

To: House Local Government Committee

From: Erik Sartorius, Executive Director

Date: February 2, 2022

RE: Neutral testimony for House Bill 2619

I would like to thank the Chairman and members of the Committee for allowing the League of Kansas Municipalities the opportunity to provide neutral testimony on House Bill 2619.

Cities and their elected and appointed officials value transparency. Having an engaged public assists local government in making better decisions. Many city elected officials receive no remuneration for their service. Those that do understand that being a public official can come with some additional scrutiny.

All of the elements described in HB 2619 are public information. Our concerns with HB 2619 stem from this being another unfunded state mandate. The programming and data transfer to adhere to this proposed legislation may be minimal for larger cities with staff well-versed in websites and other technology.

Several of our cities, however, do not maintain websites. Over 100 Kansas cities have a population of under 100 residents. Staffing is minimal – maybe 2-3 employees at most – and technology is not high on their list of items on which to spend tax funds. Creating and maintaining a website solely for the purpose of carrying out the mandate of this legislation is not a good use of cities' limited resources.

Should the committee look to move HB 2619 forward, it is imperative that consideration is given to the costs and benefits of this mandate – particularly on smaller cities in the state.