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January 20, 2021

Kansas House Taxation Committee
Via Electronic Submission
RE: 2020 SB 13 – Amendments Requested

Chairman Smith and Members of the Committee:

My name is Janet White, I am the Miami County Clerk. I am submitting neutral written testimony regarding SB13 hoping to negotiate a more workable bill.

First and foremost, the implementation date of the bill is problematic. Would you please consider changing the implementation date to January 1, 2022? This would allow a more efficient use of taxpayer dollars so that programming changes required to comply with this bill could be done and vetted in a timely, normal-course-of-business manner. The implementation date in the bill would require extraordinary expenditure. As County Elected Officials we are also good stewards of taxpayer dollars. If a notification to the taxpayer is to be sent with that much detail, it would be appreciated by all, that it be accurate when sent. Miami County has 13 Townships and 7 Cemetery Districts which budget just what is needed for one year of operations. Money for the cost of notifications has not been budgeted. Special needs arise for these districts and their taxpayers even when they are trying their best to hold the line on increases to the public.

Our estimate of cost to print and mail these notices on a countywide basis is \$16,000.00. This doesn't include the staff time required to verify that the information is correct prior to mailing. The timeframe to send these notifications will typically occur when most County Clerk/Election Officers will be preparing ballots for the fall elections and preparing for tax statements. This expense has not been budgeted, so allowing for a later implementation date, would ensure that this expense can be budgeted by the requesting entities

A simpler notification process would be less expensive and cause less confusion for the taxpayer. The taxpayers already receive a notification in March regarding their valuation on each parcel. Maybe the notification could just be simple and effective for the taxpayer by simply stating a levy increase is anticipated by the taxing entity that is increasing their budget. The contact information for the entity should be included so that the taxpayer would know exactly who to contact regarding the increase. The taxpayer could then speak directly to the entities leadership to get their concern or questions answered. In Miami County there are 39 taxing entities not including the State and the Schools. Other questions which arise and do not seem to be contemplated by SB 13: We have 7 shared Districts of the 39, how will those work? These districts cross county lines. Am I to notify the residents in the adjoining county when there is a proposed increase in a joint district? Additionally, will the Recreation Commissions fall under the School exemption?

One last thing, I think it is important to consider that an increase of growth, due to new improvements or a change in use of property, typically requires additional County services. Those additional services require additional levy, which requires additional taxes, and additional budgetary resources for mailing. Simply put, this bill implements a tax increase in the form of mailing costs to the public.

Thank you for taking the time to read and consider my opinions.

Janet White, Miami County Clerk