

Testimony on SB 537

**Senate Bill 537 is a bill that would authorize Neosho County to enact a .5% sales tax specifically dedicated to construction, maintenance, and improvement of county roads and bridges for the exclusive use of the county. Currently Neosho County has a .75% sales tax that is for the purpose of the county ambulance service, and a .5% sales tax that is shared with cities in Neosho County. In addition, Neosho County has a .5% sales tax for a road construction project which will sunset in early 2025.**

**Neosho County maintains over 500 miles of roads including 100 miles of chip and seal roads, and over 150 bridges. The county has not had sufficient funds to repair and maintain these structures as the property valuation is approximately \$153 million dollars, with a set mill levy of 47.92 mills. Neosho County projects that a .5% sales tax will raise \$1,500,000 per year over its ten-year lifespan. In addition, this .5% sales tax will not only increase revenues for road improvement projects, it will also generate cash reserves necessary to participate in state and federal cost sharing programs for road and bridge improvement projects.**

**As a resident of Neosho County, the most common complaint I hear from other residents of the county, is the condition of our roads. Allowing the county to submit to the voters a sales tax that would raise additional funds necessary to improve the condition of our road and bridges would be considered a big step in addressing these complaints. I would urge the committee to pass this bill this session.**

**Tom Giefer**

**Neosho County Resident**