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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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JOHN R. EPLEE, MD
63RD DISTRICT

February 20, 2019

Testimony in Support HB2063

Assessment & Taxation Committee

Honorable Chair-Carlynn Tyson

Vice Chair-Dan Kerschen

Ranking Minority-Tom Holland

Honorable Committee Members

Chairwoman Carlynn Tyson and Esteemed Colleagues of Assessment & Taxation Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to kick off my request to testify in favor of HB2063. Many members of this committee will recall this bill from the last session offered by Rep Greg Lewis. It is an honor for me to act in his absence and "re-launch" this bill again for this session.

This bill is referred to commonly as the "Pratt Airport Authority Bill." This bill was passed by this committee and our House Chamber last year by a vote of 118-0. Unfortunately, it had a doomed fate as it became a victim of last year's mega tax bill that ultimately did not make it out of our House Chamber. You may recall this bill died at the very end of session.

This is a companion bill to HB2628 passed last year and becoming law. HB2628 grants the City of Pratt a remedy of capacity to dissolve the Pratt Airport Authority if needed in the future. But this 2nd bill, HB2063, deals with the tax implications. The Pratt Airport Tax Authority (capped at 4 mills) can be transferred to the City of Pratt without requiring a vote under the tax lid.

The net result would be no net increase in taxing ability to the City of Pratt and the Airport Authority. It is a combination of taxing capacity of both entities. In this bill it is my understanding that City of Pratt could levy less that the total of the 2 entities together, but not greater than the 2.

I have a significant interest in this bill, as I have a similar situation in my own district 63 in Northeast Kansas. The City of Atchison and Watershed Authority #26 within the city are considering a similar dissolution and taking over the watershed taxing authority. Passing this bill will facilitate this similar issue in my own district. In both situations, all parties are desiring this consolidation ability from a governance stand point and a tax standpoint.

Thank you, Mrs. Chairwoman for this opportunity to appear before you and my fine colleagues of the Assessment & Taxation committee.

Representative John Eplee, District 63

Two handwritten signatures in black ink. The signature on the left is 'John R. Eplee' and the signature on the right is another name, possibly 'Dan Kerschen' or 'Tom Holland', though it is less legible.