



City of Frontenac, Kansas

313 East McKay Street • Frontenac, Kansas 66763 • Tel. No. (620) 231-9210

To: House Local Government Committee
From: John Zafuta, City Administrator, Frontenac, KS
Date: February 15, 2021
RE: Support Testimony on HB 2238

I want to thank the Chairman and Committee Members for your consideration of HB 2238 and for allowing the City of Frontenac to offer testimony in support of this bill.

Most cities in Kansas, including Frontenac, are smaller in population. A smaller population typically means a smaller tax base. This leads to difficulties for cities to levy funds for libraries, which are more than quality of life institutions, but also advance knowledge, and provide entertainment for our young and old alike. Many studies have also linked reading with higher test scores, a highly educated workforce, and overall success in life.

For as long as anyone can remember, Frontenac schools have been at the top in our region in academics. A large part of Frontenac's steady increase in population and home values is due to our exceptional school system. While southeast Kansas has the benefit of a nearby state university for post-secondary education, many cities do not have this advantage, and rarely have the money to build their own facilities.

K.S.A. 12-1252, in its current form, restricts donations to cities for the specific purpose of building a library to \$500,000. This would not come close to the actual cost of building a library which could reach into the millions of dollars. Should a city decide today to build a library, without donations, cuts to other services or increases in taxes would be required. We feel that the changes to K.S.A. 12-1252 by HB 2238 would open up opportunities for Kansas cities, without the burden of additional taxes. Frontenac is one such city that would be able to take advantage of the generosity of others to make a public library a permanent fixture in the lives of our citizens.

Thank you for your work in the Kansas Legislature and for your consideration of HB 2238.