

**Senate Committee on Ethics, Elections, and Local Government**

**Hearing on Senate Bill 211**

**Thursday, February 21, 2013 at 9:30 a.m. – Room 159-S**

**Written Testimony of Loren J. Pepperd**

**Mayor, City of Manhattan, Kansas**

Good afternoon Chair Pyle, Vice Chair Holmes and honorable members of the Senate Committee on Ethics, Elections, and Local Government. My name is Loren Pepperd, and I have the honor of serving as Mayor for the City of Manhattan. I want to thank you for this opportunity to provide written testimony to the Committee.

The City of Manhattan opposes SB 211 that would move municipal elections to the fall of even-numbered years and make them partisan. Local general elections are currently held in April of odd-numbered years. If moved to November, local elections would have to compete for media coverage with state and national elections, thereby diminishing voter education about local issues.

The City of Manhattan is strongly opposed to converting to partisan municipal elections. The vast majority of issues confronting local government are not partisan in nature. Political parties typically do not even develop platforms for local issues. It is completely unclear how introducing partisan politics into local elections will improve the public dialogue and debate of local issues. In addition, partisan elections may discourage otherwise qualified candidates from seeking office.

**Please oppose SB 211 and maintain non-partisan municipal elections with primary and general elections held in the spring of odd-numbered years.**

Thank you for your consideration, and I would be happy to answer any questions. I may be reached by mail at City Hall, City of Manhattan, 1101 Poyntz Avenue, Manhattan, KS 66502, by phone at (785) 587-2404, or by email at [pepperd@cityofmhk.com](mailto:pepperd@cityofmhk.com).