

State of Kansas

Senate Chamber

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Senate Tax and Assessment Chair Tyson and committee members,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak as a proponent of SB 91. When I served on this very committee last year, we heard vivid testimony from Disabled Veterans and beleaguered elderly tax payers that were struggling with property tax bills that were increasing significantly on a yearly basis. I'm proud to be a cosponsor of SB 91, that will serve to address many of their concerns.

On a personal basis, I have had many older constituents that have reached out to me over the last four years, seeking property tax relief. Two of my retired neighbors intend to move out of the state when they sell their homes because they struggle to keep up with all of the high taxes we impose on Kansans. Unfortunately, this is an issue that is receiving national recognition. In the February 2019, *Kiplinger's Personal Finance* magazine (pg. 31), Kansas is reported as being the third worst state to live in due to our property and inheritance taxes.

There are several aspects of this bill that are worthy of note:

- We address claimants who were eligible prior to 2018
- We use the criteria of permanent disability for members of the armed forces and the Kansas national guard
- We provide for the legal guardian, conservator or attorney-in-fact to file a claim for the claimant
- We allow the payment of any refund to first go toward any outstanding liability
- We limit only one claimant per household per year
- We allow the director of taxation to extend the time of filing a claim when good cause exists

In short, I believe the passage of SB 91 will allow elderly and disabled veteran Kansans a new opportunity to stay in our state by reducing the financial burden of staying in the home that they own. Additionally, it extends assistance to those that are renters. In turn, we further strengthen our communities and families.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration,

Molly Baumgardner