



TESTIMONY

SENATE ASSESSMENT AND TAXATION COMMITTEE

SB 196

By: Manny Ortiz, Mayor, City of Garden City, KS
On behalf of the City of Garden City
January 11, 2024

SUPPORT

Chairwoman Tyson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on behalf of the City of Garden City in support of SB 196.

Manny Ortiz
Mayor

Roy Cessna
Commissioner

Bryce Landgraf
Commissioner

Tom Nguyen
Commissioner

Troy R. Unruh
Commissioner

The City of Garden City supports restoring the Local Ad Valorem Tax Reduction (LAVTR) Fund. This has existed in Kansas statutes for many years. Despite its mandated existence, the Kansas Legislature has consistently fallen short in allocating funds to sustain LAVTR. As a direct consequence, the burden of generating revenue has shifted to local property payers.

For the City of Garden City, this shift, which is estimated to be over \$500,000 in this year's budget, impacts services that are vital to a thriving community such as police, fire, Lee Richardson Zoo, street maintenance, parks, and cemetery maintenance.

Matthew C. Allen
City Manager

Cities have been without this valuable state resource since 2003. The error of commission by the State of Kansas then, and the two decades of errors of omission by the State of Kansas since, has directly translated into higher property taxes. The Garden City Commission remains mindful of the property tax obligations of our residents by making fiscally responsible decisions to meet the community's needs and will continue to do so. Unfortunately, there is an increment of our local property tax burden at both the City and County level, that is not transparently associated with the level of government that de facto levied it against our citizens 20 years ago and every year since.

Virtually all of you espouse that property taxes are a big worry for Kansans. It is time to address the issue and provide meaningful relief that offsets the property tax burden experienced by our residents. Restoration of LAVTR will assist the City of Garden City, and other cities and counties across the state, in covering the costs to provide basic services to our communities and alleviate pressure currently placed on local property taxes by the State of Kansas.

For these reasons, the City of Garden City strongly urges you to support SB 196.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Manny Ortiz", is written over a white background. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Manny Ortiz
Mayor

**City Administrative
Center**

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