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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF TOPEKA, KANSAS, that the following is hereby adopted as the City of Topeka's legislative agenda for the 2025 legislative session:

## Finance & Taxation.

(2) Sales Tax. As the majority of commerce occurs inside city limits, cities should be able to impose voter-approved local sales taxes without interference from the county. The City of Topeka should continue to be able to determine voter-approved local sales tax allocations. While the legislature is granted authority to make decisions relating to statewide sales tax, local voters and their elected officials are vested with that authority for local sales tax. Any sales tax exemptions considered by the legislature should only apply to the state portion of sales tax and

not eliminate voter-approved local sales taxes.

(3) Unfunded Mandates. If the state or federal governments seek to promote particular policy objectives, such mandates should be accompanied by an appropriate level of funding.

(4) Property Tax Valuation. The City of Topeka has a vested interest in an equitable and sustainable valuation system. The State should reexamine property valuation laws in Kansas and, in cooperation with local governments, modernize the residential and commercial valuation system. This should include looking at using a rolling average system, similar to that used in Kansas agriculture property valuations.

(5) Revenue Neutral Process. All property taxing authorities, including the State should be transparent, and abide by the same limitations, restrictions, and requirements, this includes taking a vote to exceed the revenue neutral rate and looking at all options to decrease the state-wide mill levy. We ask the State to work together with us on innovative approaches to reduce property taxes.

#### **Public Safety Welfare.**

(1) Housing. Recognizing that residents have a right to live in safe, affordable, housing, we support legislation allowing cities to require mandatory inspections for landlords accepting public funds, strengthening protections for enforcement of equitable interest in contract for deed arrangements, and giving cities additional tools to deal with vacant and abandoned housing in order to decrease blight in neighborhoods and return houses to productive use.

(2) Mental Health. We support allocating additional resources for mental health programs, including establishment of a state mental health facility in Topeka to

provide additional bed space for patients with mental health issues.

(3) Medicaid Expansion. Kansas is one of only 11 states that has not expanded Medicaid eligibility which is supported by 7 out of 10 Kansas voters. We urge the Legislature to do so in order to provide health care to individuals who cannot afford to access these services.

(4) Homelessness. We support allocating a portion of the budget surplus to help cities address homelessness and its underlying causes which include a lack of affordable housing and social services.

(5) Firefighter Helmet Cameras. We support the ability of local governments to determine when and how helmet cameras and drone audio/visual recordings will be used by firefighters in the course of responding to public safety calls including the regulation of public access to those recordings, balancing the needs of public safety professionals and the individuals whose images and sounds are captured in the recordings.

(6) Law Enforcement Officer Age Requirement. We support efforts to allow individuals to enter the law enforcement academy if the individual will meet the current minimum age of 21 when the individual graduates from the academy.

(7) Minimum Wage. We support passage of legislation which would allow cities to utilize their Home Rule power to require employers to pay wages higher than the minimum wage.

### **Community and Economic Development.**

(1) Broadband. The State should support efforts that invest in broadband as an essential utility for the success of the community.

(2) Metropolitan Topeka Airport Authority (MTAA). Recognizing Topeka is located in

an ideal location to support NIAR initiatives in Wichita and Salina, we support legislative efforts by the MTAA to receive a budgetary appropriation for expansion into the field of aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO).

(3) Local Government Employment Grants. Vacancies in local government positions negatively impact our community causing delays in services. We support legislation to create programs that incentivize individuals in hard to fill professions to stay in Kansas and work in the public sector.

(4) CROWN Act. We support legislative efforts to pass at the state level the Creating A Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair Act prohibiting race-based hair discrimination.

**League of Kansas Municipalities.** We support the League of Kansas Municipalities 2025 Statement of Municipal Policy to the extent the Policy is consistent with the City's priorities and agenda, including opposing legislation limiting the City's Home Rule authority.

ADOPTED and APPROVED by the Governing Body on November 19, 2024.

CITY OF TOPEKA, KANSAS

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Michael A. Padilla, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Brenda Younger, City Clerk