

CITY OF SHAWNEE

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SENATE FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE HEARING ON SB 98

Written Opposition to SB 98 on behalf of the City of Shawnee

By Katie Killen, Assistant City Manager

February 10, 2015

Honorable Chair and members of the Senate Federal and State Affairs Committee:

The City of Shawnee values transparency and has been recognized by the Sunshine Review, a national non-profit, with an A+ grade for enhancing our website, increasing access to information, and proactively championing government openness. At the same time, some of the requests we receive require considerable staff time to complete and do not always come directly from persons within our community.

We appreciate that SB 98 allows cities to recoup some of the costs in providing open records, however there are still some issues of concern that are outlined as follows:

- This bill potentially creates a situation where someone requests the first hour of work, but nothing else. Many open records requests cannot be handled in this fashion. Additionally, it potentially sets up piecemeal open records requests that in their entirety consume a significant amount of staff time.
- Finally, the City of Shawnee's Governing Body has had many public agenda discussions about the format of our minutes and has determined a format that not only meets current requirements, but also serves the needs of our residents. The need for the Secretary of State to determine the format further erodes home rule.

The City of Shawnee is not opposed to having state requirements on open records and meetings and supports the intent of having open government. There are issues in this bill that have the potential to create an unfunded mandate as well as diminish home rule with regard to minute format. For these reasons, the City of Shawnee opposes this legislation.

Thank you for your consideration.

