

HOUSE BILL No. 2776
By Committee on Taxation

This testimony is in favor of House Bill No. 2776 concerning income taxation; relating to credits and Eisenhower Foundation donations.

I am Merrill Eisenhower Atwater, the great-grandson of President Dwight D. Eisenhower. I am the former Director of Aviation for the Kansas Department of Transportation and I am currently the COO of People to People International a 501(c) (3) established by President Eisenhower in 1956. People to People International has no affiliation to the Eisenhower Foundation. I am here on behalf of the Eisenhower Family.

Thank you, Chairman, for allowing me to speak on HB 2776, It is truly an honor to be here and I look forward to any questions at the end of my testimony.

The Eisenhower Museum opened in 1954 when my great-grandfather was sitting as the 34th president of the United States. The Eisenhower Presidential Library is an extraordinary testament to what a Kansan can achieve. It acts a constant reminder of how a person who grows up in less fortunate circumstances can change the world.

The Eisenhower Presidential Library was the first of its kind and is only one of 14 presidential libraries in the country. The library has over 26 million pages of historical records and papers, 335,000 photographs, 768,000 feet of original motion picture films and 70,000 artifacts. The library acts as one of the largest tourist attractions in Kansas. Students from all over Kansas and the Midwest travel to the Library to learn about President Eisenhower, foreign and domestic policy, Civil Rights, The Cold War, The Interstate System, FAA, NASA, Korea, to name a few. Over 200,000 visitors have a significant financial impact in Abilene and the surrounding communities.

The Eisenhower Foundation, is steward of the entire Eisenhower Complex that consists of the Boyhood Home, the Library, Chapel (the resting place of President Eisenhower, Mamie Eisenhower and their youngest son) and the Museum. The Foundation also promotes education about the president and his policies both as a general and as President of the United States.

The Eisenhower Presidential Library and Museum is the gem of the Midwest. It is an exceptional asset in which Kansans can be proud to invest. The ROI is exception because it cost Kansan's NOTHING. On behalf of the Eisenhower Family we fully support this bill. Thank you I will stand for questions.