

February 24, 2025

To Whom it May Concern:

Re3e: Senate Bill 215 (property tax rebate)

Dear Senator:

My name is Penny Lovell. I am a senior resident of Johnson County Kansas and have lived in Johnson County 47 out of my 67 years. I purchased my house in Overland Park in March of 2020. I may have to sell it due to the high appraisal on my house and the low threshold for relief under the SAFESR tax rebate program.

When I purchased my house 5 years ago, it was listed for \$228,000. It is a small house with 2 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms, 1400 square feet, 40 years old. I currently qualify for the SAFESR rebate program (Property Tax Relief for Low Income Seniors (enacted in 2008) (79-32,263). I easily qualify according to the income guidelines, as I became disabled in 2010, reducing my income by 3/4. At that time, I was raising my son as a single parent without any child support. Since Social Security did not start for two years, I had to drain my 401k for us to survive.

My parents passed away in 2015 and 2016 and I was left with just enough money to pay off my house, then in Olathe. In 2020, I moved to Overland Park in order to not have stairs after a terrible fall down my stairs in Olathe. My plan was to live out my days in this house, 3 miles from my childhood home where I grew up and my parents continued to live until after my dad's death in 2015.

I received my new appraisal and they have increased my appraisal amount by \$31,000 to \$249,300, just 700 short of the appraisal limit for the SAFESR rebate program, which provides for 75% off of my property taxes. I am terribly afraid that I will not qualify the next time my home is appraised.

In looking at the legislation, it appears that the appraisal threshold for SAFESR has not been raised since the legislation was passed 17 years ago. I don't understand

why this amount is not reflective of the greatly increased appraisals. My house is still a small house and of the size that the legislation certainly would have been intended to include. I noticed that proposed Senate Bill 215 is addressing the same issue, only with regard to the tax freeze for Seniors and Disabled Veterans. The income criteria for the freeze is much higher than for the SAFESR, which is only available for very low income seniors.

I noticed that there is also a House Bill (2058) that does apply to the SAFESR rebate, but that the bill only addresses the income criteria and not the appraisal amount.

If the appraisal limit is not raised, I will be forced out of my home, which would be devastating to me. I implore you to please address this matter for me and for others in my situation. I saw lots of comments on NEXTDOOR.com from low-income seniors who are affected as I am about to be by this low threshold combined with skyrocketing appraisals. Please don't forget those of us with the most need as you consider tax legislation.

Thank you for your help with this,

Sincerely,

Penny Lovell
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