

HB 2296 – Proponent Wynn Butler February 22, 2015

To: Honorable Chair Steve Huebert and Members of the House Local Government Committee

I am a proponent of HB 2296. The voters should have specific input to large scale local government building projects. The proposed bill just makes the process equal between large and small local government entities. The bill does not prevent the use of a public building commission and continues to make this financial tool available for use by local government.

Clearly the PBC concept was designed for those special occasions when local government circumstances dictated a vital need to increase bonded debt above the limits imposed by the 3% appraised property value limitation. Vital need is the key term. If a project is of such importance to the local government entity, that it requires use of the special PBC financial tool, to raise and exceed standard debt limits, then a public vote process should be required. The public vote would ensure that both the elected officials and the citizens agree to the vital nature of the project that is being financed by the PBC.

I am currently serving as the Mayor of the City of Manhattan. This communication is my view on the topic and does not represent any individual or group opinion from the Manhattan City Commission. Riley County recently established a PBC. Several building projects are proposed that will impact the property tax structure of not only the county but the city. I believe that two of the projects fit the bill of vital for both the County and the City, the proposed plans to enhance EMS and court facilities. The PBC concept allows the County Commission to proceed with these projects without getting further approval of the local voters. Adding a requirement to vote on these projects may delay the timeline for completion, but I have confidence in the local voters. They will support projects that are vital to the community.

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