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February 3, 2020

The Honorable Caryn Tyson

RE: SB294

Dear Senator Tyson:

While I can appreciate what SB294 is trying to accomplish, I do not believe the benefits of passing this bill will outweigh the complications.

My greatest concerns with this bill is:

1. Taxing districts that levy are already required to publish their proposed budget increase and estimated mill levy rate, along with a public hearing date, time, and location for residents to attend. Therefore, taxpayers already have access to speak with their districts over their concerns for raising the mill levy.
2. Counties do not have a way to electronically transmit the information to individual taxpayers, and would have to rely on the mail. Mailing to every property owner in Sumner County would be a great burden on an already small staff, costly, and very difficult to achieve. It would be easier to provide this information in a set location, such as our website or designated county newspaper that each interested taxpayer could seek this information.
3. Statute compliance is an issue we deal with in the County Clerk's Office. As of now, there are little to no repercussions for taxing districts that do not follow statutes. This bill would only enact more "rules" in which the counties have no way to enforce.

Instead, I propose more regulations on the taxing districts that receive tax dollars from their residents, and repercussions for those that do not comply with statutes.

In conclusion, I urge you to vote against SB 294. I believe the tax payers bear the responsibility of collecting their own information. At this time, there are resources for a taxpayer to collect this information from the County Clerk and County Appraiser, and we have very few residents that take advantage of that as it is.

Jennifer Strickland  
Assessment Clerk

Reviewed and approved: Debra A. Norris, Sumner County Clerk and Election Official