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Senate Assessment & Taxation Committee
Proponent Testimony for SB 248

Chair Tyson, Vice Chair Peck, Ranking Member Holland and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to appear today in support of SB 248, legislation that would take the sales tax on food to “true zero” for nutritional food as defined in the bill. For the last two years, we have heard a lot about ‘axing the tax’ on food, and many Kansans think that means that by 2025, their sales tax on food will hit 0%. That is not the case – it simply would get rid of the *state* portion of the sales tax on food, meaning Kansans would still pay their local tax – which in some areas, can be more than 3%.

This bill takes a different approach. By making healthy food exempt from sales tax entirely, Kansas families would know that when they buy things such as produce, meat, or other healthy products families depend upon, they would truly pay no tax. Not 1 or 2 or 3% depending on their geography – but all Kansans would finally pay 0% on healthy food.

This proposal is one part of a three-part approach to tax reform to truly help those who need it the most – our families and seniors – who are disproportionately impacted by the stifling inflation we are still experiencing.

One part is, as noted, is to take healthy food to true zero for all Kansas families. The second part is to reduce or eliminate the tax on social security benefits. The third part is structural reform of our income tax to a single, low rate with a larger exemption so everyone gets a tax reduction.

Remember, our middle and high tax brackets kick in at \$15,000 and \$30,000 of income for single filers – by definition, that’s middle class. So, while common objection you’re likely to hear is that this proposal would return the tax on things like junk food to 6.5%, we feel it is more important to lower income taxes on middle income Kansans and get to one, easy-to-understand, single rate for all taxpayers.