



To: Chairman Thompson and Members of the Committee,
From: City Manager, Nickolaus J. Hernandez, and the City of Dodge City Commission
Date: February 12, 2024
Subject: Testimony in Opposition to Senate Bill 373

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony on behalf of the City of Dodge City in opposition to Senate Bill (SB) No. 373. We are urging you to **Vote No** on SB 373 which seeks to prohibit the use of public funds for lobbying.

It is crucial to recognize that municipalities across the state, especially those located in remote areas like ours, rely on lobbying efforts to advocate for the needs and interests of our residents. Lobbying serves as a vital tool for ensuring that our voices are heard, and our concerns are addressed by state lawmakers. By restricting the use of public funds for lobbying, SB 373 would severely impede our ability to effectively represent the best interests of our community before the state legislature.

One of the primary reasons for Dodge City's opposition to SB 373 stems from the geographical constraints that our municipality faces. As a city situated in southwest Kansas, we encounter significant time and distance challenges when it comes to actively participating in legislative matters in Topeka. The journey to the state capital is lengthy and requires considerable time and resources, making it difficult for us to effectively engage in the legislative process.

In addition, it is essential to understand that lobbying is not synonymous with wasteful spending. Rather, it is a strategic investment that enables municipalities to navigate the complexities of the legislative process and advance policies that promote the well-being and prosperity of our constituents.

In closing, the City of Dodge City urges you to recognize the critical role that lobbying plays in facilitating meaningful dialogue between local governments and state policymakers. By preserving our ability to engage in lobbying activities, you will ensure that municipalities like Dodge City can continue to actively participate in shaping the future of our state.

Your consideration of our testimony and your opposition of SB 373 is greatly appreciated it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nickolaus J. Hernandez". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Nickolaus J. Hernandez
City Manager

