

Michael Stec
16295 262nd Road
Atchison, KS 66002

March 9, 2020

Senator Caryn Tyson
Chair – Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee
Room 123-E Statehouse
Topeka, KS 66612

Re: Senate Bill 396

Dear Senator Tyson and Committee Members,

I am writing on behalf of myself, in opposition of this bill. I have been the Vice-Chairman of the Atchison County Solid Waste Committee since 2013, as appointed by the Atchison County Commission. I live in an unincorporated area of Atchison County; I also own a business on a separate parcel, that is in the same township as my home.

I was appointed by the City of Atchison in 2018, to be a member of the Joint Communications & Solid Waste Sales Tax Committee, which was formed to give guidance to the Atchison County Commission, the City of Atchison, and the other cities in the County; in an effort to find consensus for the equitable funding of Solid Waste Management and Emergency Joint Communications operations. The funding of those operations come in part from one cent countywide general use sales tax, which was approved by the citizens of Atchison County in 1993.

From what I am led to believe this, this bill was inspired at least in part, by the recent discourse, the apportionment of the funds raised by this tax, has caused in my community. For a variety of reasons, I have had a front row seat at the funding discussions for these programs for many years. I have earned enough respect from both the County and the City of Atchison Commission's, to have had both bodies to appoint me to assist with this issue.

The dynamics of this discussion change with every election, and with realignments of funding priorities – that are necessary to maintain compliance with regulators and to keep pace with industry best practices. Given these constraints, regular and transparent communication is key. I am confident that by working together - like we always have in the past – we will be able to maintain the quality programs our fellow citizens expect.

Like so many of you that I am testifying before today, I have had a variety of leadership roles in my community. One thing I have learned from being part of a team, is that no measure passes unless you build consensus. Every countywide general use tax this bill seeks to alter, will disrespect the many coalitions that brought communities together to fund important work for their citizens.

Please be mindful of the efforts of those citizens who formed consensus to get these taxes passed and respect their right to continue to manage them.

I haven't been able to determine the original intent of the apportionment formula, but it seems safe to assume that it is very much rooted in the urban and rural dynamics still in place today. In Atchison County, the City's maintain a supermajority, I would assume this is the norm for the majority of the State's 105 counties. Should you choose to drastically alter this formula you put in peril the delicate balance this law provides in its current form – by affording protections for both cities and counties.

Respectfully yours,

Michael Stec