



**KANSAS**  
ASSOCIATION OF  
**COUNTIES**

**To:** House Federal and State Affairs Committee

**From:** Nathan Eberline – Associate Legislative Director & Legal Counsel

**Date:** February 21, 2013

**Re:** Opposition to House Bill 2055

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 2055. This testimony has little to do with gun control and everything to do with local control. The Kansas Association of Counties opposes big levels of government imposing blanket rules on smaller levels of government. Much like our State's opposition to federal regulators setting rules in Kansas, KAC advocates for allowing local communities to set their own standards. For this reason, we oppose HB 2055.

As suggested above, we do not oppose concealed carry. But under the general principles of police power, municipalities focus on issues ranging from health and sanitation to transportation and public safety. It is the principle of public safety that led Kansas communities to regulate firearms dating back to the Wyatt Earp Era. If a county takes a stance on setting security measures through self-governance, then KAC supports the measure.

This is particularly true when a state law potentially imposes a significant financial burden on counties. On page 2, line 26, the bill defines "Adequate security measures" as:

means the use of electronic equipment and personnel at public entrances to detect and restrict the carrying of any weapons into the state or municipal building, including, but not limited to, metal detectors, metal detector wands or any other equipment used for similar purposes to ensure that weapons are not permitted to be carried into such building by members of the public.

This means that each Kansas county would have to spend public funds to purchase equipment and employ personnel for each entrance of a county facility in order to restrict weapons from the facility. While most people think only of the court house, there are often multiple public facilities in every county, and each entrance would be a costly requirement. KAC estimates that metal detectors or wands would cost around \$2,500 per facility entrance, and additional staff could run as high as \$50,000 annually. These costs do not include the x-ray machines needed for bags and parcels, which only adds to the expense.

But KAC's concerns extend beyond the mandated security cost of HB 2055. We also believe there is an issue of providing a blanket extension of concealed-carry authority to municipal employees. Not only are there a wide variety of county facilities, but municipal employees also enter private properties to address everything from roads and bridges to solid-waste management and noxious-weed eradication. This information does not suggest that it is wise to bar employees from carrying on the job, but KAC offers it to demonstrate how far-reaching this bill is and to demonstrate the diversity of interactions between county employees and the public. KAC simply supports allowing local governments to determine the security needs and employment policies for each individual community.

Though KAC opposes HB 2055, it stems from the Kansas principle of self-governance for communities. We support this principle regardless of the subject matter, and this means we support local decisions by counties on the issue of concealed carry. Please keep this in mind and oppose HB 2055.