

# State of Kansas

## Senate Chamber



CAROLYN MCGINN  
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HARVEY AND NORTH SEDGWICK COUNTIES

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## COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

CHAIRMAN  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT

MEMBER  
AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
ETHICS AND TRANSPARENCY  
WAYS AND MEANS

JOINT COMMITTEES  
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RE: Written Proponent Testimony for SB 301

Chairwoman Bowers and Members of the Transparency and Ethics Committee:

I am writing in support of SB 301 concerning substantial interest forms in relation to local units of government. The idea for this bill originated as a result of a bill sponsored by Senator Thompson. He introduced SB 86 as a means of addressing the conflict of interest and ethics as a result of solar or wind power development in communities.

Because of that issue, SB 301 requires elected local units of government that have taxing authority to fill out an annual substantial interest form which discloses employment, investments and gifts from organizations or businesses. Right now it is a voluntary disclosure until the next election cycle when it is required for filing. Like the legislature, they would be required to complete this form every year in April to prevent special interest voting. And in addition, it would prevent undue influence through the benefit of personal gain.

In local government, many projects are proposed and voted on to improve the infrastructure and amenities of a community. Because of the closeness of a business community, it is easy to befriend people who are local contractors or business agents that work with schools, counties and municipalities. These friendships can easily carry over into possible gifts and/or trips for the elected officials without any transparency about who covered the costs.

I believe we have good people who step up to serve at the local level with good intentions. But those good intentions can get clouded when your personal and professional relationships become too entangled. This bill will ensure transparency remains as part of the process. Please support SB 301 and help to encourage open government.

Sincere request,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carolyn McGinn', written in a cursive style.

Senator Carolyn McGinn