



Kathleen B. Sexton
City Manager

March 9, 2015

Mark Kahrs, Chair
House Committee on Elections

Re: Sub SB 171

Dear Chairman Kahrs & Members of the Committee:

As you consider the local elections bill, would you please consider removing the amendment made on the floor of the Senate to prohibit elections on sales taxes, bond issues, and special questions from being held throughout the year or by using a mail ballot?

Flexibility in scheduling is critical to meeting the evolving needs of cities, especially given state requirements to approve our budgets by mid-August every year. This restriction will severely hamper the ability of cities to get the word out about issues that are often complicated or require more thought from voters than just reading the palm cards of candidates to decide which to select.

For example, shifting a city's reliance from property tax to sales tax is a complex issue requiring attention and thought that is difficult to get during fall elections when voters are inundated with advertising and robocalls.

I read with interest about the idea to place city and school candidates at the top of the ballot and find that it may be of some help in mitigating the negative effects of moving to fall elections. Information overload will likely still be an issue though, and especially if special questions are also included in these elections.

Thank you for considering local elections in odd-numbered years rather than even-numbered and for making the partisan question to be determined by each jurisdiction instead of a one-size-fits-all approach mandated by the state. The Derby City Council prefers no bill at all, but if a majority of you believe you need to pass a bill, then these provisions are preferable to others also being discussed.

Highest regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Kathy Sexton'.

Kathy Sexton
City Manager

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City Manager's Office

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