

February 25, 2016

Sen. Ty Masterson
Chair, Senate Ways and Means Committee

My name is Ryan Dixon and I am the Presiding Judge of the Overland Park Municipal Court. I am writing to you today in opposition of SB 403 which would greatly reduce our ability to fund important programs for police officers and victims of crimes in our city.

The City of Overland Park Municipal Court is the second largest municipal court in the State of Kansas. In 2015, there were approximately 39,000 traffic violations filed. As a matter of convenience, many thousands of these traffic tickets are resolved by mail, online or at the clerk window prior to the first court date. With a few exceptions, nearly all of the traffic violations include a court cost of \$22.50. An itemization of these court costs are as follows:

\$1.00 Judicial Branch Education Fund
\$20.00 Law Enforcement Training Center
\$1.50 Overland Park Victim Assistance Program

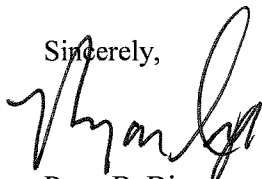
Furthermore, a number of municipal courts across the state have court "technology program" court costs that fund updates to court technology including computer hardware and software programs. This is especially important to many cities as they make the transition from paper to digital courts as may be the case in our own city in the next few years.

The language on page 12 lines 13 through 16 seeks to eliminate "costs for the administration of justice" if the person ticketed resolves their citation by mail, online or in person prior to their court date. As enumerated above, literally tens of thousands of our citations are resolved prior to the first court appearance. If no costs are recovered in these cases it would force the city to increase the \$1.50 Victim Assistance Program thus creating a "penalty" for those who choose to exercise their constitutional rights to be heard by the court and contest their ticket instead of mailing in a payment.

In addition, beginning on page 2 at line 35, SB 403 seeks to capture 70% of all revenue from traffic infractions occurring on the national network of highways. This would significantly affect the programs listed above as a number of highways run through our city limits. There is also the likelihood that the bill would change traffic enforcement habits of many Kansas municipalities. I believe this would make our roads and highways less safe.

I would urge you and the members of the Ways and Means Committee to reject SB 403 in its current form.

Sincerely,



Ryan B. Dixon
Presiding Judge
Overland Park Municipal Court