

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Tuesday, February 16, 2016

HOUSE BILL 2605

Testimony of Thomas G. Franzen, CTP, CPFO
Johnson County Treasurer & Finance Director

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on behalf of Johnson County and the Kansas County Treasurers Association as a member of the Legislative Committee on HB 2605.

We strongly oppose the requirement that the County Treasurer reject vehicle registrations or renewals, if the registered owner of such vehicle has unpaid tolls.

The passage of HB 2605 would add complexity to the current vehicle registration process and increase wait times for customers. It will escalate customer frustration and security concerns for County Treasurers and their staff. County Treasurers' statutory duty is the collection of property taxes, and passage of this bill will hinder those efforts.

The process of verifying and matching customer records and vehicle plates cannot be relied upon for the purposes of this bill. The state motor vehicle system contains multiple customer records for the same person. For example Joe may exist as Joe, Joseph, Joseph Michael – each customer record is tied to a different vehicle owned by the same person. Currently Kansas plate combinations are not unique across plate types. County Treasurers and KDOR staff spend time researching ownership records for out-of-state tolling authorities that have implemented plate readers. This results in the incorrect vehicle owner being billed for tolls.

Since 2012, Kansas County Treasurers vehicle operations continue to go underfunded. The current business model is unsustainable with fee schedules established that fail to account for increasing costs and duties as work continues to be pushed down to County Treasurers.

I respectfully request that you consider the detrimental impacts of HB 2605 on County Treasurer operations and local government and not pass this bill out of committee. Thank you for your consideration.