

To: House Committee on Welfare Reform
From: Spencer Duncan, Government Affairs Director
Date: February 6, 2025
RE: HB 2101 – Prohibiting Municipalities from Adopting Guaranteed Income Programs
Opponent – Verbal Testimony

Thank you to the Chair and members of the Committee for the opportunity to provide testimony.

HB 2101 is reactionary legislation to a non-existent problem. The bill pushes aside Constitutional Home Rule and the core value of letting Kansans shape their own communities. The League and cities of Kansas respectfully ask you to support Constitutional Home Rule and vote NO.

Sixty-three years ago, Kansas voters approved Constitutional Home Rule, allowing cities to conduct their affairs to reflect the direct will of their residents. The Constitutional directive is clear: citizens want local governments to make decisions that reflect their unique communities. HB 2101 contradicts the constitutional right of local self-governance by removing the ability for local officials to determine whether these products fit with the city's priorities.

Our constitution seeks to address issues like HB 2101, as the subject does not rise to a level that requires your intervention. Specifically, HB 2101 ignores Article 12, Section 5 of the Kansas Constitution: *“Powers and authority granted cities pursuant to this section shall be liberally construed for the purpose of giving to cities the largest measure of self-government.”*

There is significance to our constitution that none should take lightly. As a nation of laws, this language is more than a casual guideline. It is an extension of the Kansans who make our state great, and issues such as HB 2101 should not invalidate the core value of self-governance.

Aside from the Constitutional Home Rule issue, this bill is unnecessary.

There are no cities, to the League's knowledge, seriously considering instituting a guaranteed income program and it is not likely to become a trend. Even if one city is considering, this Legislature should not punish all 625 cities simply because one acts in a manner that causes disagreement by officials who do not live in that city.

It is not in the best interest of a city to adopt policies that drive taxpayers from that community or turn people away from living in a city. Just as citizens across the state trust in those who serve in the Legislature, this Legislature must trust in the work of local elected officials and the citizens who elect them.

It is important for cities across Kansas to look different and adopt different policies. Citizens can decide which communities they want to live in and conduct business. Over time, cities will adjust to the marketplace and adopt policies reflective of what attracts residents.

The League is also concerned that the language in HB 2101 could be liberally interpreted to impact other programs cities provide for the betterment of citizens, such as child care vouchers and housing programs for low-income citizens. If this body moves forward with HB 2101, we ask that clarifying language be adopted to ensure no other programs are impacted by the legislation.

With these points in mind, we urge you to support Constitutional Home Rule by voting NO on HB 2101. Thank you for your time and consideration. Please let me know if we can provide any additional information that might prove helpful.



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