



**Municipal Court
Written Testimony on SB 403
Senate Ways and Means Committee**

Vonnie Fisher, Municipal Court Administrator
Fairway, Kansas Municipal Court

February 25, 2016

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony concerning SB 403. As a Municipal Court Administrator I have to oppose this bill. It is my opinion that this bill creates unnecessary administrative and processing burdens on Municipal Courts. The logistics of capturing, reporting & analyzing data as well as submitting related reports is a huge burden. Processing every ticket will take longer, service will be slower and more errors will be made. Defendants will end up being treated as a number and not a person because court personnel will be dealing with so much red tape.

Section 6 (b) states that "a person shall not be assessed costs for the administration of justice described in subsection (a) if such person makes an appearance, waiver, plea and payment in accordance with K.S.A. 12-4305(c), and amendments thereto". By not assessing court costs on certain tickets when the defendant enters a plea or pays their ticket online/in person before their scheduled court date seems unfair; in essence the defendant will be charged more by exercising their constitutional right to have their day in court.

As far as asking cities to turn over 70% of the revenue from tickets issued on the "national network of highways" I imagine this would make sense if the State shared 70% of the costs printing and issuing those tickets. In reality, the cost of the ticket doesn't even begin to cover the operational costs of court administration, not to mention the officer's salary, as well as maintenance to the police vehicle the officer is driving. To illustrate my point, in October of 2015 my Municipal Court disposed of 68 traffic cases; five (5) of those cases were **not** on a State Highway. Our total revenue for those 63 cases that were on a State Highway totaled \$10,123.50; \$7086.45 of that total would have been turned over to the State. The City would have been left with \$3037.05 in revenue for those citations; as I previously stated that would not even begin to cover the administrative costs associated with enforcing the law and the administration of justice. If this bill passes I foresee municipal court fines dramatically increasing to make up for the loss of revenue thereby putting an unreasonable financial burden on the motoring public.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony.

Vonnie Fisher
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