



## HARVEY COUNTY, KANSAS

### HARVEY COUNTY COMMISSION

COURTHOUSE  
P.O. BOX 687  
NEWTON, KANSAS 67114-0687

PHONE: 316-284-6806

FAX: 316-284-6811

### TESTIMONY—HOUSE BILL 2285

February 21, 2013

#### **Honorable Chairman Richard Carlson and Members of the Kansas House Taxation Committee:**


Thank you for allowing me to present testimony to you pertaining to House Bill 2285. My name is George A. "Chip" Westfall. I live in Newton, Kansas and currently I serve as Chairman of the Harvey County Board of Commissioners. I have served as county commissioner since 2006. I am urging you to reject HB 2285 and vote "no" to broadening the list of property tax exemptions.

During my terms as a county commissioner, I have become increasingly aware of the importance of preserving our local tax base. In 2008, Harvey County successfully supported the passage of a second one-cent, county-wide sales tax. This has enabled us to provide services through a healthy balance of user fees, sales taxes, and property tax revenues.

Harvey County is home to a strong manufacturing base—e.g. AGCO Industries, Excel Industries, Bunting Magnetics, Full Vision Industries, and Cargill Industries, to name a few. It is impossible at this point in time to precisely calculate the full impact of the proposed HB 2285 on taxpayers in Harvey County. A very conservative estimate, however, shows a loss of \$9,062,104 in assessed valuation due to the provisions of HB 2285. That translates to a 3.47% reduction in our county tax base. Should this bill be adopted, a mill levy increase of 1.1844 mills would be necessary for Harvey County to fund its budget at its current level. The impact on our school districts and our local municipalities would have a similar effect.

If implemented, this increased tax burden would fall disproportionately on the backs of residential property tax payers in Harvey County. I would urge you to vote against HB 2285. Thank you.

Submitted by:

  
George A. "Chip" Westfall

Chairman, Harvey County Board of Commissioners