



February 14, 2023

House Committee on Local Government  
Chair, Rep. Emil Bergquist  
Vice Chair, Rep. Doug Blex  
Ranking Minority Member, Rep. Linda Feathersen

Re: House Bill 2376 Opposition

Chair Bergquist, Vice Chair Blex, Ranking Minority Member Featherston, and members of the committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to address you regarding the HB 2376.

I would like to draw your attention to page 1, line 31 (New Sec. 2) there is language added that would not only remove local control from *municipalities, towns, and counties attempting to address discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, disability, national origin or ancestry that is more restrictive than Kansas Statute* but also *make void and unenforceable any ordinance passed prior to July 1, 2023*.

This is an offense to local control and the current practice that allows municipalities, towns, and counties to be more restrictive than state statute but not less restrictive. Page 1, line 31 through page 2, line 9 OR all of Section 2 should be removed from this bill.

While members of the legislature represent the same constituents as local elected officials, local government is closest to the people. Any governing body that seeks to put in efforts to reduce discrimination is doing the right thing and sending a message that discrimination has no place in Kansas.

I can tell you from experience as an elected that I have had many constituents highlighting the discrimination they face now, and it isn't always geared toward the racial arguments so many have politicized over the years. The ordinance passed in Wichita allows for mediation, education or if all else fails, a low financial penalty.

Discrimination is something that we can work through in mediation and education. As the statute currently sits, many who've been discriminated against acknowledge that the State of Kansas is backlogged, moves entirely too slow to address issues, and makes our constituents feel hopeless like their experience is not valid. I am certain none of you would appreciate feeling that way, and if you have before, then you understand why this section should be removed.

I stand firmly in opposition to this bill if section 2 is not removed. Sections 1 and 3 are good and this bill would be fine without section 2.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Brandon A. Johnson'.

Brandon A. Johnson  
Wichita City Council – District 1