

Municipal Testimony

In **Opposition** to Agenda Item #4.2

Administration & Human Services

October 27th, 2025

My name is Logan DeMond, and I am the Director of Policy and Research at the American Civil Liberties Union of Kansas. The ACLU of Kansas is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization with more than 35,000 supporters across Kansas that works to preserve and strengthen the civil rights and liberties of every person in our state. On behalf of the ACLU of Kansas, I am writing to express our opposition to item 4.2 on tonight's agenda, "Ordinance/resolution: Repealing or Suspending Enforcement of Certain Sections of the Unified Government Code of Ordinances."

Section 1 of this ordinance/resolution unnecessarily and preemptively looks for noncompliance with Executive Orders. These actions pose a threat to a more diverse, equitable county at the expense of local control.

Section 2, which lists specific ordinances for repeal, focuses on Chapter 18, Article III – Discrimination. Repealing 18-61 eliminates the county's prosecutorial power in cases of discrimination, while repealing 18-62 removes the county's ability to label an individual as a repeat offender, eliminating vital safeguards. By repealing these ordinances, the Unified Government is relinquishing authority to curry favor with the Trump Administration at a time of grave uncertainty for the most vulnerable communities among us. Repealing 18-138(b) eliminates fair and consistent hiring practices intended to address discrimination in the workplace. The proposed ordinance seeks to repeal and suspend enforcement of sections that clash with the current administration's *interpretation* of federal law, which is different from repealing sections that don't, in fact, comply with federal law. The current administration's decision not to enforce civil rights law in no way changes the government's obligations under Title VII, Title II, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, or the ADA. Acting (or failing to) in a manner that shows deliberate indifference towards discriminatory or harassing behavior will expose the UG to liability pursuant to any number of those laws.

Not only does the repeal of these ordinances place the county squarely out of legal compliance with federal law, but these actions lend unnecessary credibility to an administration intent on promoting discrimination and executive orders attempting to override decades of precedent. By repealing and suspending ordinances, resolutions, regulations, policies, practices, and customs, the Unified Government is bending the knee to an administration drunk on power when no direct

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threats have been made to eliminate funding in Wyandotte County. This action is less focused on ensuring compliance than on creating problems for the Unified Government to cater to this administration, posing greater compliance risks and harming the people of Wyandotte County in the immediate term in the process.

It cannot be left unsaid what the text of the proposal clearly states as its goal. If you vote for this measure, you are clearly saying that in order to ensure that members of the community who may not be members of a protected class, i.e. white families, continue to benefit from federal grants that support their housing, infrastructure, health care, and other needs, the UG will stop protecting community members who happen to be members of protected groups, from discrimination in employment. The next logical step to comply with the caprice of this administration will be for the UG to stop protecting members of protected classes from discrimination in housing, in healthcare, in infrastructure, and in public spaces. Following the lead of the Trump administration would return us to Jim Crow, a fate we cannot allow in the Free State.

I urge you to vote against the repeal of these ordinances.

Logan DeMond

Director of Policy and Research

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