



KANSAS
ASSOCIATION OF
COUNTIES

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Testimony of the Kansas Association of Counties to the
Senate Committee on Assessment and Taxation
Proponent for HB 2160 • March 19, 2019

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 2160 regarding sales tax authority for Wabaunsee County. Over the years, several counties have requested special sales tax authority for “dedicated” purposes. Purposes for imposing the dedicated taxes have varied – from constructing jails to financing the local match for system enhancements under the state’s comprehensive transportation programs to construction of a landfill to road and bridge improvements. Many of these “dedicated” countywide sales taxes have had sunset provisions, so that the tax is retired once the funds for a project are raised. The Legislature has routinely granted such requests for additional authority, subject to local voter approval. This bill passed the House by a margin of 112-7.

In this case, Wabaunsee County is requesting authority to hold an election to re-authorize the current sales tax for an additional 15 years, subject to approval by the local electors. The funds generated from this tax would continue to go to financing bridge and roadway construction and improvement in Wabaunsee County.

It is important to remember that approval of HB 2160 will not automatically re-authorize the tax. Approval of HB 2160 will allow Wabaunsee County to submit the ballot question to re-authorize the tax. The electors of Wabaunsee County may, should they choose, reject the ballot initiative and allow the current 0.5% sales tax to expire. However, the Kansas Association of Counties feels that decision is best left in the hands of the local electors.

Please report HB 2160 favorably for passage. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Jay Hall

Kansas Association of Counties

