



February 11, 2020

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 338 Senate Ethics, Elections & Local Government Committee

Chairwoman Bowers and Members of the Senate Ethics, Elections & Local Government Committee:

I appear today on behalf of a coalition of Northeast Johnson County cities, presently comprised of the cities of Merriam, Mission, Prairie Village, and Westwood Hills. I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 338, which would allow municipalities to adopt an alternate budget procedure. Specifically, the bill would allow cities to set an estimated ad valorem amount by August 1st, but then gives cities until November 30th to submit their final budgets. This would help to mitigate some of the challenges caused by the current framework, which requires cities to submit their budget nearly five months in advance of the new budget year.

We fully support the League of Municipalities' statement on the budget timeline: "The current statutory framework for the adoption of municipal budgets makes it difficult for cities to plan for budgets that must be presented to governing bodies five months before the start of the fiscal year." The current framework also does not take into consideration circumstances that are nearly impossible to plan—or budget—for, such as natural disasters or other contingencies. This bill would make it easier for cities to address some of these types of situations.

The four northeast Johnson County cities—Merriam, Mission, Prairie Village, and Westwood Hills—ask your support of this legislation, to alleviate some of the logistical pressures caused by the current timeline and allow cities some extra time in order to prepare accurate and transparent budgets.

Thank you for your consideration and I welcome any questions or further discussion you may have on this matter.

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