

January 21, 2024

Subject: Testimonial in Support of HB2036 Property Tax Relief for Disabled Veterans

Dear Members of the Kansas Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee,

I extend my sincere apologies for not being able to present this testimony in person, as I am currently attending the American Farm Bureau national convention in Salt Lake City, Utah. I appreciate your understanding and thank you for considering my written testimony on the crucial matter of property tax relief for disabled veterans.

My family and I chose Kansas as our home upon military retirement, captivated by its charm despite the state not offering the same benefits for veterans as some other states. We recognize Kansas's rich military history, being the birthplace of General Eisenhower and his dedication to veterans' that continued beyond his presidency, as he advocated for the creation of the Veterans Administration (VA) to streamline and enhance services for veterans. Eisenhower's contributions laid the groundwork for ongoing efforts to support and care for those who have served in the military. Also from Kansas, Senator Bob Dole, a disabled veteran himself, having sustained injuries during World War II, Bob Dole became a strong advocate for disability rights. Kansas is home to numerous veterans who have served our country. With three active-duty military bases, Kansas attracts servicemen and women looking to retire or establish roots post-service.

As a combat aviation pilot and veteran, myself, with a Bronz Star during Operation Enduring Freedom, I strongly advocate for the relief of property tax for disabled veterans in Kansas. This initiative would undoubtedly make the state more inviting for military personnel seeking a home after their years of service. Disabilities should not hinder veterans from contributing to the community, as they bring economic stability, financial prudence, and valuable leadership to various levels of community service.

Kansas, in my experience, is a military-friendly state that genuinely supports its veterans, so let's show it to those who have sacrificed so much. Now is the opportune time to reciprocate that support for our heroes that served us. Kansas believes in its heroes, their courage, sacrifice, tenacity, loyalty, and honor by bearing witness to the experiences of war heroes who were disabled because of military service. HB2036 will pay tribute to the hidden and visible disabilities from all conflicts and all branches of service. Let's treat our disabled veterans like the heroes they are and show our appreciation to reduce their property tax because of their sacrifice for us. By doing so, we can make Kansas an even more appealing landing zone for veterans at all levels, fostering a sense of belonging and prosperity. I implore you to consider this legislative change as a step towards ensuring disabled veterans in Kansas can feel like heroes again.

Let us continue to make Kansas a beacon of support for our disabled veterans. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

*Bryan Zesiger*

Bryan Zesiger (MAJ US Army retired)



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