

To: Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee

From: Trey Cocking, Deputy Director

Date: March 11, 2020

RE: Testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 414

Good Morning Madam Chair and Committee Members and thank you for allowing the League of Kansas Municipalities to testify in opposition to Senate Bill 414.

The Community Improvement District (CID) statute is a powerful tool that allows cities to redevelop certain areas of the community to improve the quality of life for residents. The tool has successfully been used in almost 50 cities across Kansas. The decision on the inclusion of grocery stores in the CID should be left to local officials. They are best equipped with the ability to weigh the pros and cons of including a grocery store.

Cities across Kansas are grappling with the issue of food deserts and the impact on the quality of life of city residents. The creation of a CID represents a potent tool that cities can utilize to attract grocers to these food deserts and increase the quality of life in the community. In many cases, an extra 1% sales tax to fund a neighborhood grocery store would save someone from higher transportation and the lost time of having to travel to grocery store miles away.

Addressing food deserts is a critical issue in both rural and urban areas as grocery stores consolidate and move to more profitable larger areas. The utilization of the CID tool is imperative to improve lives of Kansans. Cities need all the tools possible to fight for grocery stores to serve their citizens. Local governing body members are in the best place to weigh the tradeoff of higher prices with the need to serve their community.

We would urge this Committee to look at alternatives to this bill, and not report this bill out of Committee.