



Garnett, Kansas  
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Date: February 12, 2020  
To: House Local Government Committee  
From: Christopher Weiner, City Manager for the City of Garnett, Kansas  
Re: HB 2580 – Written Opponent Testimony

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Committee, for allowing me to submit testimony on HB 2580. The City is opposed to this legislation because it is an unnecessary and counterproductive bill.

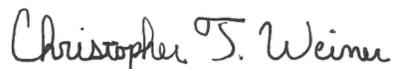
While annexation is often deemed to have a negative connotation associated with it, it is a process responsibly utilized by cities. There are already significant limitations and guardrails preventing the abuse of unilateral annexation. This process is limited to twenty-one (21) acres and can only be utilized on certain types of land. A city must determine the advisability of the annexation at a public hearing and must show that it can extend services to the area proposed to be annexed.

Unilateral annexation is often used by cities that have grown and have pockets of land that are surrounded by the City limits on multiple sides but remain outside the corporate city boundaries. These residents and businesses benefit from city services while contributing no property taxes towards the cost of providing those services. These necessary services include the roads surrounding the property and emergency service costs for fire, police, and EMS among others. Without unilateral annexation, a single property owner completely surrounded by the City on all sides could refuse to be annexed just because they don't want to abide by the city's ordinance on prohibiting grass over a foot tall.

Unilateral annexation also helps prevent the development of major subdivisions immediately outside the city limits made up of property owners who want all the benefits of living in the city, but do not want to contribute toward the cost of those city services in the form of property taxes.

Growth in housing and businesses that exist right outside the boundaries of the city limits inevitably increase the cost of city services. The residents, owners, and patrons of these properties will drive on city maintained streets; they will likely visit city maintained parks and recreational facilities; and they will contribute to an overall population increase that will require additional police and fire services. The elimination of unilateral annexation prohibits growth and causes increases in service costs to city residents.

For these reasons, I ask that Committee not pass HB 2580 out of committee. Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christopher T. Weiner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'C'.

Christopher T. Weiner, City Manager