

**Proponent Follow-Up on Questions for HB 2176
To Senate Committee on Assessment and Taxation
By Mendy Pfannenstiel, Director of Arkansas City Public Library**

Taxation without Representation

- It's important to note that the new ACPL District would not be its own taxing authority. If it was, we would certainly need to elect our board officials. But this bill states that our taxing authority would change from the City of Ark City to USD 470, thus we would continue with appointing our board members and there would be no need for elections.
- We believe that libraries and recreation commissions across the state do demonstrate taxation *with* representation, as their board of directors are appointed by elected officials from school Boards of Education and City Commissioners. At any point, if a citizen wishes to protest the actions of these appointed members, they can take the issue up with the elected officials who selected them.
- While we are not completely opposed to electing library board members, the issue becomes the unfortunate lack of willingness by community members to serve. Asking them to pay fees to register as a candidate and to campaign for the office will likely dissuade many people from doing so, which would put our libraries (& rec commissions) in a bind. We struggle to get volunteers within civic organizations and have struggled to find candidates even for City Commission.
- We also feel that the appointment of board members by elected officials is a common practice, even as far up as the federal government. It's important to note that regional library systems also appoint members to an Executive Committee that is responsible for financial oversight, program review and policy guidance for SCKLS.
- Our budget still requires public hearings and full transparency, so community members do have a voice—an avenue for protest. We also must comply with law regarding the auditing of public funds, which we feel gives voters further transparency in the spending of their tax dollars.
- HB 2176 is written to conform to existing state statutes. This bill aligns with existing precedent in the state of Kansas, and we are not asking anything differently than what has already been done before.

Local Control

- HB 2176 allows voters to decide by election if they support the creation of this library district. We are asking state government to respect and allow local voters to decide how they want to help their communities.

South Central Kansas Regional Library System (SCKLS)

- SCKLS' projected 2023 Ad Valorem tax receipts are \$3,502,806. In creating the new Ark City Library district, they would lose a projected \$40,292 in tax revenue. That's a *decrease of 1%* of their budget, which the Ark City Library Board feels that they can easily manage, especially because it can be recouped with increases in property valuation the next year.
- However, the ***increase to ACPL is 57% in tax revenue. And this increase comes from lowering taxes for 78% of property owners.***
- We will continue to serve other nonresidents outside of USD 470 territory, which still allows us to be a part of SCKLS. Currently, we have several hundred such nonresidents we already serve.