

To: Senate Federal & State Affairs Committee
From: Sage Pourmirza, Staff Attorney
Date: February 1, 2024
Re: Neutral Testimony on SB 368

I want to thank Chairman Thompson and members of the Committee for affording the League of Kansas Municipalities the opportunity to provide neutral testimony on SB 368.

The League understands the intent behind this bill in preventing a rather costly form of elections and keeping the process simplified for voters and election offices. However, the League does have concerns with the limitation on a city's Home Rule authority, as granted through Article 12, Section 5 of the Kansas Constitution.

At this time, the League is not aware of any cities in Kansas that use ranked choice voting in their election process.

The League believes that the authority on how to conduct local elections should be left to local authorities. When Kansas voters approved Constitutional Home Rule, their goal was to allow local governments to make decisions that reflect their unique communities. If a local government feels ranked choice voting is the most effective way to conduct elections, that authority should be left to them, and while no city has made that decision at this time, the ability to do that should still be left to local governments.

We are grateful to the Committee for allowing the League to submit testimony on this bill. We would ask that the Committee consider not limiting the Home Rule abilities of local government and exempt them from this bill.