

Testimony on Senate Bill 167
Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee
March 16, 2017
Harvey County Council of Governments
Bernie Koch

Senator Tyson and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill 167 on behalf of the Harvey County Council of Governments. That organization includes Harvey County and the seven cities in the county: Newton, Hesston, Halstead, North Newton, Sedgwick, Burrton, and Walton.

The local governments of Harvey County support the flexibility to use property taxes to continue services and add new ones that local communities need and want. To that end, we oppose the 2015 legislation that limits certain increases without an election and urge its repeal. In addition to being unworkable from a timing standpoint, the 2015 legislation limits the ability to provide the services for which local governments are responsible.

The legislation dilutes local control, creates more bureaucracy, and lacks coordination with budget timelines. It discriminates against smaller communities who lack the ability to bear the costs of elections.

Thomas Jefferson said, “The government closest to the people serves the people best.”

The prosperity of the State of Kansas is highly dependent upon the prosperity of local communities.

Thank you for your consideration.

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