

To: House Local Government

From: Amanda L. Stanley, General Counsel

Date: February 24, 2021

RE: Opponent Testimony for HB 2233

We want to thank Chairman Thompson and the Committee members for allowing the League of Kansas Municipalities the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to HB 2233.

HB 2233 is bad public policy which will lead to higher property taxes and decisions driven by emotion rather than the needs of the community.

City elected officials are elected by the public to make hard decisions for the community. Sometimes, those decisions involve whether it is best to sell or demolish a public building. These decisions are complicated, administrative decisions which involve numerous professional staff and expert opinions. When dealing with a popular building, they also generally involve numerous meetings with the public, informal public votes, and multiple opportunities for the elected officials to hear from their constituents. These decisions are also local decisions where citizens can advocate for their position at governing body meetings. These are not appropriate questions for a costly referendum.

Under HB 2233, a tornado could pass right through one of these buildings and the governing body could do nothing until a public election was held. HB 2233 would be a terrible precedent, removing from local elected officials the ability to govern as needed in their community, and as such, we ask that this Committee not pass HB 2233 out to the full House.