## SENATE BILL No. 272

By Committee on Assessment and Taxation

1 - 15

AN ACT concerning property taxation; relating to county appraisers and the state board of tax appeals; prohibiting valuation increases of county appraised property in valuation appeals; amending K.S.A. 74-2433f, 79-1448, 79-1609 and 79-2005 and repealing the existing sections.

1 2

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Kansas:

Section 1. K.S.A. 74-2433f is hereby amended to read as follows: 74-2433f. (a) There shall be a division of the state board of tax appeals known as the small claims and expedited hearings division. Hearing officers appointed by the chief hearing officer shall have authority to hear and decide cases heard in the small claims and expedited hearings division.

- (b) The small claims and expedited hearings division shall have jurisdiction over hearing and deciding applications for the refund of protested taxes under the provisions of K.S.A. 79-2005, and amendments thereto, and hearing and deciding appeals from decisions rendered pursuant to the provisions of K.S.A. 79-1448, and amendments thereto, and of article 16 of chapter 79 of the Kansas Statutes Annotated, and amendments thereto, with regard to single-family residential property. The filing of an appeal with the small claims and expedited hearings division shall be a prerequisite for filing an appeal with the state board of tax appeals for appeals involving single-family residential property.
- (c) At the election of the taxpayer, the small claims and expedited hearings division shall have jurisdiction over: (1) Any appeal of a decision, finding, order or ruling of the director of taxation, except an appeal, finding, order or ruling relating to an assessment issued pursuant to K.S.A. 79-5201 et seq., and amendments thereto, in which the amount of tax in controversy does not exceed \$15,000; (2) hearing and deciding applications for the refund of protested taxes under the provisions of K.S.A. 79-2005, and amendments thereto, where the value of the property, other than property devoted to agricultural use, is less than \$3,000,000 as reflected on the valuation notice; and (3) hearing and deciding appeals from decisions rendered pursuant to the provisions of K.S.A. 79-1448, and amendments thereto, and of article 16 of chapter 79 of the Kansas Statutes Annotated, and amendments thereto, other than those relating to land devoted to agricultural use, wherein the value of the property is less than \$3,000,000 as reflected on the valuation notice.

In accordance with the provisions of K.S.A. 74-2438, and amendments thereto, any party may elect to appeal any application or decision referenced in subsection (b) to the state board of tax appeals. Except as provided in subsection (b) regarding single-family residential property, the filing of an appeal with the small claims and expedited hearings division shall not be a prerequisite for filing an appeal with the state board of tax appeals under this section. Final decisions of the small claims and expedited hearings division may be appealed to the state board of tax appeals. An appeal of a decision of the small claims and expedited hearings division to the state board of tax appeals shall be de novo. The county bears the burden of proof in any appeal filed by the county pursuant to this section. With regard to any matter properly submitted to the board relating to the determination of valuation of property for taxation purposes pursuant to this subsection, the board shall not increase the appraised valuation of the property to an amount greater than the final determination of appraised value by the county appraiser from which the taxpayer appealed to the small claims and expedited hearings division.

- (e) A taxpayer shall commence a proceeding in the small claims and expedited hearings division by filing a notice of appeal in the form prescribed by the rules of the state board of tax appeals which shall state the nature of the taxpayer's claim. The notice of appeal may be signed by the taxpayer, any person with an executed declaration of representative form from the property valuation division of the department of revenue or any person authorized to represent the taxpayer in subsection (f). Notice of appeal shall be provided to the appropriate unit of government named in the notice of appeal by the taxpayer. In any valuation appeal or tax protest commenced pursuant to articles 14 and 20 of chapter 79 of the Kansas Statutes Annotated, and amendments thereto, the hearing shall be conducted in the county where the property is located or a county adjacent thereto. In any appeal from a final determination by the secretary of revenue, the hearing shall be conducted in the county in which the taxpayer resides or a county adjacent thereto.
- (f) The hearing in the small claims and expedited hearings division shall be informal. The hearing officer may hear any testimony and receive any evidence the hearing officer deems necessary or desirable for a just determination of the case. A hearing officer shall have the authority to administer oaths in all matters before the hearing officer. All testimony shall be given under oath. A party may appear personally or may be represented by an attorney, a certified public accountant, a certified general appraiser, a tax representative or agent, a member of the taxpayer's immediate family or an authorized employee of the taxpayer. A county or unified government may be represented by the county appraiser, designee of the county appraiser, county attorney or counselor or other

1 2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11 12

13

14 15

16

17

18

19 20

21

22

23

24

25

26 27

28

29 30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

representatives so designated. No transcript of the proceedings shall be kept.

- (g) The hearing in the small claims and expedited hearings division shall be conducted within 60 days after the appeal is filed in the small claims and expedited hearings division unless such time period is waived by the taxpayer. A decision shall be rendered by the hearing officer within 30 days after the hearing is concluded and, in cases arising from appeals described by subsections (b) and (c)(2) and (3), shall be accompanied by a written explanation of the reasoning upon which such decision is based. Documents provided by a taxpayer or county or district appraiser shall be returned to the taxpayer or the county or district appraiser by the hearing officer and shall not become a part of the board's permanent records. Documents provided to the hearing officer shall be confidential and may not be disclosed, except as otherwise specifically provided.
- (h) With regard to any matter properly submitted to the division relating to the determination of valuation of property for taxation purposes, it shall be the duty of the county appraiser to initiate the production of evidence to demonstrate, by a preponderance of the evidence, the validity and correctness of such determination. No presumption shall exist in favor of the county appraiser with respect to the validity and correctness of such determination. With regard to leased commercial and industrial property, the burden of proof shall be on the taxpayer unless the taxpayer has furnished the county or district appraiser, within 30 calendar days following the informal meeting required by K.S.A. 79-1448, and amendments thereto, or within 30 calendar days following the informal meeting required by K.S.A. 79-2005, and amendments thereto, a complete income and expense statement for the property for the three years next preceding the year of appeal. Such income and expense statement shall be in such format that is regularly maintained by the taxpayer in the ordinary course of the taxpayer's business. If the taxpayer submits a single property appraisal with an effective date of January 1 of the year appealed, the burden of proof shall return to the county appraiser. With regard to any matter properly submitted to the division relating to the determination of valuation of property for taxation purposes, the hearing officer shall not increase the appraised valuation of the property to an amount greater than the final determination of appraised value by the county appraiser from which the taxpayer appealed.
- Sec. 2. K.S.A. 79-1448 is hereby amended to read as follows: 79-1448. Any taxpayer may complain or appeal to the county appraiser from the classification or appraisal of the taxpayer's property by giving notice to the county appraiser within 30 days subsequent to the date of mailing of the valuation notice required by K.S.A. 79-1460, and amendments thereto, for real property, and on or before May 15 for personal property. The

county appraiser or the appraiser's designee shall arrange to hold an 1 2 informal meeting with the aggrieved taxpayer with reference to the 3 property in question. At such meeting it shall be the duty of the county 4 appraiser or the county appraiser's designee to initiate production of 5 evidence to substantiate the valuation of such property, including, a 6 summary of the reasons that the valuation of the property has been 7 increased over the previous year, any assumptions used by the county 8 appraiser to determine the value of the property and a description of the 9 individual property characteristics, property specific valuation records and 10 conclusions. The taxpayer shall be provided with the opportunity to review the data sheets applicable to the valuation approach utilized for the subject 11 12 property. The county appraiser shall take into account any evidence provided by the taxpayer which relates to the amount of deferred 13 14 maintenance and depreciation for the property. In any appeal from the 15 appraisal of leased commercial and industrial property, the county or 16 district appraiser's appraised value shall be presumed to be valid and 17 correct and may only be rebutted by a preponderance of the evidence, unless the property owner furnishes the county or district appraiser a 18 19 complete income and expense statement for the property for the three 20 years next preceding the year of appeal within 30 calendar days following 21 the informal meeting. In any appeal from the reclassification of property 22 that was classified as land devoted to agricultural use for the preceding 23 year, the taxpayer's classification of the property as land devoted to 24 agricultural use shall be presumed to be valid and correct if the taxpayer 25 provides an executed lease agreement or other documentation 26 demonstrating a commitment to use the property for agricultural use, if no 27 other actual use is evident. The county appraiser may extend the time in 28 which the taxpayer may informally appeal from the classification or 29 appraisal of the taxpayer's property for just and adequate reasons. Except 30 as provided in K.S.A. 79-1404, and amendments thereto, no informal 31 meeting regarding real property shall be scheduled to take place after May 32 15, nor shall a final determination be given by the appraiser after May 20. 33 Any final determination shall be accompanied by a written explanation of 34 the reasoning upon which such determination is based when such 35 determination is not in favor of the taxpayer. The county appraiser shall 36 not increase the appraised valuation of the property as a result of the 37 informal meeting. Any taxpayer who is aggrieved by the final 38 determination of the county appraiser may appeal to the hearing officer or 39 panel appointed pursuant to K.S.A. 79-1611, and amendments thereto, and 40 such hearing officer, or panel, for just cause shown and recorded, is 41 authorized to change the classification or valuation of specific tracts or 42 individual items of real or personal property in the same manner provided 43 for in K.S.A. 79-1606, and amendments thereto. In lieu of appealing to a SB 272 5

1

5

11

14

15 16

17

18

19 20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35 36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

hearing officer or panel appointed pursuant to K.S.A. 79-1611, and 2 amendments thereto, any taxpayer aggrieved by the final determination of 3 the county appraiser, except with regard to land devoted to agricultural 4 use, wherein the value of the property, is less than \$3,000,000, as reflected on the valuation notice, or the property constitutes single family residential 6 property, may appeal to the small claims and expedited hearings division 7 of the state board of tax appeals within the time period prescribed by 8 K.S.A. 79-1606, and amendments thereto. Any taxpayer who is aggrieved 9 by the final determination of a hearing officer or panel may appeal to the 10 state board of tax appeals as provided in K.S.A. 79-1609, and amendments thereto. An informal meeting with the county appraiser or the appraiser's 12 designee shall be a condition precedent to an appeal to the county or 13 district hearing panel.

Sec. 3. K.S.A. 79-1609 is hereby amended to read as follows: 79-1609. Any person aggrieved by any order of the hearing officer or panel, or by the classification and appraisal of an independent appraiser, as provided in K.S.A. 79-5b03, and amendments thereto, may appeal to the state board of tax appeals by filing a written notice of appeal, on forms approved by the state board of tax appeals and provided by the county clerk for such purpose, stating the grounds thereof and a description of any comparable property or properties and the appraisal thereof upon which they rely as evidence of inequality of the appraisal of their property, if that be a ground of the appeal, with the state board of tax appeals and by filing a copy thereof with the county clerk within 30 days after the date of the order from which the appeal is taken. The notice of appeal may be signed by the taxpayer, any person with an executed declaration of representative form from the property valuation division of the department of revenue or any person authorized to represent the taxpayer in K.S.A. 74-2433f(f), and amendments thereto. A county or district appraiser may appeal to the state board of tax appeals from any order of the hearing officer or panel. With regard to any matter properly submitted to the board relating to the determination of valuation of residential property or real property used for commercial and industrial purposes for taxation purposes, it shall be the duty of the county appraiser to initiate the production of evidence to demonstrate, by a preponderance of the evidence, the validity and correctness of such determination. With regard to leased commercial and industrial property, the burden of proof shall be on the taxpayer unless, within 30 calendar days following the informal meeting required by K.S.A. 79-1448, and amendments thereto, the taxpayer furnished to the county or district appraiser a complete income and expense statement for the property for the three years next preceding the year of appeal. Such income and expense statement shall be in such format that is regularly maintained by the taxpayer in the ordinary course of the taxpayer's

1 2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11 12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29 30

31

32

33

34

35

36 37

38

39

40

41

42

43

business. If the taxpayer submits a single property appraisal with an effective date of January 1 of the year appealed, the burden of proof shall return to the county appraiser. With regard to any matter properly submitted to the board relating to the determination of valuation of property for taxation purposes, the board shall not increase the appraised valuation of the property to an amount greater than the final determination of appraised value by the county appraiser from which the taxpayer appealed.

Sec. 4. K.S.A. 79-2005 is hereby amended to read as follows: 79-2005. (a) Any taxpayer, before protesting the payment of such taxpayer's taxes, shall be required, either at the time of paying such taxes, or, if the whole or part of the taxes are paid prior to December 20, no later than December 20, or, with respect to taxes paid in whole or in part in an amount equal to at least <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> of such taxes on or before December 20 by an escrow or tax service agent, no later than January 31 of the next year, to file a written statement with the county treasurer, on forms approved by the state board of tax appeals and provided by the county treasurer, clearly stating the grounds on which the whole or any part of such taxes are protested and citing any law, statute or facts on which such taxpaver relies in protesting the whole or any part of such taxes. When the grounds of such protest is an assessment of taxes made pursuant to K.S.A. 79-332a and 79-1427a, and amendments thereto, the county treasurer may not distribute the taxes paid under protest until such time as the appeal is final. When the grounds of such protest is that the valuation or assessment of the property upon which the taxes are levied is illegal or void, the county treasurer shall forward a copy of the written statement of protest to the county appraiser who shall within 15 days of the receipt thereof, schedule an informal meeting with the taxpaver or such taxpaver's agent or attorney with reference to the property in question. At the informal meeting, it shall be the duty of the county appraiser or the county appraiser's designee to initiate production of evidence to substantiate the valuation of such property, including a summary of the reasons that the valuation of the property has been increased over the preceding year, any assumptions used by the county appraiser to determine the value of the property and a description of the individual property characteristics, property specific valuation records and conclusions. The taxpayer shall be provided with the opportunity to review the data sheets applicable to the valuation approach utilized for the subject property. The county appraiser shall take into account any evidence provided by the taxpayer which relates to the amount of deferred maintenance and depreciation of the property. The county appraiser shall review the appraisal of the taxpayer's property with the taxpayer or such taxpayer's agent or attorney and may change the valuation of the taxpayer's property, if in the county appraiser's opinion a

change in the valuation of the taxpayer's property is required to assure that the taxpayer's property is valued according to law, and shall, within 15 business days thereof, notify the taxpayer in the event the valuation of the taxpayer's property is changed, in writing of the results of the meeting. The county appraiser shall not increase the appraised valuation of the property as a result of the informal meeting. In the event the valuation of the taxpayer's property is changed and such change requires a refund of taxes and interest thereon, the county treasurer shall process the refund in the manner provided by subsection (1).

- (b) No protest appealing the valuation or assessment of property shall be filed pertaining to any year's valuation or assessment when an appeal of such valuation or assessment was commenced pursuant to K.S.A. 79-1448, and amendments thereto, nor shall the second half payment of taxes be protested when the first half payment of taxes has been protested. Notwithstanding the foregoing, this provision shall not prevent any subsequent owner from protesting taxes levied for the year in which such property was acquired, nor shall it prevent any taxpayer from protesting taxes when the valuation or assessment of such taxpayer's property has been changed pursuant to an order of the director of property valuation.
- (c) A protest shall not be necessary to protect the right to a refund of taxes in the event a refund is required because the final resolution of an appeal commenced pursuant to K.S.A. 79-1448, and amendments thereto, occurs after the final date prescribed for the protest of taxes.
- (d) If the grounds of such protest shall be that the valuation or assessment of the property upon which the taxes so protested are levied is illegal or void, such statement shall further state the exact amount of valuation or assessment which the taxpayer admits to be valid and the exact portion of such taxes which is being protested.
- (e) If the grounds of such protest shall be that any tax levy, or any part thereof, is illegal, such statement shall further state the exact portion of such tax which is being protested.
- (f) Upon the filing of a written statement of protest, the grounds of which shall be that any tax levied, or any part thereof, is illegal, the county treasurer shall mail a copy of such written statement of protest to the state board of tax appeals and the governing body of the taxing district making the levy being protested.
- (g) Within 30 days after notification of the results of the informal meeting with the county appraiser pursuant to subsection (a), the protesting taxpayer may, if aggrieved by the results of the informal meeting with the county appraiser, appeal such results to the state board of tax appeals.
- (h) After examination of the copy of the written statement of protest and a copy of the written notification of the results of the informal meeting

1

2

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11 12

13

14

15

16 17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29 30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40 41

42

43

with the county appraiser in cases where the grounds of such protest is that the valuation or assessment of the property upon which the taxes are levied is illegal or void, the board shall conduct a hearing in accordance with the provisions of the Kansas administrative procedure act, unless waived by the interested parties in writing. If the grounds of such protest is that the valuation or assessment of the property is illegal or void the board shall notify the county appraiser thereof.

- (i) In the event of a hearing, the same shall be originally set not later than 90 days after the filing of the copy of the written statement of protest and a copy, when applicable, of the written notification of the results of the informal meeting with the county appraiser with the board. With regard to any matter properly submitted to the board relating to the determination of valuation of residential property or real property used for commercial and industrial purposes for taxation purposes, it shall be the duty of the county appraiser to initiate the production of evidence to demonstrate, by a preponderance of the evidence, the validity and correctness of such determination except that no such duty shall accrue to the county or district appraiser with regard to leased commercial and industrial property unless the property owner has furnished to the county or district appraiser a complete income and expense statement for the property for the three years next preceding the year of appeal. No presumption shall exist in favor of the county appraiser with respect to the validity and correctness of such determination. In all instances where the board sets a request for hearing and requires the representation of the county by its attorney or counselor at such hearing, the county shall be represented by its county attorney or counselor. The board shall take into account any evidence provided by the taxpayer which relates to the amount of deferred maintenance and depreciation for the property. In any appeal from the reclassification of property that was classified as land devoted to agricultural use for the preceding year, the taxpayer's classification of the property as land devoted to agricultural use shall be presumed to be valid and correct if the taxpayer provides an executed lease agreement or other documentation demonstrating a commitment to use the property for agricultural use, if no other actual use is evident. With regard to any matter properly submitted to the board relating to the determination of valuation of property for taxation purposes, the board shall not increase the appraised valuation of the property to an amount greater than the appraised value reflected in the notification of the results of the informal meeting with the county appraiser from which the taxpayer appealed.
- (j) When a determination is made as to the merits of the tax protest, the board shall render and serve its order thereon. The county treasurer shall notify all affected taxing districts of the amount by which tax revenues will be reduced as a result of a refund.

(k) If a protesting taxpayer fails to file a copy of the written statement of protest and a copy, when applicable, of the written notification of the results of the informal meeting with the county appraiser with the board within the time limit prescribed, such protest shall become null and void and of no effect whatsoever

- (1) (1) In the event the board orders that a refund be made pursuant to this section or the provisions of K.S.A. 79-1609, and amendments thereto, or a court of competent jurisdiction orders that a refund be made, and no appeal is taken from such order, or in the event a change in valuation which results in a refund pursuant to subsection (a), the county treasurer shall, as soon thereafter as reasonably practicable, refund to the taxpayer such protested taxes and, with respect to protests or appeals commenced after the effective date of this act, interest computed at the rate prescribed by K.S.A. 79-2968, and amendments thereto, minus two percentage points, per annum from the date of payment of such taxes from tax moneys collected but not distributed. Upon making such refund, the county treasurer shall charge the fund or funds having received such protested taxes, except that, with respect to that portion of any such refund attributable to interest the county treasurer shall charge the county general fund. In the event that the state board of tax appeals or a court of competent jurisdiction finds that any time delay in making its decision is unreasonable and is attributable to the taxpayer, it may order that no interest or only a portion thereof be added to such refund of taxes.
- (2) No interest shall be allowed pursuant to paragraph (1) in any case where the tax paid under protest was inclusive of delinquent taxes.
- (m) Whenever, by reason of the refund of taxes previously received or the reduction of taxes levied but not received as a result of decreases in assessed valuation, it will be impossible to pay for imperative functions for the current budget year, the governing body of the taxing district affected may issue no-fund warrants in the amount necessary. Such warrants shall conform to the requirements prescribed by K.S.A. 79-2940, and amendments thereto, except they shall not bear the notation required by such section and may be issued without the approval of the state board of tax appeals. The governing body of such taxing district shall make a tax levy at the time fixed for the certification of tax levies to the county clerk next following the issuance of such warrants sufficient to pay such warrants and the interest thereon. All such tax levies shall be in addition to all other levies authorized by law.
- (n) Whenever a taxpayer appeals to the board of tax appeals pursuant to the provisions of K.S.A. 79-1609, and amendments thereto, or pays taxes under protest related to one property whereby the assessed valuation of such property exceeds 5% of the total county assessed valuation of all property located within such county and the taxpayer receives a refund of

1 such taxes paid under protest or a refund made pursuant to the provisions 2 of K.S.A. 79-1609, and amendments thereto, the county treasurer or the 3 governing body of any taxing subdivision within a county may request the 4 pooled money investment board to make a loan to such county or taxing 5 subdivision as provided in this section. The pooled money investment 6 board is authorized and directed to loan to such county or taxing 7 subdivision sufficient funds to enable the county or taxing subdivision to 8 refund such taxes to the taxpayer. The pooled money investment board is 9 authorized and directed to use any moneys in the operating accounts, 10 investment accounts or other investments of the state of Kansas to provide the funds for such loan. Each loan shall bear interest at a rate equal to the 11 12 net earnings rate of the pooled money investment portfolio at the time of 13 the making of such loan. The total aggregate amount of loans under this program shall not exceed \$50,000,000 of unencumbered funds pursuant to 14 15 article 42 of chapter 75 of the Kansas Statutes Annotated, and amendments 16 thereto. Such loan shall not be deemed to be an indebtedness or debt of the 17 state of Kansas within the meaning of section 6 of article 11 of the 18 constitution of the state of Kansas. Upon certification to the pooled money 19 investment board by the county treasurer or governing body of the amount 20 of each loan authorized pursuant to this subsection, the pooled money 21 investment board shall transfer each such amount certified by the county 22 treasurer or governing body from the state bank account or accounts 23 prescribed in this subsection to the county treasurer who shall deposit such 24 amount in the county treasury. Any such loan authorized pursuant to this 25 subsection shall be repaid within four years. The county or taxing 26 subdivision shall make not more than four equal annual tax levies at the 27 time fixed for the certification of tax levies to the county clerk following 28 the making of such loan sufficient to pay such loan within the time period 29 required under such loan. All such tax levies shall be in addition to all 30 other levies authorized by law. 31

(o) The county treasurer shall disburse to the proper funds all portions of taxes paid under protest and shall maintain a record of all portions of such taxes which are so protested and shall notify the governing body of the taxing district levying such taxes thereof and the director of accounts and reports if any tax protested was levied by the state.

32

33

34

35 36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

(p) This statute shall not apply to the valuation and assessment of property assessed by the director of property valuation and it shall not be necessary for any owner of state assessed property, who has an appeal pending before the state board of tax appeals, to protest the payment of taxes under this statute solely for the purpose of protecting the right to a refund of taxes paid under protest should that owner be successful in that appeal.

Sec. 5. K.S.A. 74-2433f, 79-1448, 79-1609 and 79-2005 are hereby

- 1 repealed.
- 2 Sec. 6. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its
- 3 publication in the statute book.