

STATE OF KANSAS

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SENATE CHAMBER

Proponent Testimony for SB 76

Madam Chairman and Committee members. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you as a proponent of **SB 76**; the Golden Years Homestead Property Tax Freeze Act. And I want to thank Senator Holland for being the lead sponsor of the legislation.

All who have been a legislator for any length of time have heard complaints about taxes – and frequently property taxes. I know I have. As a matter of fact, prior to 2021 (this year it's been struggles with unemployment benefits), property taxes, the amount and constant increases, have been the number one issue constituents have asked me to address or "fix".

Admittedly, SB 76 won't solve all issues with property taxes. Nor will it provide property tax relief to all homeowners. But it will help our fixed income senior citizens – those age 65 and above – and our disabled military veterans. Many of whom struggle to pay an ever-increasing property tax bill.

During my previous time in the legislature (12 years in the House), I worked to find a way to provide property tax relief for senior citizens. It was a difficult task as my solution required a constitutional amendment and was opposed by local units of government – those who assess the largest portion of property taxes.

Since SB 76 is funded by state dollars and does nothing to reduce the ability of local units of government to receive revenue, it should remove opposition from those who generally oppose such tax cutting measures.

As a cosponsor of SB 76, I support the bill as written. However, if the Committee deems changes necessary, a couple options would be to change the base year from 2019 to 2020 and increase the maximum income level for those who would qualify for the tax freeze from \$50,000 to something higher – maybe \$75,000. I only suggest these possible changes as an effort to assist in getting the legislation through the process and start providing tax relief to disabled veterans and senior citizens who live in Kansas.

Thanks again for your time. I'm happy to answer questions at the appropriate time.