



Testimony

**House Bill 2002
House Taxation Committee
January 24, 2023**

The Kansas County Commissioners Association supports HB 2002. The KCCA represents the elected county commissioners from all 105 Kansas counties. The KCCA supports HB 2002 because it will protect local taxpayers against costly and unneeded expense. In 2022 we warned the legislature that the notice provisions of SB 13 would be cumbersome and costly. We were right.

The State agreed to pay the cost for the first two years of the printing and mailing of notices that the local government had taken in more money in the current year than they did in the previous year.

That cost to send those notices was more than \$1.2-million. Is that really a smart use of tax dollars?

The way the law is written, every individual taxpayer must receive a notice. If that taxpayer owns multiple properties, they will receive multiply notices, all saying the same thing. I know of one taxpayer who owns 30 properties and they received 30 notices all saying the same thing.

We argue it is a waste of money. We appreciate that the State agreed to pay the cost for the first two years. But if the State is going to require this kind of unneeded cost, it should pay for it instead of dumping the unnecessary cost on local governments and taxpayers.

There are two changes which would make the current process more workable for local elected officials and taxpayers.

1) Changing the revenue neutral tax rate to revenue neutral amount would be easier to calculate and be more understandable for taxpayers. If the budget was \$5-million last year and its \$6-million this year, taxpayers will know the budget grew by \$1-million and the vote to exceed the previous year would be explained in the vote.

2) Tax rates and mill levies are sometimes difficult to calculate and unexpected circumstances can change the tax rate after it's adopted. Or maybe it was just a mistake if one-tenth of a mill. Allowing a "curing" period to correct such situations would be helpful. Otherwise, more notices must be sent out.

And the KCCA needs to point out, when property values go up, the State collects revenue windfalls from its 21.5 mills and the Legislature never holds a public vote to exceed that rate or even make the public know how much extra money was collected. To be fully transparent, should the State Legislature be required to vote on and notify taxpayers how much additional money it collected from taxes over the previous year?