



KANSAS MAYORS ASSOCIATION
300 SW 8TH AVENUE
TOPEKA, KS 66603
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February 10, 2015

Senate Committee on Ethics and Elections
c/o League of Kansas Municipalities
300 SW 8th Avenue
Topeka, KS 66603

Re: Opposition to Senate Bill 171

As President of the Kansas Mayors Association, I urge the Senate Ethics and Elections committee of the Kansas Legislature reject Senate Bill 171, which would make nonpartisan city and school elections partisan and move to the fall of even numbered years to be held in conjunction with state and federal elections.

Each city has a unique character and unique issues that come to the forefront in local elections. These issues do not fit into the ideology of the existing political parties. There is no Republican or Democratic way to build a swimming pool or a new school. Both city councils and school boards across the State must be free to do important work without being concerned about the pressure of a political platform or agenda and whether they have the blessing of a particular political party.

Partisan elections will harm the quality of city governments in Kansas and prohibit federal employees and active duty military from running for local office. The idea that moving the elections to the fall will draw a greater number of voters also presents the likelihood that voters would be less informed about the local issues. The present system of local elections in the spring of odd numbered years has worked for literally decades and is not in need of reform. Energy needs to be focused on the economic situation facing the State of Kansas and not expended on an issue that is working properly for all citizens across the State.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Bill Phillip', is written over a light blue circular stamp.

Bill Phillip, President
Mayor-City of Marysville