SENATE ETHICS AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE HEARING ON
SB 10

Written Testimony in Opposition to SB 10 on behalf of the City of Shawnee
By Katie Killen, Assistant City Manager
February 4, 2013

Honorable Chair and members of the Senate Ethics and Elections Committee:

The City of Shawnee Governing Body, as part of their 2015 Legislative State Program, strongly supports Home Rule authority. Senate Bill 10 would diminish the power of local governments to determine the best way to fill vacancies within our Home Rule Charters. Therefore, the City of Shawnee opposes SB 10 as it erodes Home Rule.

Many cities, including the City of Shawnee, have clear succession plans within their Charters in the event the mayor can no longer serve. This bill treats all positions the same in terms of filling vacancies on the Governing Body. Additionally, it takes away the vacancy processes that local elected officials have determined work best in their communities. If a community feels that there is a problem or a question with their process, it ought to be in their prerogative to find a suitable solution.

Finally, many jurisdictions already have provisions to prevent prolonged vacancies. The City of Shawnee's current Charter states, "If the City Council fails to fill a vacancy within sixty (60) days, a special election shall be called as provided by law." It seems heavy handed to remove all other provisions cities may have to fill vacancies, if the aim of this bill is truly only to negate long term vacancies.

For these reasons, the City of Shawnee is opposed to SB 10. Thank you for your time and consideration.

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