

Support for SB 196



January 4, 2024

201 East Sixth, P.O. Box 426
Newton, Kansas 67114-0426

To Whom it May Concern:

The Newton City Commission supports restoring the longstanding partnership between the State of Kansas and local governments to control property taxes known as the Local Ad Valorem Tax Reduction Fund (LAVTR). This time-tested partnership, started in 1937 but unfunded since 2003, provides dollar for dollar reductions in property tax bills. This transfer allows municipalities to deliver high quality core services to our residents while keeping property taxes low. This transfer is a preferred method for us to be able to continue to offer property tax relief while embracing the growth of business in the state.

The Newton City Commission continues to be mindful of the property tax burden being placed on our citizens. We strive to make good decisions for our community. This includes adopting a budget that reflects the needs and values of our citizens. High inflation has caused our budgets to expand even to simply provide the continuing services that our residents rely on. Rural communities often do not have the luxury of economies of scale when spending on core services and the LAVTR assists in helping Kansans keep their way of life in an affordable way. As the City of Newton continues to work to attract businesses, keeping a competitive mill levy assists us with growing our community and overall tax base.

The City joins the State Legislature in relishing the good news that the State of Kansas has a great ending balance, a surplus of funds. We would recommend that honoring this decades-old agreement to lower property taxes by funding the LAVTR will help all of Kansas.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rod Kreie". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a faint, illegible stamp or background.

Rod Kreie
Mayor