



February 13, 2024

Kansas Senate Committee on Assessment and Taxation
Sen. Caryn Tyson, Chair
assessment.taxation@senate.ks.gov
(submitted via email)

Re: Testimony in Opposition to SB 468

Chair Tyson and Members of the Committee on Assessment and Taxation,

Please accept this testimony in opposition to SB 468 on behalf of the City of Spring Hill, Kansas.

Spring Hill is proud of its work in lowering the mill levy by almost four mills over the past five years despite rising inflation and city growth that necessitates additional staff such as our incredible police officers. Our Governing Body and Staff has undertaken significant time and work crafting budgets that lower the mill levy while still providing the positive services our citizens seek and deserve.

As one of the fastest-growing cities in Kansas, the City of Spring Hill also explores and uses every opportunity to grow its local economy, bring jobs and community stakeholders to the City, and to create economic development that allows the City to continue lowering the property tax burden on its citizens.

Unfortunately, SB 468 would undercut what appears to be its very purpose. The Revenue Neutral Rate has been encouraged by lawmakers as a transparent way to ensure taxing bodies do not overburden their citizens. However, one of the best ways to achieve the goal of lowering property taxes is to increase revenue from other sources, including attracting new businesses and growing sales tax revenues. An important tool for cities are economic incentives such as tax abatements, IRBs, and TIF districts. Spring Hill has worked hard to attract businesses and growth with minimal assistance, but having a broad toolbox available is critical, especially for cities near our borders.

Cities like Spring Hill can find themselves at a disadvantage to larger municipalities – both within Kansas and outside our state lines – that already have a significant commercial and industrial tax base to allow for lowering property taxes. SB 468 could stymie the growth that provides alternative sources of revenue to municipalities. Thus, by restricting cities' flexibility and tools to further economic development, SB 468 stands to harm the very people it appears targeted at protecting – homeowners in our communities.

It is not realistic to expect a city to simultaneously invest in economic development, including the creation of new jobs in this state, while also staying within the Revenue Neutral Rate.

I urge this Committee to stand with municipalities around the state and with their constituents and vote against SB 468.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lane Massey".

Lane Massey
City Administrator, Spring Hill, Kansas

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