



Testimony before the Senate Committee on Assessment and  
Taxation March 8, 2016  
Eric Gustafson, Governmental Affairs Chair  
Kansas Library Association

Good Morning. Thank you for allowing me to address you today. My name is Eric Gustafson. I serve as the Director of the Derby Public Library and also represent the Kansas Library Association as Governmental Affairs Chair. I am speaking today in opposition of SB 316.

The Kansas Library Association opposes Senate Bill 316 because it limits the budgetary authority of locally elected officials and will negatively impact growth of communities. Representative democracy is a key principle of our government, and this bill places unnecessary restrictions on city leaders. Elected officials need to be able to make day-to-day budgetary decisions without putting them to a city-wide vote. As a city grows, there is a need to increase services to provide for increased demand and growth in infrastructure. If a growing city is unable to raise the funding to provide necessary services, this will discourage development within that city.

Libraries provide a variety of resources to local communities including computer and internet access for potential job seekers. They also provide support and access for small-business owners in addition to fulfilling the informational, educational and entertainment needs of the community. Cities are required by law to levy taxes on behalf of libraries for the financing of library budgets, which allows libraries to provide these services. If cities are forced to reduce mill levies due to a property tax lid, this will have a negative impact on library budgets. As a city grows, citizens expect more from their local libraries. If budgets are not allowed to grow naturally as population increases, libraries will be forced to reduce services and may not be able to purchase sufficient resources for their communities.

I request that the committee oppose this bill for the aforementioned reasons.