

Testimony of Birdie Alt
Self Represented

House Committee on Federal and State Affairs
March 15, 2022

House Bill 2717
Opponent
WRITTEN-ONLY Testimony
785-371-7231

Chairman Barker and members of the committee,

My name is Birdie Alt. I was born and raised in Lawrence, Kansas, I attended Lawrence High School, and I am a senior at the University of Kansas studying political communication. The Lawrence community and every other community across the state are incredibly important to me. I have spent the last several years working with different groups and applying to my studies to help advocate for and communicate their needs. This is what makes Kansas so incredible, so unique - is how diverse our state is. It is what encouraged me to stay here for my collegiate studies, what compels me to remain here post-graduation, and what has brought so many of my friends and fellow students to our great state. This is why I urge you to vote against HB 2717, a bill that attacks the Hispanic communities that make Kansas whole and undermine local decision-making across the state.

The Hispanic communities across Kansas are integral to our cultural identity. 2020 census data showed the Hispanic percentage of the American population grew from 16% in 2010 to 19% in 2020, and in Kansas specifically, it grew from 10.5% of the state to 13%. Simply put, Kansas' Hispanic population has grown roughly 25% since 2010 and continues to grow today. The Hispanic community is an essential part of Kansas, wherever it is. In Lawrence, I have seen members of the Hispanic community take charge of our mutual aid efforts, providing community support where the government won't. We see the Hispanic population in this state continue to grow, improve our labor force and economy, and further strengthen our communities.

Once again, I urge you to vote down HB 2127, which is a gross government overreach into local government, and stand with the Hispanic community and all of the communities with which they are intertwined.