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Darla Conner, Senate Committee on Ethics and Elections Secretary

To the Senate Committee on Ethics and Elections:

The City of Colby would like to formally testify against the passage of SB 171 to make City elections partisan and combine them with State and Federal elections.

Below are several reasons why we feel this should not be passed:

By passing this legislation it would eliminate a percentage of the eligible voters per the federal Hatch Act and the Department of Defense Directive 1344.10. Candidates that are federal employees or on active duty in the military would not be eligible to run in partisan elections.

The City of Colby believes that holding the elections with the State and Federal elections would cause the local issues to be buried in the spotlight of larger, more covered debates.

With the passage of SB 171 it takes away the flexibility communities have in regards to frequency of elections; length of terms; the use of wards to ensure distributed representation; and the use of odd-year elections for sales tax issues, bond issues, and other local issues requiring a vote of the citizens. This passage would almost guarantee an increase in special elections which contradict the reasons for moving the elections.

In summary, the City of Colby feels there could be several other ways of increasing voter turnout rather than completely changing the law governing municipal elections. Again, we oppose the passage of SB 171 in its current written form.

Thank you,



Tyson J. McGreer
City Manager