

Approved March 8, 1991
Date

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The meeting was called to order by REPRESENTATIVE M. J. JOHNSON at
Chairperson

1:30 ~~am~~ p.m. on MARCH 6, 1991 in room 521-S of the Capitol.

All members were present ~~except~~ ~~XXXXX~~

Committee staff present:

Mike Heim, Legislative Research Dept.
Theresa Kiernan, Revisor of Statutes
Connie Smith, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Representative Sam Roper
Mary Ladesic, Wyandotte Co. Treasurer, representing Kansas Treasurers Assn.
Dan Brunetti, Crawford Co. Clerk
Jim Clark, representing the Kansas County & District Attorneys Association
Susie Parmer, representing the Register of Deeds Assn.
John Torbert, Kansas Association of Counties
Gerry Ray, Johnson County Commission
Willie Martin, Sedgwick Co.
Betty McBride, Cherokee County Treasurer, representing Kansas County Treasurer's Association
Linda Schreppel, Labette County Clerk and Vice Chairperson of the Clerks Legislation Committee
Tony Wedel, McPherson County Commissioner

Chairman Johnson opened a hearing on HB 2204.

HB 2204 - County officers; limitation on reduction on salary.

Representative Sam Roper, a sponsor of HB 2204, testified in support. (Attachment 1)

Mary Ladesic, Wyandotte County Treasurer, testified on behalf of Kansas Treasurers Association in support of HB 2204. (Attachment 2)

Dan Brunetti, Crawford County Clerk, testified as a proponent on HB 2204. (Attachment 3) Mr. Brunetti responded to questions from the committee.

Jim Clark, representing the Kansas County and District Attorneys Association, appeared in support of HB 2204. (Attachment 4) Mr. Clark responded to questions from the committee.

Susie Parmer, representing the Register of Deeds Association, wanted to go on record in support of HB 2204.

John Torbert, Kansas Association of Counties, testified in opposition to HB 2204. (Attachment 5) Mr. Torbert responded to questions from the committee. Mr. Torbert gave the history of the McPherson case which he was going to give on the next bill.

Gerry Ray, Johnson County Commission, testified in opposition to HB 2204. (Attachment 6)

Willie Martin, Sedgwick Co., testified as an opponent on HB 2204. (Attachment 7)

Chairman Johnson closed the hearing on HB 2204.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT,
room 521-S, Statehouse, at 1:30 ~~am~~/p.m. on MARCH 6, 1991

Chairman opened the hearing on HB 2298.

HB 2298 - Elimination of county officers and duties.

John Torbert, Kansas Association of Counties, gave background of HB 2298 and testified as a proponent. (Attachment 8) Mr. Torbert responded to questions from the committee.

Betty McBride, Cherokee County Treasurer, appeared in support of HB 2298 on behalf of the Kansas County Treasurer's Association. (Attachment 9) Ms. McBride responded to questions from the committee.

Linda Schreppel, Labette County Clerk and Vice Chairperson of the Clerks Legislative Committee, testified in support on HB 2298. (Attachment 10)

Ms. Schreppel read testimony in support of HB 2298 from Beverly Baker, County Clerk, Johnson County, on behalf of the Kansas County Clerks Association. (Attachment 11)

Gerry Ray, Johnson Co., testified in support of HB 2298. (Attachment 12)

Tony Wedel, McPherson County Commissioner, testified on behalf of the Board of McPherson County Commissioners, spoke in opposition to HB 2298. (Attachment 13) Mr. Wedel addressed the \$1 issue in HB 2204 and responded to questions from the committee.

Chairman closed the hearing on HB 2298.

Chairman called for discussion and action on HB 2298.

Vice-Chairman Gomez moved to amend HB 2298 on page 2 after line 18 by creating a new subsection "d". "It shall also be considered the elimination of a treasurers office by reducing salary by using state vehicle reimbursement as a factor. The motion was seconded by Representative Stephens. After considerable committee discussion Vice-Chairman Gomez called for the question and the motion failed.

Chairman called for any other amendments or motions on HB 2298.

Vice-Chairman Gomez moved that HB 2298 be recommended favorably for passage. The motion was seconded by Representative Holmes. The motion carried.

Chairman Johnson turned the committee's attention to HB 2204 and asked for discussion or a motion.

Representative Brown made a motion to report HB 2204 adversely. The motion was seconded by Representative Cornfield. After committee discussion, the motion failed.

Meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

DATE March 6, 1991

NAME

ADDRESS

REPRESENTING

NAME	ADDRESS	REPRESENTING
NANCY WEEKS	ASHE SUBLETTE	HASKELL CO. TREAS.
John Kovain	Diand	Crawford Co. Treas.
Betty McBride	Columbus	Cherokee Co. Treasurer
Gerry Ray	Clatwa	Johnson Co. Commission
Ann E. O'Brien	Clatwa	Johnson County Treasurer
Cheryl Weduski	Atwood	Lawrence Co. Treasurer
Mary B. Jodovic	Weyandotte	County Treasurer
Joseph C. Reddick	Grant	County Treasurer
Jane A. de la Torre	Topeka	Secretary of STATE
John Vorhies	"	KAC
Cileen King	Manhattan	Riley Co. Treasurer
Marilyn Brown	Helen, K.	Jackson Co. Treas.
Pat McDermid	Topeka	Shawnee Co. Clerk
Wayle Jondoll	Maysville	Marshall Co. Clerk
Meredith Shuchie	Atwood	Lawrence Co. Clerk
Carolyn Arganbright	Maysville	Marshall Co. Treas.
Barbara Pitt	Topeka	Dept of Admin.
Geo William	Eureka, K	Greenwood Co. Treas.
Jo Ann Raaf	Dridley	Coffey Co. Treas.
Carol Fleuch	Ottawa Co.	Co Clerk
Linda Schreppel	Lambert Co	Co Clerk
Willie Martin	Wichita	Sedgwick Co.
Kita Clene	Topeka	Shawnee Co

STATE OF KANSAS

L. V. "SAM" ROPER
REPRESENTATIVE, SECOND DISTRICT
201 S. CHEROKEE
BOX 276
GIRARD, KANSAS 66743-0276



TOPEKA

HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS
MEMBER: COMMERCIAL AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS
COMPUTERS, COMMUNICATION AND
TECHNOLOGY
FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS
LABOR AND INDUSTRY

County officers are elected. The salary of the elected officials is known to them and to the public at the time of the election.

I do not believe the county commissioners should have the power to alter any of those salaries during that particular term of office.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sam Roper". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed text.

LD
3-6-91
Attach 1

TO: HOUSE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE
FROM: MARY P. LADESIC, KANSAS TREASURERS ASSOCIATION
DATE: MARCH 6, 1991
RE: HOUSE BILL 2204

MADAM CHAIRMAN AND HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THIS COMMITTEE:
MY NAME IS MARY LADESIC, FROM THE TREASURER'S OFFICE OF WYANDOTTE CO.

I AM HERE ON BEHALF OF THE KANSAS TREASURERS ASSOCIATION IN SUPPORT
OF HOUSE BILL 2204.

EACH INDIVIDUAL WHO RUNS FOR AN ELECTED OFFICE DOES SO KNOWING THE
SALARY AND DUTIES OF SAID OFFICE. IN AN EFFORT TO MAINTAIN
PROFESSIONAL OR QUALITY INDIVIDUALS FOR PUBLIC OFFICE IT IS NECESSARY
TO ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN A BASE SALARY.

IF COMMISSIONERS WERE ALLOWED TO CUT SALARIES DURING TERM, WHO WOULD
RUN? ONLY THOSE WITH FINANCIAL SECURITY COULD AFFORD TO HOLD OFFICE.

ALSO, IF THEY CUT THE SALARY IT ONLY FOLLOWS THAT A LATER STATUTORY
REDUCTION OF THAT OFFICER'S DUTIES WILL COME ABOUT - OTHERWISE THE
RESPONSIBILITY WOULD DISPROPORTIONATELY OUTWEIGH THE PAY --

WHERE DO THOSE RESPONSIBILITIES GO - ? A SHIFT OF THE LOCAL POWER
BASE WOULD RESULT. AND WE WOULD LOSE THE ABILITY FOR CHECKS AND
BALANCES IF POWER IS CENTRALIZED IN ONE OFFICE.

THANK YOU.

MPL:sc

LY.
3-6-91
Attach 2

DAN BRUNETTI

CRAWFORD COUNTY CLERK
GIRARD, KANSAS 66743
(316) 724-6115

March 6, 1991

TO: Representative Mary Jane Johnson, Chairman
Local Government Committee.

FROM: Dan Brunetti, County Clerk, Crawford County, Kansas
(Chairman of the Clerks Legislative Committee)

SUBJECT: House Bill 2204

Madame Chairman, Members of the Committee, I would like to speak in support of House Bill 2204.

First I would like to set things straight. This bill is not a Clerk's Bill, it's a Clerk's Bill, a Treasurer's Bill, a Register of Deed's Bill, a Sheriff's Bill, and a County Attorney's Bill. This bill represents all County wide Elected officials in the State of Kansas.

104 Kansas Counties were shocked by what happened in McPherson County in 1990. The Treasurer's salary was cut to \$1.00 per year, simply by a vote of the Commission. This can currently happen in any county, and I would like to see this threat to every county elected official eliminated.

The County Commission has complete budget control over all County offices, elected and appointed, and this is by far the ultimate control over any office.

The recent implementation of reappraisal and classification, and the statutory duties that have accompanied these changes, have created some friction between certain offices. We do not want situations such as these to be a factor in wage determination.

A candidate runs for an office after careful consideration of several factors, included among these, duties, responsibility, and salary. Duties are outlined by statute, responsibility has done nothing but increase, leaving salary the only unprotected issue.

We are elected by the citizens to do a specific job, at a specific wage, and that wage should not be subject to random decreases throughout the term of that office.

In Crawford County, all county wide elected officeholders support this bill as it is now written.

We urge your support of this bill. Thank you.

Ly
3-6-91
Attach 3

OFFICERS

Rod Symmonds, President
James Flory, Vice-President
Randy Hendershot, Sec.-Treasurer
Terry Gross, Past President



DIRECTORS

Wade Dixon
Nola Foulston
John Gillett
Dennis Jones

Kansas County & District Attorneys Association

827 S. Topeka Ave., 2nd Floor • Topeka, Kansas 66612
(913) 357-6351 • FAX # (913) 357-6352
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR • JAMES W. CLARK, CAE

By Jim Clark

Testimony in Support of

HOUSE BILL NO. 2204

The Kansas County and District Attorneys Association appears in support of House Bill No. 2204, which would prohibit the reduction of a county officer's salary during their term of office.

1. On the more general level, we are concerned with the problem of getting good, competent people to run for elected office. In many of our smaller communities it is difficult to find even one candidate for an office, let alone allowing the people to make a choice in the matter. On the more specific level, getting good, competent attorneys to seek, and to retain, the part-time position of county attorney is an ever-growing problem. Because of heightened public scrutiny and expectation of public officials; the increasing number of drug, child abuse and driving under the influence cases; the growing need for legal counsel by county governments; the additional duties being imposed by the Legislature; and the direct competition of a private law practice, it is difficult to find and keep county attorneys in many of our smaller counties. This problem is heightened somewhat by the fact of the nearly \$7 million per year the State pays for representation of indigent felons, the rate for contract defense attorneys is at least \$50 per hour. The result is that there is at least a 60% turnover of elected prosecutors every term. Clearly, to become a county attorney involves a great deal of sacrifice. To allow the practice of reducing the county attorney's salary only aggravates the problem.

2. In addition, there is the more general problem of denying the people the choice of their elected official. As an example, the board of county commissioners may support one candidate for office, but the opposing candidate is elected. The board may actually force the candidate selected by the people out of office by reducing the salary of that position. This is an improper infringement on both the elected official and the people of the county. The passage of House Bill No. 2204 would eliminate this problem.

LJ
3-6-91
Attach. 4



"Service to County Government"

212 S.W. 7th Street
Topeka, Kansas 66603
(913) 233-2271
FAX (913) 233-4830

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Cherokee County Treasurer
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Roy Patton
Harvey County Weed Director
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Gary Post
Seward County Appraiser
(316) 624-0211

Nancy Prawl
Brown County Register of Deeds
(913) 742-3741

Vernon Wendelken
Clay County Commissioner
(913) 461-5694

NACo Representative

Keith Devenney
Geary County Commissioner
(913) 238-7894

Executive Director

John T. Torbert

March 6, 1991

Testimony

To: House Local Government Committee

From: John T. Torbert
Executive Director

Subject: House Bill 2204- County Salaries

The Kansas Association of Counties is opposed to HB 2204. This opposition reflects a unanimous vote of our executive committee.

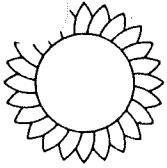
House Bill 2204 is an unnecessary intrusion into the authority of the county commissioners. Commissioners are given clear authority under statute to set salaries and this legislation would dilute that authority. There are very few cases that I am aware of where there have actually been salary reductions put in place in the middle of a term. But, the flexibility to do this does need to be retained.

This bill, if enacted would hamper the ability of commissioners to make salary adjustments in tough economic times. It would also preclude them from reducing salaries even if that officer's duties had been reduced and the officer in question had agreed to that reduction. And since this bill speaks to "terms" instead of officers, it would also mean that a downward adjustment could not be made even if there were a mid-term changeover in that office and the new person holding the job had less experience and knowledge than the previous office holder.

We would urge your opposition to this bill.

tsjcomrd

tsj
3-6-91
Attach. 5



Johnson County
Kansas

MARCH 6, 1991

HOUSE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

HEARING ON HOUSE BILL 2204

TESTIMONY OF GERRY RAY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL OFFICER,
JOHNSON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Madam Chairman, members of the committee, my name is Gerry Ray representing the Johnson County Board of Commissioners. I am appearing today in opposition to House Bill 2204.

The Commission opposes the bill for the following reasons:

- ... The budget and fiscal integrity of the county is the responsibility of the governing body.
- ... Salaries of county officers is not set by statute and limitations in that area should not be imposed by statute.
- ... When an an election is held for a county office, there is no reference to compensation or guarantees offered.

It is the view of the Johnson County Commission that each county must have the flexibility to make decisions on personnel and financial matters that best fits that county. Legislation such as this puts unnecessary constraints on the ability of the Commission to set up a reasonable and workable compensation plan and to operate the county in a businesslike manner.

We urge the committee to vote against the passage of HB 2204.

LR
3-6-91
Attach. 6



SEDGWICK COUNTY, KANSAS

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATOR

WILLIE MARTIN

COUNTY COURTHOUSE • 525 N. MAIN • SUITE 315 • WICHITA, KANSAS 67203 • TELEPHONE (316)383-7552

To: House Local Government
From: Willie Martin, Sedgwick
Date: March 6, 1991
Re: House Bill 2204

Madam Chair and members of the Committee, I am Willie Martin representing the Sedgwick County Board of Commissioners. I appreciate the opportunity to appear in opposition to HB 2204.

Introduction of this legislation was not only unexpected but unnecessary. The 1990 Legislative Session saw the introduction of legislation which was in reaction to activities which had occurred in McPherson County. The bill was strongly opposed and did not pass from committee. In a spirit of cooperation several meetings were held since the last session to try and draft a bill which would address the fears and anxiety of clerks, treasurers, and registrar of deeds and still provide county commissioners local control of county operations. Representatives of each of these groups were present. House Bill 2298 is a result of those meetings.

The introduction of HB 2204, as previously stated is not only unnecessary but in our opinion a betrayal of a compromise which had been carefully drafted and agreed to.

We respectfully request unfavorable recommendation from the Committee.

LS
3-6-91
attach 7



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Topeka, Kansas 66603
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Geary County Commissioner
(913) 238-7894

Executive Director
John T. Torbert

March 6, 1991

Testimony

To: House Local Government Committee

From: John T. Torbert
Executive Director

Subject: HB 2298- County Officer Consolidation

The Kansas Association of Counties supports HB 2298. This legislation is a legislative request of this association.

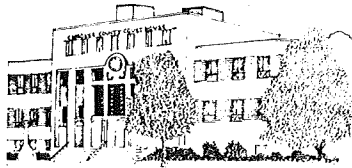
The legislation clarifies that no county office can be eliminated without an election. Existing legislation is somewhat ambiguous as to what actually constitutes "elimination" of an office. That lack of clarity led to several situations where commissioners attempted de facto elimination of offices without going through the prescribed statutory procedure. We feel this legislation puts the necessary safeguards in place so that it is clear that if a commission wants to eliminate an elected office, either by transferring or otherwise shifting duties, that the elimination would have to be put to a vote. Such a vote would not be necessary if the elected office holder consented to the transfer of those duties.

This bill is the product of a special KAC committee that met throughout the summer and fall months of 1990. It has the support of our affiliate organizations, our governing board and was approved by a vote of our general membership at our annual business meeting last fall.

We urge your favorable consideration of this legislation.

tsjoffcn

JLJ
3-6-91
Attack 8



CHEROKEE COUNTY COURTHOUSE

Betty McBride, Treasurer

Cherokee County, Kansas
Columbus, Kansas 66725
316-429-3848

TO: THE HOUSE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE
FROM: BETTY MCBRIDE, CHEROKEE COUNTY TREASURER
RE: HOUSE BILL 2298
DATE: MARCH 6, 1991

Madam Chairman, members of the committee, I am Betty McBride Cherokee County Treasurer. I am appearing today on behalf of the Kansas County Treasurer's Association and wish to express our appreciate to this committee for the opportunity to seek your support of House Bill 2298.

House Bill 2298 if enacted would amend KSA 12-3903 and would mandate that an election be held prior to the abolishment of any county office. It further provides that the statutory duties of an elected official can not be transferred without the consent of the elected official holding that office.

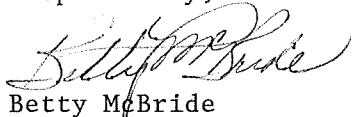
Background history leading to the introduction of House Bill 2298 began in 1989 when one Kansas county governing board utilized KSA 12-3903 and voted to tranfer all the duties of the County Treasurer's office and lower the salary of the County Treasurer to \$1.00 per year. The Attorney General later ruled that this action constituted the abolishment of this office without the electorate having the opportunity to vote and therefore the office remained in name only. In 1990 the governing board placed before the voters at the November general election the question to abolish or retain the office of County Treasurer. The electorate spoke loudly by voting to retain the Treasurer's office 6,477 to 2,681. However to date most of the duties have not been transferred back to the treasurer's office.

LB
3-6-91
Attach 9

In an effort to correct this problem Senate Bill 800 was introduced late in the 1990 session but received mixed reactions due to the language contained in the bill. A committee was appointed by the Kansas Association of Counties Executive Director John Torbet consisting of representatives from the following associations, County Commissioners, County Treasurers, County Clerks, Register of Deeds, Sheriffs and lobbyist representing Sedgwick and Johnson County. The agreement reached, and action taken by this committee resulted in the language used in House Bill 2298. This language was presented to the Kansas Association of Counties membership at their 1990 November annual convention held in Wichita. It was endorsed 100% by the KAC membership. No descending votes were cast. It now appears on the Kansas Association of Counties platform as an endorsed objective.

To insure that the above mentioned situation will not have to be dealt with in the future the Kansas County Treasurer's Association asks and would appreciate your favorable support for the passage of House Bill 2298

Respectfully,



Betty McBride
Cherokee County Treasurer

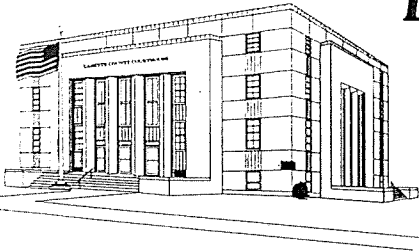
Office of

Labette County Clerk

Labette County, Kansas
Oswego, Kansas 67356
316-795-2138

LINDA SCHREPPLE, County Clerk

PEGGY BLACKLEDGE, Deputy Clerk



March 5, 1991

TO: Committee on Local Government, Representative Mary Jane Johnson, Chairperson

FROM: Kansas County Clerks Association, Linda Schreppel, Labette County Clerk and Vice Chairperson of the Clerks Legislative Committee

RE: House Bill 2298 relating to the consolidation of operations procedures and functions.

Madam Chairperson and Members of the Committee. On behalf of the Kansas County Clerks Association I offer the following Comments;

While we certainly respect the fact that County Commissioners have the responsibility to oversee the operations within our counties, for the betterment of each county, and that some counties may have the need for consolidation of offices and duties, we should also point out that since the other officials are represented by all of the electorate of each county, those offices should not be eliminated prior to the consent of the electorate who installed them and their duties assigned according to Kansas Statutes Annotated. We also contend that duties should not be altered, eliminated or transferred without the mutual consent of the officials involved.

County Commissioners from McPherson County requested that the Kansas Association of Counties support changes to the current statutes, dealing with reorganization, in the county platform. The KAC board chose not to support legislation of this nature and instead support the proposed amendment as stated in HB 2298.

My County is average to smaller than most. I would like to refer you to comments from Bev Baker County Clerk, Johnson County.

LS
3-6-91
Attach 10

February 26, 1991

TO: Representative Mary Jane Johnson, Chairman
Local Government Committee

FROM: Beverly Baker, County Clerk, Johnson County, Kansas, for
The Kansas County Clerks Association

SUBJECT: House Bill 2298

Madame Chairman, members of the Committee, I would like to speak on behalf of the Kansas County Clerks Association in support of House Bill 2298.

The essence of this legislation is the continuance of elected offices in the State of Kansas and the right of Kansans to make these choices.

As all of you know, the elected officeholder is closest to the people they serve. Electeds in courthouses throughout the State respond and interact on a one-to-one basis with the public every day, without layers of protective bureaucracy.

Elected officials, from the townships to the Governor's office are cognizant of who the "customer" is and knows that the citizen must be treated as the private sector would treat a valued customer.

As government grows, it is now more important than ever to have the "checks and balances" provided by elected officeholders. They can speak out when something is wrong without fear or intimidation.

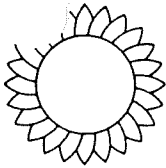
As in any government or business, some electeds, some appointed department heads, are better than others. With an elected official, the citizen has the responsibility to judge their performance and the right to decide when to retain that office or official. Thankfully, we electeds depend upon the wisdom of the voters.

We believe this legislation is fair to all concerned and when an elected office is threatened with elimination, the voters make the final decision, which is as it should be.

In Johnson County, all county elected officeholders, five Commissioners and the five countywide elected officials unanimously support this bill as it is now written.

We urge your support of this bill. Thank you.

Lj
3-6-91
Attack 11



Johnson County
Kansas

MARCH 6, 1991

HOUSE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

HEARING ON HOUSE BILL 2298

TESTIMONY OF GERRY RAY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL OFFICER,
JOHNSON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Madam Chairman, members of the committee, my name is Gerry Ray representing the Johnson County Board of Commissioners, and appearing today in support of House Bill 2298.

In 1990 a bill similar to House Bill 2298 was introduced late in the Session. Johnson County strongly opposed that bill and due to the effort of several people it was tabled by this committee. Last summer, the Kansas Association of Counties formed a committee of the interested parties to work out an agreeable solution on the question of transfer and consolidation of duties. Johnson County Commissioner Murray Nolte and I both served on that committee. A great deal of time and effort was given by representatives of the various groups and the result of that work is the legislation in House Bill 2298.

We feel it is a reasonable compromise and one that everyone can live with. The Johnson County Commission agreed to support the bill, if there are no amendments made to it. It is hoped that if the bill becomes law it will alleviate the fears and concerns that seem to have developed regarding the role of county administrative officers.

During any legislative session, counties have many issues that affect them and must be dealt. It is our desire that this question will be settled quickly and decisively, so we can turn our attention to other issues on which a united effort on the part of local government is needed.

Ly
3-6-91
Attach 12



McPHERSON COUNTY

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

BY

TONY WEDEL, MCPHERSON COUNTY COMMISSIONER
ON BEHALF OF THE
BOARD OF MCPHERSON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
MARCH 6, 1991

The basic issue of House Bill 2298 is "Who should manage county government?" County Government must be managed on the local level by the county commission or by the State thru legislation. Clearly this bill removes management from the county commission.

Several years ago McPherson County had problems with the accounting system. First, we secured the professional assistance of a government auditing firm. It was asked to develop a system that best fit our county's needs. Basically, the recommendations given us involved eliminating the duplications that were taking place, computerizing the accounting system, and putting an accountant on staff replacing some of the duties of the county clerk and treasurer.

An accountant on staff has positively changed the commission's ability to make competent decisions. With accurate accounting information at our quick disposal we have accurate information and professional analysis before establishing policy.

At a time when the state legislature is seriously concerned about property tax, I find it interesting that some want to limit county commissions who want to make local government as efficient and cost effective as possible. Progress generally comes in small steps. This bill eliminates the commission's ability to try innovative efficient ideas. Because all improvements will require a public vote, very few improvements will be attempted resulting in an antiquated local government locked in place.

If it is the desire of the state to lessen the county commission's home rule powers and to begin the management of local government, then it is my suggestion that before you make these kind of decisions please order a study of what efficiency needs exist for county government. An independent government auditing firm or business management firm should be employed by the State. The results will give professional direction so that state government can implement legislation that most efficiently uses community resources.

During the last legislative session much emphasis was placed on the need for local units of government to hold down their spending, i.e. the iron clad tax lid. We in McPherson County, thru the consolidation of operations, are making every effort to operate in a more efficient and cost effective manner, while at the same time, providing the same services for our taxpayers.

*By 3-6-91
Attach 13*

MCPHERSON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

McPherson County
Courthouse

Duane Patrick
District 1

Dean R. Bacon
District 2

Tony Wedel
District 3

P.O. Box 676
Phone No. 316-241-8149