

March 18, 2024

Committee on Assessment and Taxation

Written Testimony in Support of SB 537

Submitted by Shirley Estrada

Chairwoman Caryn Tyson and members of the Committee:

My name is Shirley Estrada, a private citizen residing in District #1 in Neosho County.

I appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony in support of SB 537, a countywide retailers' sales tax of .5%, which I believe is necessary as a funding source to construct, maintain and improve aging roads and bridges in the county.

This .5% will be a new sales tax upon the expiration of the existing .5% sales tax used to construct Shaw/Elk Road, an important connection between the cities of Erie and Chanute, which in turn was a new sales tax upon the expiration of a .5% sales tax originating in 2000 for the construction of a new county jail. Therefore, this .5% sales tax has been an ongoing tax for 24 years for 2 separate purposes, and, hopefully, now a third.

I neither enjoy paying taxes, nor do I enjoy crumbling roads and bridges in our county, but the reality is the county does not have adequate funding resources to address these issues. This .5% sales tax would not solve, but rather give a much needed boost to address the more critical infrastructure needs in the county over the next 10 years.

The current .5% sales tax generates approximately \$1.6M annually. In order to generate this much in funding through property taxes, it would require adding over 10 mils to the current 48.190 mil levy. Given these two choices, my preference is to pay .5% in a retailers' sales tax.

Please support SB 537 with an affirmative vote of approval.

Shirley Estrada

Neosho County Resident