



Testimony

Unified Government Public Relations
701 N. 7th Street, Room 620
Kansas City, Kansas 66101

Mike Taylor, Public Relations Director
913.573.5565 mtaylor@wycokck.org

Restoring Local Control Over Wage Requirements House Bill 2185

Delivered February 7, 2017
House Commerce, Labor and Economic Development

The Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City supports House Bill 2185. The measure will return to local control the decision about paying prevailing wage on public works projects and economic development projects where tax incentives are given.

Prevailing wage fits the nature of our community and is supported by our citizens.

Prevailing wage has encouraged economic development in Wyandotte County, not hurt it. Economic investment in Wyandotte County totals \$5.2-billion over the past 25 years with most of those projects paying the workers building them prevailing wage. Prevailing wage certainly did not prevent investment. Even with the prevailing wage requirement, the Unified Government is recognized as one of the most business friendly local governments in the Kansas City metro.

Wyandotte County has used prevailing wage as a successful economic development tool which has transformed our community into a regional tourism and manufacturing center. While prevailing wage was still in place, Wyandotte County was ranked first in the Kansas City metro and 19th in the nation for job growth, with thousands of new jobs are being created by the businesses and tourist attractions investing in Wyandotte County.

Payment of prevailing wage benefits the economies of Wyandotte County and the State of Kansas by giving workers more income to spend on purchases large and small, supporting local businesses and generating increased tax revenues.

The law prohibiting use of prevailing wage is an unnecessary and unwelcome intrusion by the State of Kansas into local affairs and violates the spirit of Home Rule for cities which has been enshrined in the Kansas Constitution for more than 60 years. Many state elected leaders and members of the Kansas Legislature say they believe in small, limited government and object to the Federal government meddling in State of Kansas decisions and policies, but frequently themselves meddle in the decisions and policies of local governments.

The Unified Government respectfully requests and strongly urges the Kansas Legislature to repeal the law banning local government policies requiring the use of prevailing wage on public works and economic development projects.