



**House Committee on Taxation  
Verbal Testimony in Opposition to HB 2626  
Presented by Eric Stafford, Vice President of Government Affairs**

**Tuesday, February 13, 2018**

Mister Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Eric Stafford, Vice President of Government Affairs for the Kansas Chamber. The Kansas Chamber appreciates the opportunity to testify in opposition to House Bill 2626 which amends the statutes governing the public vote requirement when property taxes increase beyond the rate of inflation.

When conducting our annual business leaders poll each year, we have asked Kansas business owners about their support for maintaining a public vote requirement since passage in 2015. Our results have shown support in the mid-80 percent range among the business community to keep the public vote requirement in place.

House Bill 2626, while touted as a bill that would encourage consolidation among local government, ultimately is another attempt by local units of government to take away the ability for voters to voice their support or disapproval of proposed changes by their local governments. Kansans strongly support the public vote requirement. Property taxes are by far the least favorite of the business community with over 60% of business owners feeling they're too high already.

In closing, we question the need for House Bill 2626 and view it simply as an effort to weaken the public vote requirement.