



March 15, 2017

Testimony in Support of SCR 1602

Chairwoman Tyson and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Jeff Glendening, and I am the Kansas State Director of Americans for Prosperity, the state's largest grassroots advocate for free markets. On behalf of over 50,000 AFP activists in Kansas, I urge you to support Senate Concurrent Resolution 1602 which would create tax expenditure limits for the state of Kansas.

It's no secret that Kansas is currently dealing with an imbalance between its revenue and its spending. Recent proposals have attempted to deal with this imbalance by increasing income taxes, sales taxes, motor fuel taxes and even cigarette taxes. What has been missing from the discussion is any attempt to rein in government spending, which has continued to grow at an unsustainable rate.

For example, after the tax cut in 2012 the state has not cut spending, so the ensuing deficit should come as no surprise. Spending has continued to grow fairly uninterrupted since the tax cuts were put into place. Simply put, this is irresponsible fiscal policy.

This irresponsible spending policy doesn't have to continue, however, as the legislature can display true leadership by adding spending limits to the Kansas Constitution.

Although only one state, Colorado, has a constitutional amendment like the one proposed in this legislation, expenditure limits have proved to be effective at controlling spending across the country. For example, states with limits, like Utah and Idaho, have spent almost \$2,000 less per capita than Montana and Wyoming, which have no such laws. These laws have helped rein in budgets and forced government to prioritize spending as government services such as schools and road still continue to be funded.

Colorado, which has its Taxpayer Bill of Rights, or TABOR, has seen even more astonishing results. Colorado limits the amount of money government can spend based on a formula involving inflation plus population growth. Anything beyond that must be approved by voters. Any excess revenue is then returned to the taxpayers, which has amounted to more than \$2 billion since 1992. At the same time, Colorado has continued to have one of the highest levels of economic and population growth in the country.

If Kansas truly wants to create a sustainable fiscal situation, the way to do so is it rein in the growth of spending, not increase taxes on working families. I urge you to support Senate Concurrent Resolution 1602 and put Kansas on the path to a bright fiscal future.

Jeff Glendening  
Kansas State Director  
Americans for Prosperity