

CITY OF



133 W 8th St
PO Box 112
Russell KS 67665-0112
Phone: (785) 483-6311
Fax: (785) 483-4397

January 22, 2017

The Honorable Elaine Bowers, Chair
Senate Ethics, Elections and Local Government Committee
Kansas State Capitol
300 SW 10th Avenue, Room 223-E
Topeka KS 66612

Re: SB 31 Testimony in Support

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

The City of Russell has been addressing blighted property for many years. During my four years as City Manager more than twenty homes, after due process, have been ordered repaired or removed. Of those homes half have been absentee owners or deceased owners with no known relatives. All but one of those homes had to be razed and removed at the City's expense – ultimately the tax payers' expenses as the costs are rarely recouped.

I write today in support of SB 31 as it will provide flexibility to cities when dealing with abandoned housing by allowing cities, after receiving proper authority, to work with community groups to rehabilitate certain abandoned homes. Such flexibility builds the public – private partnership, can be used to build trade skills through school programs, and can convert blighted property to safe affordable housing.

SB 31 is the result of multiple years' work among numerous interested parties, including the League of Kansas Municipalities, the Kansas Association of Counties and other interested group.

Please contact me if you have any specific questions related to the effect of blighted housing on the City of Russell and how SB 31 could provide our community with another option when dealing with abandoned housing.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jon Quinday", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Jon Quinday, CPM
City Manager