

THE CITY OF PRAIRIE VILLAGE
STAR OF KANSAS

Testimony in Opposition to House Bill 2665 – City and county inspections of rental properties; limitations

To: Honorable Chairman Representative Mark Hutton
Members of the House Committee on Commerce, Labor and Economic Development

From: Nolan Sunderman, Assistant to the City Administrator

Date: February 26, 2016

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments in opposition to House Bill 2665 - City and county inspections of rental properties.

The City of Prairie Village is opposed to House Bill 2665 for many reasons. The City of Prairie Village is a residential community of over 20,000 residents including over 750 rental properties. The City initially began a rental registration and inspection due to the many residents requesting a program to address ongoing concerns with rental properties. The program was initiated with the involvement of local citizens, property owners, and landlords. The program is a very successful tool which increases communication and education between new residents, landlords, and the City. The City of Prairie Village utilizes an exterior-only inspection program led by our Code Enforcement Officers. The goals of the City's Code Enforcement program are to promote the health, safety, and well-being of residents, to protect neighborhoods against blight and deteriorating influences, and to protect property values. The City also believes a strong code enforcement program including rental inspections helps reduce crime and maintain property values.

Many of our landlords have voiced their appreciation for the program as an additional tool to check on the status of their property. It has been especially valuable for those property owners who do not live in the area. As it is currently written, the proposed legislation will eliminate the City's ability to continue this worthy program.

The proposed legislation will impact a program which local residents and property owners have demanded and the City Council has supported. The City of Prairie Village supports local control regarding these local issues. The proposed legislation is an attack on the ability for the locally-elected officials to implement programs which have positive impacts on the community. For these reasons, the City of Prairie Village is opposed to House Bill 2665.