



February 11, 2013

CITY COMMISSION

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Mayor

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Honorable Chairman Pyle and Members of the Senate Ethics, Election and Local Government Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding SB109. My name is David Crase and I currently serve as Mayor of the City of Garden City. We strongly oppose this measure which prohibits cities from using public funds to lobby and would prohibit cities from paying dues toward associations that lobby.

Together, Garden City, Dodge City and Liberal, created the Southwest Kansas Coalition, a group united around a common set of issues that impact our region. In the current economic climate, and with tight budgets, it is not feasible for City representatives to frequently travel across the state to visit with legislators or present testimony on important legislative matters. Therefore, our communities employ the services of lobbyists to champion issues that affect our cities. This practice not only creates an environment of trust and cooperation among our cities, it also promotes efficiency as we strive to meet the needs of our citizens.

This bill is far-reaching and impacts virtually all trade associations, local chambers, and other advocacy groups. These groups exist to unify, strengthen, and advocate for the interests of Kansans, to advance general welfare and to promote the quality of life of the people who live within our cities. If SB109 passes, many such organizations would cease to exist.

The consequences and costs of SB109 are massive, potentially undoing many decades of partnerships. We feel this bill is an attempt to stifle legitimate debate and discourse. We urge you to oppose SB109.

Sincerely,

David D. Crase
Mayor