

SESSION OF 2007

**SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE ON HOUSE BILL NO. 2573**

As Recommended by House Committee on  
Elections and Governmental Organization

**Brief\***

HB 2573 would allow the voters to decide whether a city or county is to be brought under the provisions of the Public Employer-Employee Relations Act (PEERA). The bill would:

- Require that a resolution brought under PEERA be placed on a ballot if a verified petition, signed by 5 percent of the qualified and registered voters of the city or county, is filed with the city or county clerk.
- Require such election be held in the manner prescribed by general bond law.
- Require a city or county to be bound by the provisions of PEERA as of the effective date of a resolution, if the resolution was approved by the voters. The resolution would remain in effect unless it is rescinded by the voters in a subsequent, similar ballot process. A resolution to rescind would not take effect until the termination of the next complete budget year following the original PEERA resolution vote.

**Background**

Current law allows the governing body of any public employer, other than the state and its agencies, to bring the public employer under the provisions of PEERA upon a majority vote of all the members of the governing body. Such action

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\*Supplemental notes are prepared by the Legislative Research Department and do not express legislative intent. The supplemental note and fiscal note for this bill may be accessed on the Internet at

may be rescinded in the same manner in which it was originally approved. The purpose of PEERA is “to obligate public agencies, public employees and their representatives to enter into discussions with affirmative willingness to resolve grievances and disputes relating to conditions of employment, acting within the framework of law. . . . [and] to promote the improvement of employer-employee relations within the various public agencies of the state and its political subdivisions by providing a uniform basis for recognizing the right of public employees to join organizations of their own choice, or to refrain from joining, and be represented by such organizations in their employment relations and dealings with public agencies.” (KSA 75-4321, subsection (b))

Testifying in support of the bill were representatives of the Kansas State Council of Fire Fighters and the Olathe and state lodges of the Fraternal Order of Police. Representatives of the Kansas Association of Counties, the League of Kansas Municipalities, and the City of Overland Park provided testimony in opposition to the bill.

According to the fiscal note, it is estimated county election offices would incur costs from holding elections in accordance with general bond law, which allows for either a special ballot question or one held in conjunction with a general election. The precise fiscal effect of the bill’s passage is unknown, because it is unknown how many local governments would hold an election to bring a city or county under PEERA. According to the fiscal note, the Secretary of Labor indicated there also could be operational costs from tracking local governments that have brought themselves under PEERA through voter initiatives, though these costs are estimated to be negligible.