

February 11, 2013

RE: Senate Committee on Ethics, Elections and Local Government  
Senate Bill No. 109 Hearing

Thank you Chairman Pyle and Honorable Members of the Committee for hearing my testimony concerning Senate Bill 109. I appreciate the opportunity to speak on this issue.

I am here today because the public trust is in jeopardy when it comes to public funds being used to pay lobbyists to advocate on matters for or against civil rights. But, I am also against Kansas Municipalities using any public money to advocate for anything.

Our cities are in terrible financial shape and that does not seem to be improving anytime in the near future. Our cities and counties are falling apart and desperately need new infrastructure and other immediate needs. With a dwindling tax base it is too easy for cities to spend tax payer money to advocate on whatever they feel is ailing at the time. Everyone knows the old saying "it's always easier to spend other people's money".

This bill does not in any way trample on free speech or civil rights. It is intended to protect those very rights of the citizens who pay taxes. If city or county officials have concerns they have every right by the 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment to write a letter, pick up the phone and call their state elected official. Invite that local or state official to a city or county meeting to address their concerns. Do the same thing tax payers have to do and participate in the process? Another good idea would be for those local elected officials to pay out of their own pockets for a lobbyist at the state. By local officials using tax dollars the only thing that happens is the extra cost gets passed on to local citizens in the form of higher taxes.

No one is paying me to be here. I'm volunteering my personal time and losing money. I'm here because I want to make my state a better place. One just has to look at our federal government to see how lobbyists have almost ruined our system of Government.

This should be a no brainer. Civil rights are enshrined in our federal and state Bill of Rights and no elected body or government organization should be able to lobby for or against those rights using public funds.

When it comes to civil rights we have to have a higher standard of scrutiny. If local municipalities or public schools want to state their opinion they have an individual right to do so but not a public right, because of the many different views they represent. Only privately funded organizations should have the right to lobby on matters of civil rights. That would represent a more diverse segment of the citizens of Kansas.

I have a copy of home rule which I have attached with my testimony. If SB 109 passes, all municipalities would have to follow this law. As stated in our constitution Article 12 Section 5, if a state law is uniform among all classes of cities they have to follow that law. Cities claim home rule all the time and on most occasions no one challenges them. As you can see, they have nothing to stand on when it comes to state legislated laws and home rule would not apply.

I urge this committee to vote yes on this bill and pass it to the full Senate for a vote.

Thank you for allowing me to speak to you today and considering my position.

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