

March 8th, 2024

Dear House Taxation Committee,

I am writing to express my support for a 1% countywide sales tax for Rawlins County to be used towards the rebuilding of school facilities in USD 105-Rawlins County. My wife and I have four young children. Fourth grade, second grade, pre-school and a three year old. Along with running a family farm I also work for our family business that has been serving the community for over 60 years as an independent cable tv, internet, and telephone provider. I am a member of the Atwood Ambassadors who volunteer in the community and put on local events such as the Atwood Early Rod Run. I also serve as Vice President of the school board for USD 105 as well as a board member for Northwest Technical College in Goodland. Needless to say, I am committed to making our town, community, county, and surrounding area a better place for many future generations.

I believe decisions should be fact based so I researched 30 county and city sales taxes in our area, currently Rawlins County has amongst the lowest sales tax in the surrounding areas of NW Kansas. I am by no means advocating that because we are among the lowest as a reason to increase taxes. However, due to our current situation of losing our school to a fire last summer and needing to rebuild, we feel that a countywide sales tax will have a great impact in the funding for building a new school while also not putting our sales tax rate at an unmanageable level.

A school bond will need to be passed in order to rebuild. This will be a tremendous financial burden on the property owners in our school district. A county sales tax will be a relief to the property tax mill levy.

There is a high level of support within the community for a county sales tax increase. The USD 105 Board of Education conducted a survey recently with over 400 responses. One question that was asked was about if you would support a 1% county sales tax increase to help lighten the load of property owners to pay for the new school. The results were clear with 88% in support of a 1% county sales tax increase.

There is no secret that construction costs have gone up recently, along with every other family living expense. With the results of our survey and many conversations among patrons, there is enormous support from the community to pass a county sales tax to help fund the rebuilding of our school. It is clear to me how committed the people of Rawlins County are to take on a large tax increase in order to continue educating our children here. I would appreciate your support for a 1% county sales tax for our school project.

Sincerely,

Jordan Dunker
Board of Education Vice-President
USD 105-Rawlins County