

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Vickrey at 3:30 p.m. on March 18, 2003 in Room 519-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Larry Campbell

Committee staff present: Mike Heim, Legislative Research Department  
Kathie Sparks, Legislative Research Department  
Theresa Kiernan, Office of the Revisor of Statutes  
Maureen Stinson, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Gary Carson	U.S.D. # 308 Hutchinson Public Schools
Kim Gulley	League of Kansas Municipalities
Meryl Dye	City of Hutchinson
Rep. Tom Sloan	
Leslie Kaufman	Kansas Farm Bureau
Don Moler	League of Kansas Municipalities
Randall Allen	Kansas Association of Counties
Brenda Lorenz	Sedgwick County Farm Bureau
Jane Kelsey	
Marvin Smith	
Greg Dye	
Paul Degener	
Bruce Bodeker	Citizen's Assoc. For Responsible Government
Jack Perrin	Grant Township, Sedgwick County
Daniel Clark	
Rep. Ted Powers	

\*Meryl Dye City of Hutchinson  
\*written testimony only

Others attending: See attached list

The Chairman opened the hearing on:

**SB 178 cities; payment for certain improvements**

Gary Carson, Associate Superintendent, U.S.D.# 308 Hutchinson Schools, appeared as a proponent of the bill (Attachment 1). He stated that the bill's provisions will enable the school district and the City of Hutchinson to complete a much-needed street improvement project.

Kim Gulley, Director of Policy Development & Communications, League of Kansas Municipalities, spoke in support of the bill (Attachment 2). She testified that if there is a landowner who is seeking the public improvement and who volunteers to pay for the project, we should let them pay. She informed that the bill accomplishes this common sense goal and requested that the committee report the bill favorably for passage.

Written testimony in support of the bill was received from:

- Meryl Dye City of Hutchinson

There were no opponents to the bill.

The Chairman closed the hearing on **SB 178**.

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The Chairman opened the hearing on:

**SB 238      city-county reorganization; efficiency in local government act**

Don Moler, Executive Director, League of Kansas Municipalities, appeared as a proponent of the bill (Attachment 4). He testified that The Efficiency in Local Government Act would allow cities and counties, and their residents, to determine their own local government organizations and allow them to maximize efficiencies in government as well as modernizing governmental structures in Kansas. He urged the committee to favorably recommend the bill.

Randall Allen, Executive Director, Kansas Association of Counties, testified in support of the bill (Attachment 5). He stated that the bill removes the obstacles for cities and counties to seriously consider the feasibility of reorganizing and restructuring local government. He urged the committee to recommend the bill favorable for passage.

Rep. Sloan provided neutral testimony before the committee (Attachment 6). His recommended amendments were as follows:

- that any county may engage in the study, debate and decision-making regarding the delivery of services and/or restructuring of government operations.
- or, designate Douglas County as an urban area under KSA 12-2680 and may establish a charter commission under KSA 19-2681-KSA 19-2683.

Copies of Rep. Sloan's proposed amendment (Attachment 16) were distributed to the committee.

Leslie Kaufman, State Director, Government Relations, Kansas Farm Bureau, provided neutral testimony on the bill (Attachment 7). She stated that members of their organization firmly believe that city voters should not be allowed to advance a consolidation plan over the objection of the unincorporated areas. She requested that in order for a reorganization plan to be advanced, it must pass a majority of the total unincorporated areas of the county, not just by a majority of the cities and the county.

Brenda Lorenz, President, Sedgwick County Farm Bureau, testified as an opponent to the bill (Attachment 8). She conveyed that the Board of Directors oppose the bill. She informed of the Board's opposition to any bill that would set in place a permanent method of establishing a city and county consolidated government. She requested the committee vote "no" on the proposed act.

Jane Kelsey, Local Government and Policy Committee, Shawnee County Farm Bureau, appeared as an opponent to the bill (Attachment 9). She stated that their group has specific concerns regarding language in the current bill. She urged the committee to not recommend the bill for passage.

Marvin Smith, a rural resident of Shawnee County, testified as an opponent of the bill (Attachment 10). He stated that the proposed legislation omits the opportunity for voters in unincorporated areas to approve or reject a resolution of reorganization. He urged the committee to recommend the bill not favorable for passage.

Greg Dye, a resident of the City of Wichita, appeared as a proponent of the bill (Attachment 11). He stated that the issue of Home Rule Power should be brought up and reviewed. He requested that the bill not be passed out of committee.

Paul Degener, a resident of Shawnee County, testified as an opponent of the bill (Attachment 12). He stated that if the proposed legislation passes, the entire county will be under the control of a governing body which will respond to the preponderance of the population which resides in the urban area. He informed that the proposed legislation also lays the groundwork for an all powerful governing body and allows for too much power in the hands of a few.

Bruce Bodecker, President, Citizen's Association for Responsible Government, appeared as an opponent of the bill (Attachment 13). He stated that there is no provision in this bill to protect the ability of small jurisdictions to expand as needed into rural areas. He explained that the bill removes political power from small cities. He asked the committee to kill the bill.

Jack Perrin, Trustee of Grant Township, Sedgwick County, testified against the bill on behalf of the

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Township Association of Sedgwick County (Attachment 14). He testified the proposed legislation would eliminate all township government.

Daniel Clark, resident, City of Wichita, testified in opposition to the bill. He provided no written testimony.

Rep. Powers appeared as an opponent of the bill. He distributed a copy of the "Recommendation Summary" concerning the consolidation of the governments of Wyandotte County and Kansas City (Attachment 15).

Chairman Vickrey closed the hearing on **SB 238**:

The meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Next meeting is scheduled for March 20, 2003.