



Testimony

**Senate Bill 373
Prohibiting Publicly Funded Lobbying
Senate Federal and State Affairs Committee
February 12, 2024
Opponent**

I am Mike Taylor on behalf of the Kansas County Commissioners Association.

The KCCA opposes Senate Bill 373.

KCCA represents the elected Commissioners in all 105 counties. Republicans. Democrats. Rural. Urban. 362 elected leaders. All working to serve their communities. They can't be in the Statehouse much of the time the Legislature is in session. That's why I'm here on their behalf.

The KCCA pays me a fee to be their eyes, ears and voice here in the Statehouse. What SB 373 would do is restrict their ability to be effective, engaging participants in the legislative process. This bill would not just silence me. It proposes to silence the voices of all elected County Commissioners in Kansas.

Things move fast in the Statehouse. There is no way County Commissioners can keep up with all of the developments which impact local government. That's why I'm here on their behalf. I send them a weekly newsletter and take part in a weekly Zoom call about bills being introduced and advanced.

I am a lobbyist. But I am also an advocate, a liaison and an information resource. I am also a defender of Home Rule and Local Control. And when necessary, I speak out against legislation which attacks those principles and will hinder the ability of County Commissioners to govern their communities.

SB 373 is filled with gray areas. Does "prohibiting paying membership dues to an association that is involved in lobbying" mean cities and counties can no longer support their local Chambers of Commerce or economic development organizations? Does it mean the State can no longer pay for legislators to attend American Legislative Exchange Council events or other legislative organizations? Who determines which "requests for legislative actions or appropriations are deemed necessary for the efficient conduct of public business...?" The bill also says it doesn't prevent "communicating with a member of the legislature on the request of such member..." What if a legislator doesn't ask their local County Commissioner?

SB 373 is a mean-spirited bill designed to censor and silence the voices of local elected officials who the Kansas Legislature should be working in partnership with.