

**Representative Steven Johnson
Chair, Committee on Taxation
January 18, 2019**

Brad Homman
Dickinson County Administrator
109 East First St, Suite 208
Abilene, KS 67410
785-200-4601

HB #2033 An act concerning sales and compensation use tax

For Dickinson County, the voter approved $\frac{1}{2}$ cent sales tax specifically approved for roads and bridges in 2014 has been an unqualified **success**. This special sales tax has placed pavement on roads that were unable to be paved from existing budgets. Bridges have been replaced, including replacing one of four bridges connecting the north half and south half of the County, over the Smoky Hill River. Deck rehabilitation occurred on the other three bridges. (Losing any of these bridges to deterioration would have seriously crippled the economy of Dickinson County.) Citizens have made an extra effort to seek out Commissioners and let them know they enthusiastically endorse the sales tax and the improvements that have resulted from this extra revenue source. These are good signs that the “voter approved” special sales tax is doing just what was intended with overwhelming approval of the citizens.

During recent years, costs have risen to about \$100,000 per mile of asphalt for patching and a maintenance overlay. The special sales tax has been responsible for over 22 miles of overlay (out of 211 miles of Dickinson County pavement). A bridge over the Smoky Hill River will cost about \$1.5 to \$2 million, with smaller bridges costing \$500,000 each. KDOT funding support is simply **insufficient** to meet the deterioration needs of the 303 bridges and over 1,350 culverts in Dickinson County. Most of the accumulated deterioration has occurred due to deferring maintenance from lack of funding. Dickinson County pledged to spend the special sales tax as a priority, and this pledge has been kept. All of this “catching up” has been accomplished by contractor efforts not only resulting in better roads and bridges, but also stimulating the local economy. Continued “catch up” is needed to meet our citizen/driver expectations.

Kansas law provides for a county to enact a special sales tax for a period of five years, or longer with legislative approval. The current special sales tax period was passed on 2014 and is due to expire at the end of 2019. Because of the tremendous support and results that have come from this tax, Dickinson County plans to request renewal from our voters during the upcoming November election and would like to renew the tax for 10 years rather than 5 years.

Increasing the term of the road and bridge sales tax is needed to mitigate ongoing road and bridge deterioration, and try to meet citizen’s driving expectations. The roughly \$1,000,000 in revenue that is generated annually by this $\frac{1}{2}$ cent sales tax is vital for the continued maintenance and safety of the roads and bridges in Dickinson County and renewing this tax for 10 years would allow the Dickinson County voters to extend a proven program that they can take ownership in that allows for local decisions and control regarding their taxes. We hereby request your support to allow local voters the option to approve this special $\frac{1}{2}$ cent sales tax for a period of 10 years.

Thank you for your Consideration.



Brad Homman