

STATE OF KANSAS

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SENATE CHAMBER

Proponent Testimony for SB 97

Thank you Chairman Tyson and Committee Members for the opportunity to appear before you today in support of SB 97.

Even before becoming a legislator in 2005, I heard many “discussions” regarding property taxes. The discussions were not about how delighted Kansans were with their property taxes, but about how property taxes in Kansas are too high and cause economic hardships – especially for those on a fixed income.

SB97 is legislation to reduce property taxes and does what should have been done many years ago.

In the late 1990’s, my memory says 1997, the Legislature passed legislation wherein the first \$20,000 of residential property was exempt from the 20 mills levied by the state to help fund public education. Up until the 2022 session, the \$20,000 exemption had not been changed. In 2022, the legislature increased the exemption to \$40,000 and installed an inflationary adjustment, so the exemption amount would increase with time.

Had the inflation adjustment formula been put in place in 1997, the exemption amount would be very close to \$65,000 – the dollar amount in SB97. Last session the Senate passed legislation to set the exemption amount at \$65,000, but since the House had not taken up the issue, the conference committee settled on the \$40,000 figure. SB 97 allows the senate to again take a position that \$65,000 is the amount we believe the exemption should be set at.

I ask the Committee to recommend SB 97 favorably for passage.

I’m happy to stand for questions at the appropriate time