

To: House Committee on Pensions and Benefits

From: Brock Ingmire, Research Associate

Date: February 15, 2016

Re: Testimony in Support of HB 2653

Thank you for allowing me to appear before you today on behalf of the League of Kansas Municipalities and its member cities. Pertinent to the League's member cities, this bill would provide for an assurance protocol to be filed in order to extend an exemption from the compensation cap for a retiree who is filling a hardship position.

The League's 2016 Statement of Municipal Policy, approved by our members, iterates the importance of a city's ability to hire and retain qualified employees and to provide such benefits as promised to those employees. This bill ensures that cities have an established mechanism for the continuance of exemption for positions that are difficult to attract and hire qualified personnel for.

Many of our cities, notably in rural areas, have relied on retired employees to provide basic and necessary public services. Cities in such areas can prove to have a difficult time hiring new personnel based on a myriad of factors and are quite often left without an applicant pool in which to find a qualified individual to fill critical public service positions. As a result, it is not uncommon for cities to rely on retired personnel to maintain the core functions of local government.

Thank you again for allowing me to testify in support of this specific issue. I am happy to stand for questions as needed from the committee.