

March 7, 2016

To: Chairman Marvin Kleeb
House Taxation Committee
From: Finney County Commissioners
Subject: Written Testimony Supporting HB 2609

The Board of Finney County Commissioners are in support of House Bill 2609 which allows counties needed management flexibility in the following very important areas:

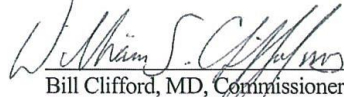
1. Permits using a municipal cost index instead of consumer price index.
2. HB 2609 would allow cities and counties to use home rule powers to opt out of the election requirement. The bill changes the election requirement to require at least 10.0 percent of the electors to sign a petition before an election would be required to approve the budget.
3. Would not require a local election to approve a budget that includes additional property taxes in the following limited instances:
 - To meet unfunded mandates by federal or state laws.
 - To fund employer contributions for Social Security, workers compensation, unemployment insurance, health care costs, and employee retirement and pension program costs.
 - To fund expenses incurred by the county for district court operations and detention of juveniles.
 - To fund expenses for law enforcement services, emergency medical services, mental health services.
4. To fund expenses related to a disaster or emergency declared by a federal official, state official, or municipal governing body.

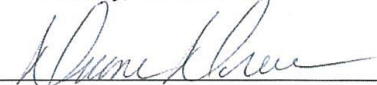
We take very seriously our responsibility to the taxpayers. We develop sustainable budgets that provide the best service possible with limited financial resources. Historically, operating and capital improvement budgets adopted by Finney County budgets have shown a yearly increase that is less than the municipal price index.

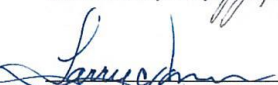
For these reasons, we support House Bill 2609. Thank you for considering our written testimony.

Sincerely,


Lon E. Pishny, Commissioner


Bill Clifford, MD, Commissioner


Duane Drees, Commissioner


Larry Jones, Commissioner


Dave Jones, Commission Chair