



2018 Legislative Program

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Dear Reader:

The Governing Body of the City of Mission annually adopts a state legislative platform to present Mission's legislative initiatives and policy positions.

The cornerstone of the legislative program is the belief that the governing of public affairs should be as close to the people as possible. Supporting activities that promote and encourage the exercise of authority and responsibility by locally elected officials is a top priority of the City of Mission. This belief is exemplified in local home rule authority, an amendment to the Kansas Constitution that was approved by the citizens of the state over half a century ago.

Generally, the City of Mission supports the Statement of Municipal Policy of the League of Kansas Municipalities and the legislative agenda of Johnson County, Kansas. The City Council works cooperatively each year with the League and other cities to enhance the mutual benefits of Kansas cities.

If you have any questions concerning the 2018 Legislative Program, please, do not hesitate to contact me at (913) 676-8350.

Sincerely,

Ron Appletoft
Mayor

Governing Body

Mayor

Ron Appletoft

Ward I

Pat Quinn
Hillary Parker Thomas

Ward II

Nick Schlossmacher
Arcie Rothrock

Ward III

Kristin Inman
Debbie Kring

Ward IV

Sollie Flora
Ken Davis

2018 Legislative Program

State and municipal governments work together to provide citizens with many services they require and have come to expect. As the local branch of government, the City of Mission understands our citizens' needs and is equipped to respond to them effectively and efficiently. While we respect the State government's role, we continue to advocate for the protection of home rule authority to ensure citizens' needs are met. We support the preservation of local authority, maintenance of local control of local revenue and spending, and oppose the devolution of State duties to local units of government without planning, time and resources. The City of Mission advocates on the following issues in the interests of our elected representatives and on behalf of those who live and work in our community.

Repeal the Property Tax Lid and Maintain Local Control Revenue and Spending*

The City of Mission opposes actions by the state to impose constitutional or statutory limits on the authority of local governments to establish appropriate levels of taxation. The City supports the repeal of the property tax lid passed by the 2015 Legislature and amended by the 2016 Legislature. Arbitrary caps on taxing or spending limits the City's ability to meet the needs of its own citizens. Absent repeal, the state-imposed tax lid on local governments should be modified to require a public vote based on a protest petition provision. The City also supports additional exemptions which would make the law more workable, including such things as human resources costs.

Tax Policy*

The City supports stable revenues, and urges the Legislature not to further restrict the tax base, including limitations on ad valorem appraised valuation growth or industry specific, special tax treatment through exemptions or property classification. We do not support changes in State taxation policy that would narrow the tax base, significantly reduce available funding for key programs, or put Kansas counties and cities at a competitive sales tax disadvantage with Missouri. We do not support a sales tax on professional services.

Retain the Local Government Sales Tax Exemption

Mission supports the current law that exempts local government and public construction projects from sales tax. Imposing sales tax on current government purchases and projects will have only one effect: increased local taxation. Only the State government benefits from this sales tax and our citizens would pay the bill through higher property taxes.

Support Maintenance of State Funding

The issue of maintaining local government revenues is a prime concern for Mission. State transfers to local government have significantly been reduced or eliminated over the last ten to fifteen years. Mission urges the Legislature to meet its fiscal responsibilities to cities by maintaining state funding to local governments. The City supports a balanced state budget that does not rely on reduction in funding for local government; more specifically, the state should honor its partnership with local governments via alcoholic liquor tax funds and motor fuels tax receipts.

Comprehensive Transportation Plan*

To ensure the critical well-being of Kansas infrastructure, we urge the Kansas Legislature to follow

through on the commitments in the Comprehensive Transportation Plan, also known as T-WORKS. The current funding level is far from adequate to address ongoing statewide infrastructure funding needs in areas of preservation, maintenance, and safety; therefore, it is critical for our state highway funds to be used for the purpose they are collected. Funds should be allocated strategically to ensure there is an identifiable long-term return on investment for the entire state. Additionally, because investment in growth areas is vital to creating a sustainable revenue stream that will address statewide infrastructure needs, we encourage the state to invest in public transportation that specifically demonstrates regional coordination in both rural and urban areas, and to support innovative platforms like ridesharing to increase access to employment and educational opportunities, as well as ease congestion and delay the need for costly road expansion.

Preserve Local Authority in the Use of Economic Development Tools

Mission supports local jurisdiction's authority both in determining how and when to use existing economic development tools and in creating new incentive programs to meet community goals. These goals are identified and supported through land-use planning, infrastructure allocation, and financial incentive tools that local communities and stakeholders develop through ongoing communication and prioritization. Each economic development or redevelopment project is unique, and may not be possible without the availability of these tools or the authority to use them.

K-12 Education Financing*

Mission is supportive of the Kansas Legislature adequately and equitably funding primary and secondary education to a level that places Kansas among the leading states in support of a "world class" education. We support Johnson County schools in their efforts to craft a new school finance formula that supports local components and treats local property tax contributions fairly for local property taxpayers and schools. We oppose any amendment to the Kansas Constitution that would remove the State's obligation to adequately and equitably fund Kansas' public schools.

Open Records and Open Meetings

We believe that an open government is essential to building public confidence, and that all levels of government should be subject to the same open meeting and open records requirements. State laws governing open records should balance the public's right of access with the necessity of protecting the privacy of individual citizens, the costs of producing requested records, and the ability of public agencies to conduct their essential business functions. Mission supports the current requirements of the Kansas Open Meetings Act and the permitted subject matters for executive sessions. We also support the retention of the current exceptions in the Kansas Open Records Act and the existing allowances for cost recovery for open record requests.

Preserve the Ability to Advocate and Educate

The City supports local officials and their representatives' ability to freely advocate and educate on issues affecting local governments. We should not be restricted on the use of public funds to accomplish this purpose. Local officials, representing their citizens and taxpayers, must retain the authority to make decisions regarding membership in organizations and to participate in the legislative process. Any new required reporting system should not increase the administrative burden on local governments.

Support Full Funding of the Kansas Public Employees Retirement System

The City supports achieving a fully-funded public employees' retirement system within a reasonable period of time. The State should fully fund its portion of the employer contributions at the Actuarial Required Contribution (ARC) levels and at the required times. The system should accumulate sufficient assets during members' working lifetimes to pay all promised benefits when

members retire. We support current provisions as they relate to accumulated leave and other human resources policies to determine retiree benefits for both KPERS and KP&F employees. Possible policy changes could have a negative impact on local government employee recruitment and retention, particularly in the competitive Johnson County employment market.

Maintain Non-Partisan Local Elections

The City supports local elections remaining separate from state and national elections. Additionally, we are opposed to any legislation that would require local elections to be conducted with partisan identification.

Restore Local Control of Right-of-Way*

2016 Legislation granting the automatic placement of cell towers in city and county owned right of way, should be repealed. Regulation of the placement of cell towers should be subject to reasonable local zoning processes which review important community values such as safety and neighborhood concerns.

Restore Local Gun Control

The City of Mission supports the local regulation of firearms and weapons. We believe that local government should have the ability to regulate and enforce the possession and use of weapons within city-owned facilities, including City Hall, public parks, the outdoor pool, community center and City vehicles.

Statewide Energy Policy

We support the development of a coordinated and comprehensive energy policy, including the use of renewables, developed with strong input from cities. We encourage the state to adopt legislation providing the mechanism and staff support for the development of such policy.

Infrastructure Funding

The City of Mission supports increased federal and state funding to assist local communities with their water, wastewater, stormwater, levee and dam infrastructure and associated security needs.

**Items with an asterisk are adapted from the Johnson County Joint Cities platform.*