

January 23,2023

Chairman

My name is Rick James, a former County Commissioner for two terms in Linn County. I am here to show my opposition against HB 2002. The State should continue to fund, indefinitely, the cost of printing and postage for our counties. By eliminating the state funded portion of SB13, it places a financial burden on many of our counties. Linn Counties' bill for this last year was \$10,847.11. Our county has less than 10,000 people. Some of the opposition and anger from county commissioners when the first senate bill (SB294) was introduced was that the state would eventually pass this financial obligation on to the counties. Here we are today facing a possible financial debacle over state funding on printing and postage. A law that you placed on local governments.

I testified in favor of that first senate bill because, I believed that the bill would effectively save and help protect our taxpayers' money from local governments. Linn County itself has been revenue neutral for the two years of this bill's existence. In addition to that, this year, several cities and one school district are revenue- neutral. This bill works because it generates thought for leaders. It holds them accountable to the public by requiring them to be notified of a potential raise in their revenue-neutral mill rate. The bill ended an era of taking the entire mill levy rate, putting it into a budget and approving it with little or no opposition from the public. The public had little no say. I tell you that to say this, eliminating the state's financial funding in house bill (HB 2002) places yet another liability on many counties, school districts, and cities who simply can't afford it. It will also undoubtedly create a new effort among local leadership to attempt to have (SB 13) repealed. They will use this new cost as an unfair burden and unwarranted requirement. If pandora's box is allowed open reporting will go away, eliminating transparency to the public. Truth in Taxation is what the state campaigned for and passed into law. Representative Fairchild voted in favor of SB13. I'm not sure why he is sponsoring HB2002 because in no way does it help local government or the citizens of Kansas however, it would boost the states' future budgets. I do not support this bill but ask instead, the state indefinitely fund the cost of printing and postage.


Rick James