

February 6, 2013

RE: Senate Committee on Ethics, Elections and Local Government
Senate Bill No. 45 Hearing

Thank you Chairman Pyle and Honorable Members of the Committee for hearing my testimony concerning Senate Bill 45. I appreciate your time spent discerning my information.

Our country and state was founded on individual rights and liberty. We value those rights and liberties as sacred and inalienable. That is why we have a constitution and bill of rights to protect from one person, leader or group from taking those sacred entitlements from the citizens.

Fast forward to today and our rights and liberties are under assault like never before by special interests with big money that does not always have the welfare of the citizens in mind. As everyone here knows, we have many different lobbyists representing many different organizations; some private and some public.

My deep concern is the public lobbyists who are paid by local tax money. We see a big disconnect when it comes to lobbyists who are from big cities or counties that have a large tax base to fund their agenda, which is not always in the best interest of the state, especially when it comes to the 2nd Amendment.

In 2010 eighty-nine percent of the voters in Kansas approved to amend the Kansas Bill of Rights by declaring that the people have a right to bear arms for lawful purposes. Everyone from small rural communities to big cities all have the right to exercise the 2nd Amendment anywhere in Kansas.

Sadly that is not the case when it comes to our local municipalities in larger populated areas like Johnson County. Every time legislation is submitted dealing with the 2nd Amendment a taxpayer funded lobbyist from Johnson County and other large municipalities oppose the bill.

This is not fair to the rest of the citizens of Kansas. When it comes to civil rights we need to have a higher standard of scrutiny on lobbyists to protect everyone from people that have possible ulterior motives to infringe on rights throughout the state.

When it comes to locally elected officials they change all the time so you may have local bodies of government who are anti-free speech, anti-religion, anti-right to assemble, anti-second amendment and the list could go on and on. These rights need to have a higher level of protection.

This is the higher standard I talk about. I believe only privately funded lobbyist or organizations should have the privilege to lobby for or against matters of civil rights. Those groups would clearly represent a larger more diverse group of Kansas citizens.

As my statement reflects, we have a problem with large municipalities lobbying against matters of civil rights in Kansas. I am hopeful this honorable committee can see we need changes in order to have a higher standard of scrutiny for publically paid lobbyists. The citizens of Kansas deserve that elevated level of security for their rights.

I urge this committee to vote yes on this bill and pass it to the full Senate for a vote.

Thank you for allowing me to speak to you today and considering my position.

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