



Testimony

Unified Government Public Relations
701 N. 7th Street, Room 620
Kansas City, Kansas 66101

Mike Taylor, Public Relations Director
913.573.5565 mtaylor@wycokck.org

Open Carry of Firearms HB 2111

Delivered March 21, 2013
House Federal and State Affairs Committee

The Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City opposes HB 2111. It is yet another big government mandate on cities, locally-elected officials and the citizens they represent.

A recent news story in the Kansas City Star reported how a number of State Legislatures, including the Kansas Legislature, are pushing back against what some view as intrusive, oppressive Federal policies, from ObamaCare to gun regulations. Senator Mary Pilcher Cook was quoted saying: "The people of Kansas do not want a command-and-control government. They want a limited government."

The Unified Government and the people of Kansas agree. Which is why Kansas voters adopted the Home Rule amendment of the Kansas Constitution nearly 60 years ago. That amendment is about small government and local control. Policy decisions which affect a city or county are made by at the community level by citizens elected by the community.

Many lawmakers here in the Statehouse express that the 10th Amendment of the United States dealing with States' Rights is being ignored by the Federal Government. I would contend the Home Rule Amendment of Kansas Constitution is too often ignored by the Kansas Legislature. Too many of you rail against the Federal Government imposing unwanted policies on the State, but then the Kansas Legislature turns around and does the same thing to local governments.

HB 2111 is such an example of big government forcing its views and mandates unto local citizens and communities. It is a State version of "command and control" government. It is certainly not limited government.

The open carry of firearms in Kansas has been regulated by city ordinance since before Kansas was even a state. In wild west Dodge City, people had to check their guns with the Sheriff when they came into town. That was done by city ordinance. This bill calls for pre-empting and changing more than a century of law.

Cities who choose to allow the open carry of guns down Main Street can do so if that fits the nature and consensus of the community. But in other communities, people walking around downtown with guns strapped to their hips is a bad idea. The concealed carry law requires a background check, a license and training. The open carry proposal in HB 2111 doesn't require anything. Just get a gun, strap it on and head to the grocery store. If you do choose to trample local control and force this measure on cities, at least adopt the same requirements as the concealed carry law.