



Testimony to House Taxation Committee HB 2376 Citizens Right to Vote on Property Tax Increases March 16, 2017 Dave Trabert, President

Chairman Johnson and Members of the Committee,

We appreciate this opportunity to testify in opposition of HB 2376, which would strip citizens of their statutory right to vote on whether, with some exceptions, property taxes should increase by more than inflation. Instead, citizens would have to gather signatures on a petition to force a vote.

The right to vote on property tax increases exists because Kansans are livid over outrageous property tax hikes imposed on them by city and county government. Inflation was just 44% between 1997 and 2016, yet 82 counties had property tax increases greater than 100%. Of those 82 counties, 24 had increases greater than 200% and 4 of them had increases over 300%!

The attached pages show the comparative changes for the home counties of each Committee member. Among them, the ‘best’ county – Sedgwick – ‘only’ increased taxes 1.4 times more than the combined rates of inflation and population. Condolences are extended to Rep. Concannon and Rep. Smith, as Mitchell County increased taxes 10.7 times more and Wallace County was 11.4 times more than the combined rates of inflation and population.

The following results of a December 2015 market research study¹ reflect Kansans’ overwhelming desire to be able to vote. There was still a 3-year delay at the time of the survey, but 69% of Kansans believed voting was a good idea with only 19% opposed.

Q5: The Legislature passed a law that, with some exceptions, will eventually prevent cities and counties from increasing property taxes by more than the rate of inflation without voter approval. The law doesn't take effect for three years. Is this law a ...

509 Adults	All	Region				Ideology			Income		
		Western Kansas	Wichita Area	Kansas City Area	Eastern Kansas	Conserv	Mod.	Liberal	<\$40k	\$40k-\$80k	>\$80k
Margin of Error: ± 4.4%											
Good idea - do it now	50%	45%	55%	50%	49%	53%	46%	51%	60%	47%	41%
Good idea - in 3 years	19%	40%	12%	19%	15%	11%	27%	13%	13%	21%	20%
Bad idea	19%	13%	19%	19%	21%	16%	20%	25%	15%	15%	29%
Not Sure	13%	3%	14%	13%	15%	20%	7%	11%	11%	16%	10%
Total Good Idea	69%	85%	67%	69%	64%	64%	73%	64%	73%	68%	61%
Total Bad Idea	19%	13%	19%	19%	21%	16%	20%	25%	15%	15%	29%

HB 2376 forces legislators to decide whether local control is about citizens or government. We encourage the Committee to oppose this bill and stand with citizens.

¹ SurveyUSA, conducted on behalf of Kansas Policy Institute; <http://bit.ly/2mypDuk>



