

Marcus Winn
Private Citizen
Written Proponent Testimony of SB 108
For the Senate Committee on Federal & State Affairs

Chair Tyson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 108. My name is Marcus Winn, and I am a resident of Wyandotte County, Kansas City, Kansas. I support SB 108 because it is fair, it is fiscally responsible, and it offers an opportunity to secure the future of Kansas communities.

Wyandotte County is unique. We have the highest-paying jobs in the state, yet one of the lowest per capita incomes. This is because 70% of the jobs in Wyandotte County are held by non-residents—people who work in our county, use our roads, rely on our public safety services, and benefit from our local infrastructure, yet take their earnings home elsewhere.

We have no problem with being an economic engine for the region. In fact, we take pride in it. But fairness demands that the very jobs we generate also help sustain the infrastructure and services that make them possible. That's why a local option earnings tax is a common-sense solution.

SB 108 would allow Wyandotte County the right to vote on an earnings tax. A 1% earnings tax in Wyandotte County is estimated to generate \$52 million per year—funding that could go toward:

- Fixing aging infrastructure without raising property taxes.
- Funding basic city services like police, fire, and emergency response.
- Keeping taxes fair by ensuring those who benefit from our economy contribute to it.

Local communities should have the right to decide what revenue sources best serve their needs. This legislation doesn't impose an earnings tax—it simply allows Wyandotte County residents the choice to vote on it. This is what small government looks like: empowering local communities to make decisions for themselves, without mandates or preemptions.

Wyandotte County faces real challenges. We lost 3,365 residents between 2020 and 2023, the highest population decline of any Kansas county. High property taxes are already a burden on local residents. We continue to struggle with aging infrastructure and funding shortfalls.

If not an earnings tax, what other revenue source can generate this level of funding while lessening the burden on property owners? The Kansas Legislature has already restricted local

governments' ability to raise revenue, limiting the tools available to address these challenges. Without options, local communities will expect the state to make up the difference.

SB 108 is not a mandate—it is an opportunity. An opportunity for Wyandotte County residents to decide for themselves how best to fund essential services and reduce reliance on property taxes.

If we want Kansas to remain strong, we must give our communities the power to shape their own future. I urge you to support SB 108 and give Wyandotte County the right to vote on a local earnings tax.

Thank you for your time and consideration.