



WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

**Testimony of Larry Jones, Finney County Commissioner
Before the House Taxation Committee
In Support of House Bill No. 2424
May 9, 2017**

Member Counties

Barber

Chairman Johnson and Members of the House Taxation Committee:

Barton

Clark

Established in 1980, Kansas Legislative Policy Group (KLPG) is a non-partisan organization comprised of elected county commissioners representing the collective interests of 35 rural Kansas counties. Thank you for allowing KLPG to provide written testimony in support of House Bill No. 2424, which provides an exemption from the property tax lid for certain employee benefits.

Ellis

Finney

Ford

Gove

Grant

Property taxes provide funding for the salaries of county employees providing essential county services – law enforcement, fire, emergency medical services, E-911, county health departments, hospitals, libraries, roadways – that benefit all citizens.

Gray

Hamilton

Harper

Haskell

The property tax lid adopted in 2015 restricts the amount of property tax revenue a county can collect from year to year through a formula based on the inflation rate or by holding an election and vote of the people. The 2015 legislation and subsequent amendments provide important exemptions that afford limited, but vital, flexibility for our boards of county commissioners in the development of an operating budget.

Hodgeman

Kearny

Kiowa

Lane

Logan

Two of the toughest challenges our commissioner’s face is attracting and retaining qualified employees and maintaining the current level and quality of public services. It’s not easy to offer salaries that compare to larger communities therefore we must provide compensation packages that compete in other ways. Yet the fastest growing expenditures for counties are employer contributions to retirement plans, healthcare coverage and other employee-benefit related programs. These costs will continue to increase into the future.

Meade

Morton

Ness

Norton

Rawlins

Rice

Russell

The counties share of state assessed KPERS and KP&F contributions are totally outside the control of local governments. A county has absolutely no control over an increase in insurance premiums for healthcare. We often don’t have a final number these expenditures until we are well into the budgeting process.

Rush

Scott

Seward

Sheridan

House Bill No. 2424 is a positive step in the proper direction and would allow local governments crucial management flexibility.

Sherman

Stanton

Stevens

Thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to present written testimony to the Committee. I urge you to support House Bill No. 2424.

Thomas

Trego

Wallace

Wichita

Larry Jones
President
Kansas Legislative Policy Group

