

GOLDEN BELT

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

02/03/2025

Members of the House Committee on Taxation
Kansas State Capitol
Room 346-S
Topeka, Kansas

RE: House Bill 2208 Regarding Tax Credits for Unrestricted and Field of Interest Endowed Gifts

My name is Jason Murray, and I am the Executive Director of Golden Belt Community Foundation. Our Foundation proudly services Barton, Pawnee, Rush and Stafford counties. We partner with passionate community members by identifying community needs and matching potential donors that may financially or educationally fulfill the need.

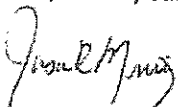
By passing the Endow Kansas bill, the State would give our foundation a tool to retain Kansas dollars to enhance our communities in perpetuity. Currently, tax credits are only available within our communities to qualified projects. With this being such a specified benefit, it limits the overall effectiveness of the donation. By increasing the scope of the tax credit to donations without restrictions compared to a specific project, the state would be allowing the local community foundation to work with local partners to utilize the tax credits in areas of prioritized needs. In addition to the local knowledge advantage, the unrestricted credit would allow charitable organizations to work together to determine the strategy of improvement that would best assist the communities. Currently we have two prime examples of this concept. In Rush County and Pawnee County, we have two endowments that are collaborative fundraising campaigns community wide. In Rush County, the Rush County Endowment was established. The county members were able to raise over \$200,000. The donations were put into an endowment so an annual grant of over \$10K could be issued annually in perpetuity. These grants can be prioritized by the community leaders to strategically enhance areas of need that will support the growth vision of the communities. Similarly, the small communities of Rozel and Burdett in Pawnee County initiated a Forever Rozel and Burdett campaign. Since the community population was about an eighth smaller than the entire county of Rush, the fundraising was smaller at \$50k. However, with additional incentives like a tax credit, these types of campaigns would have far greater results which would lead to greater impact.

House Bill 2208 would be a priceless benefit to the entire state. The generosity of our local community members is without limits. With this tax credit, Kansas citizens could fund needs through donations compared to having to budget state funds. With the needs in Rural Kansas, incentives to encourage the local members to donate to the highest priorities would help reduce the needs for state funding utilized to keep communities alive. House Bill 2208 will empower the members of the community by encouraging self-growth by way of reducing their tax burden.

I encourage you to pass this bill not just for today and tomorrow but for our future generations. Since these credits would be for an endowment, there is no end to the benefit communities would receive. It will allow not only our children a chance to leave a legacy, but it will also allow our grandchildren and future generations to follow in their ancestors' footsteps and be a part of a thriving community.

Thank you for your consideration and your continued vision of making our state a family of those wanting to improve all aspects of our communities.

Respectfully submitted,



Jason R. Murray, Executive Director