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Testimony of McPherson County Health Department to the
House Committee on Taxation
Proponent for HB 2720 • March 5, 2020

Chairman Johnson and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to supply written testimony in support of House Bill 2720 regarding providing a refundable income tax credit for certain purchases of food and discontinuing the nonrefundable food sales tax credit. As a local health department, we are very concerned with ensuring access to healthy and affordable food.

HB 2720 will have a positive impact on health by shifting to a refundable income tax credit for food purchases. HB 2720 will allow the tax credit to go much further, as the current, nonrefundable credit experiences a lot less use than a refundable credit would see. This is because a refundable food sales tax credit allows tax filers to receive the difference if the credit amount exceeds their tax liability. Given their limited income, most low-income earners have little in the way of tax liability when they file their income taxes. As such, HB 2720 will broaden who can take advantage of the tax credit.

Local health departments like mine recognize the importance food plays in a healthy lifestyle. Sales taxes on food create a barrier for those with lower incomes. HB 2720's move to a refundable food sales tax credit will improve the system and allow more people to have access to quality food. It is for these reasons that we support HB 2720 and asks that you recommend it favorably.

Respectfully,

Shalei Shea

Shalei Shea, Director
McPherson County Health Department