

January __, 2022
Title [Name of Representative or Senator]
300 SW 10th Ave #511
Topeka, Kansas 66612

Dear _____,

The City of Bel Aire's governing body recently met to rank our legislative priorities for the 2022 legislative session. Bel Aire City Council officially adopted the following legislative policy at our January 18th meeting. Bel Aire continues to be one of the fastest growing cities in Kansas, and is committed to maintaining a high quality of life for residents through careful local stewardship. We appreciate your work on, repealing the tax lid, limiting unfunded mandates and supporting mental health. Your support of these 2021 priorities makes a difference to our residents. This year the Governing Body respectfully requests your support maintaining the Countywide Sales and Use Taxes structure, amending the Senate Bill 13 burdensome notice requirements, affirming home rule, backing K-254 infrastructure funding, and supporting State funding for mental health facilities and programs.

- 1. Countywide Sales and Use Taxes: Support keeping the current city-county revenue sharing formula in place to benefit all.** The existing formula benefits both city and county tax payers and ensures there is a fair, predictable and consistent method to distribute funds that are generated primarily in cities.
- 2. Property Taxes:** Any tax lid limits cities ability to legislate and spend funds that are raised locally. The current tax notice requirement are intended to foster transparency, but are structured to be burdensome and costly. After 2022 cities will be required to pay for these additional notices from local funds. **We encourage changing the Senate Bill 13 notice requirement to make this noticed process less complex and burdensome while still preserving the goal of transparency. This may be accomplished by requiring a single publication in the official newspaper, in lieu of individual notices every time property taxes are adjusted.**
- 3. Home Rule and Properly Funded Mandates:** Home Rule is key to the success of cities to govern themselves based on citizen input and desires. Consistent with the Home Rule Amendment of the Kansas Constitution approved by voters in 1960, we support local elected officials making decisions for their communities, particularly local tax and revenue decisions. Any state or Federal mandates should heavily consider the Home Rule Amendment *and* be properly funded. Legislative requirements from the state or federal governments imposed on cities without proper funding negatively impacts the budgets of cities. **Strongly support home rule. Oppose any legislative mandates unless properly funded.**

4. **K254 Public Infrastructure: Support state prioritization of K-254 safety and infrastructure improvements and recommend the selection of K254 for IKE Transportation funding.** Studies have shown that regional and local growth for southcentral Kansas are tied improving the K-254 infrastructure. Bel Aire values the promotion of safety, economic development, growth, road improvements and other infrastructure related objectives along K-254 in the interest of the public good.

5. **Mental Health: Support the State prioritizing the allocation additional resources for mental health programs** and studying solutions to this statewide problem. Funding should be allocated for community mental health centers and additional bed space for patients with mental health issues.

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 Senator/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