



**Shawnee County
Office of County Treasurer**

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LARRY MAH
COUNTY TREASURER

House Committee on Transportation

Chairman Proehl

HB 2181

February 12, 2015

This testimony supports increasing the title fee from \$10 to \$20 as proposed in HB2181. The \$20 fee would bring Kansas more in line with the national average of \$30.50. It would also provide funds needed to support the titling process at the county level. In May 2012, the title review and approval responsibilities were transferred to the County Treasurers' offices concurrent with the implementation of the Motor Vehicle Modernization software. No additional funds were allocated to the counties to fund this additional responsibility.

Since the 2012 implementation, counties have struggled to process motor vehicle titles due to software defects and the more stringent work process built into the software. The review and approval process has proven to be labor intensive requiring counties to hire additional personnel in order to complete the reviews in a timely manner. The 2014 post audit report on the Motor Vehicle Modernization Project documented the ongoing issues with the software as well as the failure to complete the title approval process in a timely manner. The backlog of titles pending approval has exceeded six months in some counties resulting in public anger.

In recent years, the Legislature has enacted several statutes which use the county motor vehicle operations to provide various services. One case in point is the sale of State Park permits. The taxpayer is able to purchase an annual park permit with their vehicle registration. This is a great convenience to the taxpayer, but this additional responsibility came with no funding. As the State begins work on the current budget shortfall, there is discussion of eliminating the current renewal notice service provided by the Kansas Department of Revenue. If implemented, this will place a tremendous burden on the county offices from inbound calls and walk-in renewals. The counties will be forced to print and mail the renewal notices. The estimated cost to Shawnee County exceeds \$50,000 per year. The elimination of the renewal notice will result in long waiting lines and public frustration. The \$10 title fee increase would be a step forward to pay for the additional work already mandated and what appears to be a continuing trend of transferring work traditionally done at the state level to the counties.

Larry K. Mah

Shawnee County Treasurer