

January 15, 2015

Representative Steve Huebert; Chair
House Standing Committee on Local Government
Kansas House of Representatives
Room 149-S

Dear Representative Huebert:

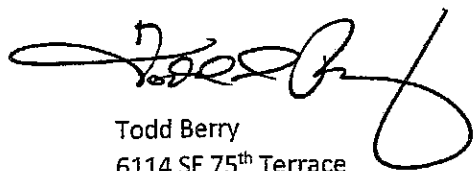
The purpose of this correspondence is to express to you, as the Chair of the House Standing Committee on Local Government, my support for HB2003 on Cities and the annexation on non-adjointing land.

As currently written, the statute on annexation of land non-adjointing to a city can be manipulated to place too much authority in the hands of too few representatives, thus removing the board of county commissioners from their jurisdiction over property within the county. While I understand that there are valid reasons for "island annexations", there must be some form of checks and balances. In these circumstances, all parties within the county should have the opportunity to be represented and have a say in whether or not the land will ultimately be annexed into a city and eventually removed from the tax roll. This is especially true for our less populated counties where the tax base is made up primarily of agricultural land and very little industry. HB2003, as introduced by Representative Mike Houser, is a step in the right direction as it will protect the interests of county residents and the school districts.

As a former classroom teacher, I understand the current situation in Kansas and I am very aware of the challenges facing the Legislature, many of our counties, and local boards of education. Without question, your work is cut out for you. However, I hope that we can agree that the continued manipulation of the current statute is not in the best interest of the majority. I ask that you support and work to advance HB2003 out of committee so that the residents of our less populated counties and local schools are not financially hurt by the wishes of a few.

I appreciate your time and your service to Kansans.

Regards,



Todd Berry
6114 SE 75th Terrace
Riverton KS, 66770

bound4dega@yahoo.com

CC: Membership; House Standing Committee on Local Government