

Date: March 10, 2023  
To: Chairman of House Committee Hearing SB248  
From: Stan Luke, Mayor  
City of Burlington, Kansas  
Reference: **Opposition to SB 248**

The City of Burlington has a voter approved sales tax on items sold within the city limits. This sales tax has been in effect for over ten years and supports three critical pieces of our infrastructure.

1. Approximately 15 years ago we built a new water treatment plant which supplies water to four (4) communities within the county and several water districts. This service represents almost 85% of the consumable water supplied to the entire county as well as individuals who visit the area. One half of the city tax supports the annual debt payment on the water plant. This sales tax spreads the costs across all water users as well as visitors and campers to the area, and outage workers. This directly lowers the costs to local residents and property taxes to city landowners.
2. Ten years ago, we established a rotational street repair program which has drastically improved the quality of the streets. Once again this helps maintain lower property taxes and spreads the costs across all who visit, camp, work outage and reside within the city. This represents 25% of the local voter approved city sales tax.
3. The remaining 25% goes to public safety and city parks. Instead of raising property taxes we support park improvements and expand the capabilities of recreational facilities within a safe environment.

City taxes are not created on a whim, they are thought out, tested, voted upon and then implemented to minimize the impact on residents and spread the cost across all who utilize the services.

Burlington has the only full-service grocery store in the county. If the state chooses to eliminate the city tax on products purchased at the grocery stores throughout Kansas, I expect to see increases in property tax. Our best estimate is that it

would raise our city millage rate by at least 7 mills which represents about a 15% increase. I do not believe this is what you want to accomplish as it is the opposite of what you want to do – help the taxpayer. Increases in property taxes directly impacts homeowners, indirectly impacts renters as rent will increase, businesses will need to raise prices or close, it could potentially lower quality of city services provided and add another barrier for economic growth.

I request that you oppose the adoption of SB248, as the adoption would be highly negative on the residents of our city and the state.