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LEAGUE NEWS



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1) LEGISLATIVE ALERT: Hearing Next Wednesday to Move City Elections to Fall of Either Odd or Even Years

Next Wednesday, the House Committee on Elections will hear Sub [SB 171](#), which would move city elections to the fall of odd years, but will keep the races nonpartisan. The Committee will also consider whether to place city elections on the same ballot as state and federal elections in the fall of even years. The League opposes both proposals based on their interference in local elections and their potential impact on the quality of city government. If your city opposes Sub [SB 171](#), please consider submitting written testimony to [Tami Martin](#), by close of business on Monday. If you would like help drafting testimony, please feel free to contact us at 785-354-9565. Opponents will have a limited amount of time to speak, so if you are considering testifying in person, please contact the League. Please also consider [contacting your House representative](#) about your concerns.

You can view the League's full talking points [here](#), but below are some of our major objections to this legislation:

- Sub [SB 171](#) would force all 3,812 elected city officials to serve longer terms than for which they were elected. Such a move encroaches upon the democratic decisions made by Kansas communities and creates unanswered constitutional questions regarding the lengthened terms that would be necessary for the transition.
- Sub [SB 171](#) would prohibit cities and other local governments from holding bond or sales tax question elections on any date other than an August or November

election. This restriction will have a negative impact upon cities and counties because it significantly impedes the flexibility and timing on city projects, municipal finances, and other actions that require local referendum to implement.

- Although combining elections would engage a larger proportion of the electorate in local races, it would come at the direct expense of the electorate's awareness of local issues. Bundling elections would make city races an afterthought to the party politics that attract the vast majority of media attention and campaign donations.

There are better ways to increase voter turnout that engage more Kansans in local races without sacrificing their awareness of local issues. For example, if county election officers were authorized to use all-mail ballot elections for local races, it would increase turnout just as much as combining elections. All mail-ballot elections would also save Kansas taxpayers millions of dollars and diminish the impact of weather on voter turnout.

2) Voter Turnout Competition

The League is hosting a statewide contest to recognize the cities with the highest percentage of voter turnout in this year's April elections. The rules for the contest are as follows:

The League will name a winning city for each county in Kansas. To win, a city must have the highest voter turnout in its county. Voter turnout is defined as the percentage of eligible registered who vote in the election. Winners will be announced at the League's Governing Body Institute in Topeka on May 15. Each winning city will be recognized in the *Kansas Government Journal* and on the League's website. Winning cities will also receive a free registration to a League webinar of the city's choice.

There will also be three overall winners from the 0-5,000, 5000-20,000, and 20,000+ population categories. Each of those winners will share the cover of a *Kansas Government Journal*.

For tips on increasing voter turnout in your city, see our [article](#) from the January-February issue of the *Kansas Government Journal*.

3) Round 2 of the Kansas Hometown Showdown is Underway!

The last day for Round 2 "likes" to be counted is Sunday, March 8. Go to the Kansas Hometown Showdown – Round 2 photo album on [Facebook](#) and "like" the photo to vote for your favorite city photo.

On Tuesday, March 10, Round 3 will start a new album with the 16 cities that advance. The "likes" will reset to zero for the new round.

A few people have asked why their city is not in the contest. There was an open call for cities to submit their photos, and it was limited to the first 64 participants. Make a note on your calendar for early February next year to look for an announcement regarding the 2016 contest!

4) Other Bills & Upcoming Hearings

Public Funds for Lobbying – On Wednesday, the Senate Ethics and Elections Committee passed out [SB 42](#), as amended, favorable for passage. The bill requires lobbyists to report the amount of public funds they receive from governmental entities. The League submitted neutral testimony on the original bill.

Conceal Carry - On February 26, the Senate approved [SB 45](#) by a vote of 31 to 7. [SB 45](#) would allow individuals to carry a concealed handgun without obtaining a conceal-carry permit, unless the individual is under the age of 21 or has a legal prohibition against possessing a firearm. On Friday, March 13, the House Federal and State Affairs Committee will have a hearing on the bill. The League will use this opportunity to express some concerns we have with the enforcement of [SB 45](#) and how it may affect law enforcement agencies. For additional information or questions, contact [Eric Smith](#), 785-354-9565.

Law Enforcement Mutual Aid – On Thursday, the House Federal and State Affairs committee worked [HB 2007](#). [HB 2007](#) creates a law enforcement mutual aid region for critical incidents in the Kansas City metro area. The bill's purpose is to provide a process that would allow police officers from the Kansas City, Missouri metro area to respond to critical incidents in the Kansas City, Kansas metro area. The region created includes only the counties of Johnson, Leavenworth, Miami, and Wyandotte in Kansas and Platte, Clay, Ray, Jackson, and Cass in Missouri. The Committee amended [HB 2007](#) to add language that gives the authority to request assistance from adjacent state law enforcement agencies to all of the counties in this state that border another state. There were other technical amendments to the bill and the Committee passed the bill out to the full House favorable for passage. Based on the amount of changes to the bill, the Committee also voted to refer to the bill as House Substitute for [HB 2007](#).

Legislative Activities-March 9-13, 2015

Monday, March 9

Time	Committee	Location	Bill No.	Topic	Activ
8:30	S, Com	548-S	HB 2254	Exempting certain general contractors from the roofing contractor registration act	Hea
9:00	H, PB	152-S	SB 228	Defining police for purposes of eligibility in the Kansas police and fireman's retirement system	Hea
	H, V2020	218-N		Water issues and groundwater management districts - Gregg Graff, Manager, Western Kansas Groundwater Management District No. 1	Pres
	S, LG	142-S		Government Funded Associations: Lobby influence and costs	Infor heal
10:30	S, Ju	346-S	HB 2023	Legislative review of exceptions to disclosure of public records	Hea
1:30	H, HHS	546-S	HB 2376	Emergency medical services board authority to impose fines, investigate and issue subpoenas	Hea
3:30	H, Ju	112-N	SB 23	Authorized restrictions of driving privileges; ignition interlock device	Hea
	H, Ju	112-N	SB 11	Regulated scrap metal; crime of theft and related sentencing provisions; regulation of scrap metal dealers, including unlawful acts and penalties	Hea
	H, Tax	582-N		Pro-Growth Small Business Incentive Policy - Richard Carlson, Kansas Department of Revenue	Infor brief

Tuesday, March 10

Time	Committee	Location	Bill No.	Topic	Activ
9:30	S, AT	548-S	<u>SB 178</u>	Valuation of agricultural land	Hea
	S, LG	142-S		Government Funded Associations: Lobby influence and costs	Infor hear
1:30	H, Tr	582-N	<u>SB 72</u>	Operation of transit buses on certain right shoulders in Wyandotte County	Hea
	S, Ut	548-S	<u>SB 253</u>	Renewable energy standards act sunset	Hea
3:30	H, Tax	582-N	<u>HB 2263</u>	Sales tax authority for Douglass county for constructing a jail	Hea
	H, Tax	582-N	<u>HB 2361</u>	Sales tax authority for Bourbon county for constructing, furnishing and operating a jail facility; sales tax exemption for concern, inc.	Hea

Wednesday, March 11

Time	Committee	Location	Bill No.	Topic	Activ
8:30	S, Com	548-S	<u>SB 179</u>	Limiting negotiations under the public employer-employee relations act	Hea
	S, Tr	546-S	<u>HB 2044</u>	License, registration and safety requirement for autocycle	Hea
9:00	H, EE	582-N	<u>HB 2373</u>	Renewable energy standards act sunset	Hea
9:30	S, AT	548-S	<u>SB 258</u>	Eliminating property tax exemption from statewide school levy for property used for residential purposes to the extent of \$20,000 of its appraised valuation	Hea
1:00	H, EI	281-N	<u>SB 171</u>	Municipal elections; nonpartisan; fall odd-numbered years	Hea
3:30	H, Tax	582-N	<u>HB 2298</u>	Removing the sunset for rural opportunity zones	Hea
	H, Tax	582-N	<u>HB 2367</u>	Including Maimi county as a rural opportunity zone	Hea

Thursday, March 12

Time	Committee	Location	Bill No.	Topic	Activ
10:30	S, FSA	144-S	<u>SB 224</u>	Emergency medical services board authority to impose fines, investigate and issue subpoenas	Hea

Friday, March 13

Time	Committee	Location	Bill No.	Topic	Activ
8:30	S, Com	548-S	<u>SB 179</u>	Limiting negotiations under the public employer-employee relations act	Fian
9:00	H, FSA	346-S	<u>SB 45</u>	Authoring the carrying of concealed handguns without a license under the personal and family protection act	Hea

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