

To: House Appropriations Committee

From: Brock Ingmire, Research Associate

Date: March 11, 2016

Re: Opposition to HB 2725

Thank you for allowing me to testify today on behalf of the League of Kansas Municipalities and its member cities. This bill would limit the amount of vacation time KPERS employees can accrue and would presumably change the KPERS final average salary calculation for pre-1993 employees. The League is opposed to this bill for a multitude of reasons.

Initially, section one, which disallows KPERS employees to accrue more than 240 hours of vacation time, acts as a preemption to local control and an unnecessary mandate on cities. An individual employer's personnel policy is what has inherently always determined the amount of vacation time earned, how much is allowed to accrue, and whether or not it is paid out when an employee retires. The amount of vacation provided by each city varies, with some setting a cap of 240 hours or below and some with a set cap above 240 hours. In cases involving a higher cap, cities have found it as a needed asset to hire and retain the most qualified employees. As a result, ensuring that cities maintain an ability to conduct local government business in a manner best suited to them is vital towards sustaining their work force. Similar to the lack of a state or federal law requiring employers to provide vacation time, such a principle should be extended to not limiting the amount of vacation time an employee can accrue.

Additionally, changing the KPERS final average salary calculation for pre-1993 employees stands to place vital city services at risk in the near future. An overwhelming concern for our member cities is the potential they would face in experiencing a mass exodus of seasoned, pre-1993 employees they rely upon to provide efficient and essential services. Many of these pre-1993 employees, especially in rural areas, would not be easily replaced. As a result, taxpayers would likely see a disruption in quality public services as competent employees retire in the near future so as to avoid the effects of this bill.

For the aforementioned reasons, the League respectfully requests this Committee to not report HB 2725 out favorable for passage. Thank you for allowing me to testify before you today.