



Date: March 16, 2017

To: Chairman Steven Johnson and House Taxation Committee:

From: David Austin, Mayor of Bel Aire, Kansas

Re: Written Testimony in Support of HB 2376

Property taxes make up forty three percent of the City of Bel Aire's total revenues. These funds are used to provide public safety, maintain public parks & recreational facilities, and to repair and improve streets. Each year, the City's budget process focuses on maintaining high service delivery levels while being as efficient as possible with tax payer money. The result has been no tax rate (mill levy) increases over the last five years and no increases are anticipated for the near future.

When new homes are constructed in Bel Aire, additional tax revenues are generated due to the assessed valuation (total value of all property within the City) increasing. This additional revenue helps the City maintain a high quality of life for residents in the form of community amenities, street improvements, and public safety coverage without raising taxes on existing home owners. Thanks to the City's growth of residential homes at about 8% per year, the assessed valuation continues to climb. This helps keep taxes low for existing citizens. However, the large increase in growth requires new infrastructure, more public improvements and public safety additions that outpace the CPI.

The protest petition election does not alter the tax lid law, only the election process. A protest petition election will allow the City to explain our unique position (how growth increases assessed valuation) in a more efficient manner to any concerned citizen. Thank you for your time and we appreciate your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "D. Austin", written over a faint, illegible printed name.

David Austin
Mayor City of Bel Aire, Kansas