



# City of Lawrence

## CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

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CITY MANAGER

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March 9, 2017

Senator Jacob LaTurner  
Chair, Senate Committee on Federal & State Affairs  
Room 144-S, Statehouse  
Topeka, KS 66612

Dear Chairman LaTurner and Senate Committee on Federal & State Affairs members,

The City of Lawrence, Kansas is strongly opposed to Senate Bill 158, which would prohibit cities in Kansas from enacting or adopting sanctuary policies or risk losing their state funding. Lawrence is a vibrant and welcoming city that embraces its diversity, and Senate Bill 158 would broadly limit the hospitable atmosphere that Lawrence residents have come to love.

Whether cities in Kansas prohibit or limit participation with federal officials regarding federal immigration enforcement is a question that should be left to the local governing body. Locally elected officials are in the best position to make decisions for Kansas cities and are accountable to voters for those decisions. The blanket prohibition on cities threatening necessary state dollars that go towards laudable goals to help local citizens, as proposed by Senate Bill 158, is overreaching by the state and an affront to each city's independence.

While the proposed legislation does attempt to offer some protection to cities by claiming that the State will bear the cost of defending a city subject to litigation for enforcing federal immigration laws, the promise is uncertain. The pledge to pay is contingent upon a city *enforcing* immigration laws rather than merely cooperating upon request, subjecting municipalities to additional expense and burden in training law enforcement officers that are already inundated with regular duties.

We encourage you to reject passage of Senate Bill 158 as currently written, which reduces local control and curtails the Home Rule Authority of Kansas municipalities.

Sincerely,

Thomas M. Markus  
City Manager

