



City of Lawrence

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February 13, 2019

Senator Elaine Bowers
Chair – Ethics, Elections and Local Government
Rm. 142 South, Statehouse
Topeka, KS 66612

Re: Senate Bill 105

Dear Senator Bowers and Committee Members,

The City of Lawrence supports the passage of Senate Bill 105. In 2015, the Kansas Legislature mandated changes to the timing of municipal elections and to the establishment of when new terms of office would occur. The Home Rule Authority of Kansas cities was severely limited by such an intrusion into the power and authority of cities to determine their affairs. The 2015 legislation (House Bill 2104 – see Sec. 7) mandated that:

The term of members of governing bodies and other elected officials of any municipality that would expire at any time in 2017 shall expire on the second Monday in January of 2018, when newly elected members of the governing body and other newly elected officials shall take office.

The legislation essentially created a “lame duck” period for the City of Lawrence and assuredly most municipal boards. The City then codified the above language going forward after 2018, that municipal terms and officers would start on the second Monday in January following a general election.

If Senate Bill 105 is adopted and signed into law, the City of Lawrence will update its city code to eliminate such a long period between elections and new commission members and officers beginning their new terms. The City will establish a date on and after December 1 following certification of the election to begin new terms.

Senate Bill 105 is a positive step to allow more Home Rule decision making and the City of Lawrence supports its adoption.

Sincerely,

Lisa Larsen
Mayor

