

**House Taxation Committee**  
**HB 2720**  
**Sister Therese Bangert**  
**Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth**  
**Proponent**

It is good to be back in front of you to support one of the recommendations of the Governor's Tax Council. I gave testimony during one of their meetings in support of a return to a Refundable Food Sales Tax Credit. I noted that like many of you I am not a fan of the Food Sales Tax. However, drastically reducing it or eliminating it does not make common sense as we face the many needs of Kansans, the needs of infrastructure and the need to pay off previous debts.

Providing a refundable food sales tax credit targets families and individuals who already pay a greater percentage of their income for taxes. This targeting is an important attempt to make a fairer "tax field".

**Recommendations:**

- Keep HB2720 as a separate bill. This refundable credit deserves its own debate. There have been bi-partisan comments about wanting to reduce or eliminate the Food Sales Tax. A debate solely on HB2720 will demonstrate that this Legislature cares about the high taxes the poorest citizens in Kansas pay for food.
- If any amendments are added, consider adding a credit for the children in the household. The Food Sales Tax Credit that was lost in the 2012 Tax Bill gave an allowance for each child. If the fiscal note is too high for such, perhaps it could be limited to 3 children as the federal EITC law does – and thus our State EITC law does.

**Not Insignificant:**

The persons who are VITA workers – Volunteers in Tax Assistance – have taught me about recipients of the Refundable Food Sales Tax. They watched many people who do not have to file taxes because of their low incomes come to the VITA sites and wait 5-6 hours to have assistance in filling out the application to receive the \$30 or \$60 dollars of the past.

I have become mindful that most of those who receive this tax credit are not people who have any "side bar" to receive some cash e.g. families who give them cash at Christmastime or on their birthday. I believe these refund dollars will be spent. I call it "trickle down".

As Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth our mission is to put our hands and hearts to the task of walking with people in poverty and changing the systems that contribute to poverty. I encourage you to support HB2720.

Thank YOU for hearing me. Thank you for having this hearing.

**I give you a greeting of PEACE and my continued promise of prayers.**