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# TESTIMONY

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## **Senate Judiciary Committee Hearing on SB321 Thursday, 9:30 a.m., RM548S**

Chairman Owens and members of the committee:

The City of Wichita stands in opposition to SB321 because it is unnecessary and would create operational problems for our Municipal Court. Specific concerns include:

- Current practice has not compromised public safety and has been effective for City of Wichita Municipal Court.
- Municipalities and judges are best suited to determine when On Recognizance (OR) bonds are appropriate based on the interests of justice and public safety.
- The bill substantially limits local and judicial discretion to grant OR bonds.
- The bill would have a negative impact on local jails which are struggling to address issues with overcrowding.
- The bill would greatly increase jail costs paid by local governments. The City of Wichita last year paid more than \$2.4 million in jail fees to Sedgwick County.
- The bill places a burden on municipalities to determine whether a person previously failed to appear on an OR bond issued in another jurisdiction.
- Local governments have initiated programs to ensure persons released on OR bonds appear in court. This bill undermines those efforts while doing nothing to enhance public safety or further the interests of justice
- While it is unclear if the bill is intended to regulate municipal courts, the effect of the bill if applied to municipal courts would be detrimental.