

Dear Senator Thompson,

We greatly appreciate your introduction of SB 474, which is vitally important to protecting the right of Kansas citizens to be heard. As we have experienced in our own community, a city council can simply declare a valid petition an “administrative” change to existing ordinance. In doing so, elected officials are free to advance their own political agenda, and silence those who might disagree.

Undertaking a valid petition drive is a difficult task, and as we have found, should be considered a last-resort effort to maintain our right to due process. Countless volunteer hours and signing events culminated in thousands of legally obtained, bipartisan signatures (over 25% of our city’s registered voters). Our City Council simply trashed that historic citizen effort and has even sued its own citizens, for fear of losing control of a politically divisive narrative. SB 474 will close the loopholes that allow a governing body to summarily dismiss that right and ignore the will of its’ constituents.

We strongly urge you to support Kansans basic right to be heard and affect bipartisan change. Please move SB 474 forward. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input into this critically important Senate Bill.

Sincerely,
Todd and Jan Bleakley
Prairie Village, KS 66207