



MARION COUNTY COURTHOUSE

MARION COUNTY, KANSAS
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK

200 S. Third St., Suite 104
MARION, KANSAS 66861
620-382-2185

TINA D. SPENCER, CLERK
COUNTY ELECTION OFFICER

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
LORI L. LALOUE
DIANNE R. NOVAK
RANDY DALLKE

Honorable Kansas State Representative Steven Johnson
Chairman, House Taxation Committee
and Distinguished Members of the Committee

RE: HB 2380

Submitted by Tina D. Spencer, Marion County Clerk

March 8, 2017

Chairman Johnson and Distinguished Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on this legislation.

Marion County has been fortunate in the past to receive legislative authority through K.S.A. 12-187(2) to submit the question to our voters of imposing a countywide retailers' sales tax and pledging the revenue received therefrom for the purpose of financing the construction or remodeling of a courthouse, jail, law enforcement center facility or other county administrative facility. Under this authority, we submitted the option to our voters to implement a special one-half cent sales tax to finance the construction of our new jail/law enforcement facility. The ballot measure was approved in April, 2011 and the tax was implemented in July, 2011.

This has been a very successful method of financing for our project. We estimate that we will have collected sufficient sales tax revenue by the end of the first quarter of 2018 to pay off the debt, which will allow us to cancel the current sales tax on April 1, 2018, several years earlier than anticipated.

While this is exciting, Marion County is facing several important challenges as we move into the future:

1. Emergency Medical Services: Marion County has traditionally handled EMS via a paid volunteer service. Over the past several years, there has been a huge decline in volunteerism. In order to continue to provide emergency medical services to our citizens, we are transitioning our service. We currently have one full time crew and are looking to add at least one more full time crew over the next few months to cover our two largest communities and surrounding areas. Outlying parts of the County will still utilize volunteers for now, but the future of our service is unknown. **The implementation of a combined full time and volunteer service (while benefiting our citizens) causes an urgent need for us to provide one or more locations for medical personnel to be housed.** Ideally, at least one EMS station would be built in the County. All feasible possibilities are being evaluated.
2. Transfer Station: Our transfer station facility is showing extreme wear and tear. There are several signs that before long it will not be structurally sound enough to be safe for use. We have examined several options for repairing or replacing the facility. All of the options will be expensive for our citizens. **The safety of our current transfer station is a growing concern.**

3. Storage: The County faces significant challenges in regard to document and equipment storage. Currently the attic of our historic courthouse is utilized for storage of documents and supplies. Several years ago a study was performed that indicated the weight of the files stored in the attic is reaching a level that is higher than recommended. In addition, the County is currently renting several storage facilities for storage of equipment and files. **A storage building is needed to reduce the weight of items stored in the courthouse attic and to make more efficient use of our citizens' tax dollars.**
4. Economic Development: We are a rural County with an aging population and are experiencing economic decline. Our citizens have made it clear that economic development is important to them and that a change in direction is needed. The County Commission created a task force to research and propose a solution for moving forward. We are currently transitioning to an economic development corporation to be funded jointly by the county and the cities. This is a bold new step for Marion County, and will require a significant commitment for funding. **Successful economic development is essential for the survival of our County.**

None of these major issues fit neatly under our current statutory authority. However, they all need to be accomplished in the near future. It is the belief of the Board of Commissioners and myself that the most responsible way to accomplish these projects is to allow the voters to decide whether to once again implement a one-half cent sales tax to finance any or all of these initiatives. In order to do this, our statutory authority needs to be broader.

We are respectfully requesting that additional statutory authority be granted as specified in this bill for us to continue to serve the needs of our citizens in a responsible manner.

In order to accomplish this in a way which least impacts our citizens, the timing is critical. We would like to present the question to our voters on the ballot this November, which could facilitate the new tax (if approved) to take effect immediately after the current tax is cancelled – causing no change in the level of taxation for our citizens, and solving several of our major issues.

Of course, we still face many other challenges such as increasing costs for employee benefits, the need to upgrade radios and voting equipment, and the ever present need for adequate roads and bridges. This would be a very positive step for our County, and would give us a tool to move forward responsibly and effectively for the good of our citizens.

For your reference I have attached our current sales tax revenue information and projected payoff.

I would be glad to provide any additional information you might require in consideration of this request.

Thank you for allowing me to testify on this matter on behalf of the citizens I represent.

Sincerely,



Tina D. Spencer
Marion County Clerk
County Election Officer

tspencer@marioncoks.net

MARION COUNTY SPECIAL (JAIL) SALES TAX

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	
	<i>bal fwd</i>	\$186,456.38	\$511,065.16	\$878,424.35	\$1,125,034.24	\$1,378,566.11	\$1,623,567.34	\$1,843,391.42	
January		\$47,682.02	\$147,204.28	\$47,261.79	47,078.92	52,244.83	47,620.89	46,000.00	
February		\$44,776.30	\$43,884.30	\$45,523.59	51,237.36	46,558.79	51,563.19	46,000.00	
March		\$49,677.13	\$44,173.69	\$43,252.40	46,247.09	49,947.60	46,000.00	46,000.00	
April		\$44,200.91	\$41,223.08	\$45,161.06	45,783.85	45,361.71	46,000.00	46,000.00	
May		\$48,095.00	\$48,239.00	\$51,090.19	48,009.17	50,581.05	46,000.00	46,000.00	
June		\$45,095.01	\$44,289.17	\$48,519.97	50,195.46	43,869.05	46,000.00	46,000.00	
July		\$42,840.91	\$53,768.71	\$52,674.44	46,561.67	48,565.72	46,000.00	46,000.00	
August		\$63,469.97	\$48,748.92	\$48,108.31	49,332.98	49,935.87	46,000.00	46,000.00	
September		\$48,004.19	\$47,894.49	\$49,197.83	50,144.52	51,988.77	46,000.00	46,000.00	
October		\$50,169.43	\$48,689.17	\$52,379.05	51,519.12	45,443.28	46,000.00	46,000.00	
November		\$54,218.87	\$53,834.35	\$50,456.58	55,055.19	52,458.95	46,000.00	46,000.00	
December		\$41,098.70	\$50,954.71	\$49,312.30	53,226.54	48,205.61	46,000.00	46,000.00	
<i>Other income</i>		\$1,574.67	\$36,315.32	\$32.38				92,000.00	<i>residual</i>
Total collected per yr	\$186,456.38	\$580,903.11	\$709,219.19	\$582,969.89	\$594,391.87	\$585,161.23	\$559,184.08	\$230,000.00	
Running total per yr	\$0.00	\$767,359.49	\$1,220,284.35	\$1,461,394.24	\$1,719,426.11	\$1,963,727.34	\$2,182,751.42	\$2,073,391.42	
Payments due per yr	\$0.00	\$256,294.33	\$341,860.00	\$336,360.00	\$340,860.00	\$340,160.00	\$339,360.00	\$338,460.00	
Balance Fwd	\$186,456.38	\$511,065.16	\$878,424.35	\$1,125,034.24	\$1,378,566.11	\$1,623,567.34	\$1,843,391.42	\$1,734,931.42	
									payments due
									2019
									2020
									2021
									2022
									2023
									\$44,931.42

Other income:
 2012 - deposit GK Baum
 2013 - close out construction fund
 2014 - interest earned