

January 16, 2024

[Senator/Representative]

300 SW 10th Ave, Room _____

Topeka, Kansas 66612

Dear [Senator/ Representative] _____,

The City of Bel Aire appreciates your continued support for legislative priorities that improve the quality of life for citizens in our community. As one of the fastest growing cities in Kansas, we are committed to maintaining the high quality of life our residents enjoy through careful local stewardship.

These priorities remain very important to our community, and we ask for your continued support in these specific areas during the 2024 session; **protecting the current city-county revenue sharing formula, advocating for simplifying the property tax notification process, providing mental health funding for our region and, highlighting the need for improving K-254.** We concur with the policy statements that the League of Kansas Municipalities and REAP provided to you regarding these topics. We also support their statements regarding **the need for municipal representation in Ground Water Management District 2 and the need to extend wastewater loans to 30 year terms instead of the current 20 year terms.**

For 2024, Bel Aire has identified the following important emerging areas and respectfully requests your help through legislation:

1. **Government Competition.** Local governments should retain local control over the services they provide to residents and businesses.
2. **City Elections.** We oppose any actions by the state government to impose partisan elections on cities.
3. **Sales Tax & Exemptions.** Cities should continue to retain voter-approved local sales tax allocations
4. **Property Valuation.** We support appraisals based on fair-market value as historically used in Kansas
5. **EMS/Hospital Funding.** We OPPOSE expansion of Medicaid.
6. **Asset Forfeiture.** All assets forfeited, or proceeds of the sale of the same, should remain with the local government that seizes the property.
7. **Medical Marijuana.** Medical marijuana should be subject to existing state and local sales tax and cities should be able to levy their own excise fees and receive a portion of any state funds to offset the impact of medical marijuana.
8. **Modern Transportation Development.** We support a modern and sustainable transportation system that meets the needs of all Kansans.
9. **Broadband.** Access to reliable broadband service ~~is~~ *may be* essential to the economic health of cities.
10. **Water.** Access to water is paramount for the growth and viability of communities. Government at all levels should pursue the conservation, protection, and development of current and future water supplies to ensure access to clean, safe, and affordable

11. Day Light Savings Time. The biannual switching of time from Central Standard Time (CST) to Daylight Savings Time (CDT) has been documented to increase health risks (heart attacks, strokes, etc.) and higher incident of traffic accidents (some fatal).

Finally, please view every priority listed here through the lens of home rule: we will support legislation that strengthens home rule and oppose legislation that erodes our constitutional home rule authority.

Our governing body is more than willing to meet with you to discuss how these outlooks can make our community and our State better. We would welcome an email or call if you need additional information from us on specific issues. My email is JBenage@belaireks.gov and I can be reached at (316) 684-0226.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to understand and champion these priorities on behalf of the City of Bel Aire. Our citizens truly appreciate your time and commitment as our Representative. You continue to be a strong supporter and friend of Bel Aire which is a great honor. Thank you for all you do in Topeka.

Respectfully,

Mayor Jim Benage