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House of Representatives

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**House Committee on Local Government
Testimony for HB 2072
Monday, February 11, 2013**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify before the committee on House Bill 2072. I have three comments made from my constituents in NW Kansas. The context of their comments included below is this bill would be a huge detriment to what we are doing to work together and save dollars in our area of the state.

I respectfully request that you amend or dismiss this bill. It needs to be fair to our entire state not just the area you feel is affected.

Many counties in Western Kansas are members of inter-local agreements which perform service that the individual county cannot afford to provide by itself. We have an inter-local agreement for recycling, one for our insurance needs (K-Work for workmen's comp insurance, K-Camp for liability insurance). The statutes also authorize counties to form port authorities for the purposes of assisting communities in retaining rail services. Sixty-one counties in Western Kansas collaborate to provide re-training opportunities for unemployed Kansas adults as well as disadvantaged youth.

It appears to me that while Western Kansas folk are not friendly to consolidation of their county governments, they are friendly to consolidation of services. If the Rawlins County Ambulance service lacks the manpower to make a transfer of a patient to a distant medical care center, the Thomas County Ambulance service may provide that service, as the need arises. Our Emergency Management and Ambulance services for Northwest Kansas meet as a group to coordinate training and planning for emergencies. We hope and pray that we do not experience a Greensburg type of tornado, but we want to be prepared to deal with it area-wide if it occurs.

HB 2072 would appear to be the three steps backward in our planning to make government more efficient. I would encourage you to oppose this bill. **Paul M. Steele, Commissioner, Thomas County**

It seems to me this could be our demise unless we can establish that there are no other independent recyclers in our area. There is one we know of and it is because of his irresponsibility to St. Francis, Colby and Oakley that we formed our organization. The State has invested well over \$1 million in our organization through grants. This would affect the counties

of Cheyenne, Rawlins, Gove, Decatur, Sheridan, Scott, Thomas and Logan. They all have invested their own money in their facilities we have located in St. Francis.

We employ 5 people in Colby at the Hub and there would be employment at each of the Satellites (county collection sites). Also, our total expenses for 2012 were \$190,316.11. Our revenue on recyclables was \$74,098.40. So it is clear that without the membership dues paid by each county it would not work. I think this is why in Western Kansas; private recycling is not a profitable venture. We try to run as close to non-profit as we can. The year 2012 left us with \$7958.60 balance carry over. I think that is pretty good for an adopted budget of \$238,000.

Roger Jensen, Coordinator & Representative of the Northwest Kansas Regional Recycling Organization Board.

Lynette Koons of the Northwest Kansas Regional Recycling Organization forwarded Roger Jensen's emails to you (Rep. Cassidy) to me. I have reviewed House Bill 2072. As a head of the Northwest Kansas Small Solid Waste Landfill Authority, an inter-local organization established by Wallace, Greeley, Cheyenne and Rawlins Counties, I do not think this bill would benefit our solid waste activities or recycling. It imposes an additional burden on counties or cities trying to divert materials into recycling from the solid waste stream. It may well require us to amend our county and regional solid waste plans. Out in this area, private recyclers have not been effective overall. The counties have gotten together in regional organizations, since this seems to be the best and most cost effective way on the long term, to divert recyclable materials out of the solid waste stream. It has also been the most reliable long method of recycling. I know at least three of my member counties have had issues with private businesses who got into recycling and found it was a hard business to be in on the long run and ended up leaving problems behind. My member landfills do use private business in recycling where it is feasible—use oil recycling and batteries to name two. I really don't think a mandate such as proposed by HB 2072 is going to do anything but make it a little more expensive and more of a hassle to divert recyclables from the solid waste stream. I oppose it. **Charles A Peckham, Attorney, Brown, Creighton & Peckham, Atwood, Ks.**

Respectfully,

Ward M. Cassidy