



## Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City

# 2015 State Legislative Program

### Priority Issues

#### **Kansas Tax System**

The Kansas Legislature has contributed to increased property taxes by shifting the cost of providing services and programs from state government to local governments. The Kansas Legislature should renew a partnership and cooperative spirit with city, county and school leaders to address the issue of increasing property taxes caused by the shifting of costs from state government to local governments and schools. The Kansas Legislature should not continue solving its budget shortfalls by taking revenues belonging to or legally obligated to city and county governments and should reject placing more of the burden for funding vital services on local taxpayers.

Local government revenues which need to be protected include: local alcoholic liquor funds; special city-county highway fund; motor fuel taxes; community mental health; and community corrections funding.

#### **Abandoned Housing**

The Unified Government supports legislation which streamlines and expedites the process for local governments and neighborhood organizations to deal with the growing blight of abandoned, nuisance and foreclosed housing.

#### **City Elections**

City elections should remain non-partisan and separate from state and national elections. Cities should continue to determine when their local elections are held.

#### **Law Enforcement Mutual Aid**

The Unified Government supports mutual aid legislation allowing law enforcement agencies to work cooperatively with their counterparts in adjoining states during critical incidents. The State of Missouri has already passed this mutual aid legislation affecting nine counties in the Kansas City metro.

#### **Medicaid Expansion**

The Unified Government supports the expansion of Medicaid. The refusal of the state to expand Medicaid puts the burden on local governments to plan health care for the poor. The new insurance market place will target only about 11,000 adults of the approximately 36,000 uninsured in Wyandotte County. This will put pressure on the Wyandotte County Public Health Department and other health care facilities in Wyandotte County to provide care without reimbursement.

#### **Urban Opportunity Zones**

The Unified Government supports the creation of urban opportunity zones as a tool to rebuild and revitalize struggling urban neighborhoods.

#### **Legislative Advocacy**

The Unified Government supports current law allowing the use of state and local tax dollars to provide information and advocate on behalf of our community and its citizens.