

My name is Stephanie Iser, and I live in Roeland Park, KS in the zip code of 66205. I represent the Safe & Welcoming Roeland Park Neighbor-led movement. Thank you for the opportunity to share my testimony; I would have come in person but am scheduled to teach on Tuesday March 15.

I would like to share more about the group that I represent and why we oppose HB2717. For about 2 years, my neighbors and I worked to make our city more safe, welcoming, and inclusive to those that live, work, shop, and worship in Roeland Park. Our movement of about 200 residents, led by a group of neighbors, worked to understand needs, study and recommend policies, and petition our elected leaders to be more inclusive and welcoming to all, regardless of one's immigration status.

During our work, we learned that some community members felt unsafe to contact the police when a crime had happened. We also learned of neighbors that had experienced different forms of racial and ethnic profiling throughout Johnson County and Kansas due to being mistaken as foreign born or non-citizen. To address these issues, we helped enact an ordinance, approved unanimously by our city council in 2020, which puts limitations on how our city staff will cooperate with ICE, reducing cooperation primarily to assistance with public safety issues.

HB2717 is government overreach, and would take away elected officials' power to do what's best for local communities. It would rollback decisions that leaders have already made and undo efforts to be more inclusive, assuring, and welcoming to immigrants and those mistakenly profiled as being foreign-born or non-citizens. We strongly urge you to oppose this bill and allow our locally elected leaders to do their jobs and make decisions that best represent our community.

Respectfully, our local leaders were the ones elected to represent us in our city. They better understand what is needed in our jurisdiction because they live in our region, were elected to represent us, and they pay taxes in our community. Please oppose HB2717 and let the leaders that we have elected be stewards of our tax dollars make decisions for our communities.

Thank you for your time, and thank you for your dedicated service to the state of Kansas, its people, and our local jurisdictions.