



## Statehouse News

January 20, 2023

### 3 Mile Ring Around the City

A bill to abolish the three mile zoning ring around cities is gaining traction.

As background, the three mile ring law has been in place for decades. It creates a buffer between the edge of city and the county. Many counties do not have zoning or nuisance laws, so the three mile ring prevents someone from building a junk yard or pig farm right next to the city limit line.

Rep Ken Corbett, R-Topeka is pushing this bill. He doesn't think city rules should intrude on the rights of county residents. This issue is very divisive. The League of Kansas Municipalities will oppose the bill. The KAC and KCCA are surveying our members to see what position we should take.

### Tax Rate Notices

House Bill 2002 will have a hearing on Tuesday in House Tax. The bill calls for permanent state funding of the costs for sending out notices under the Revenue Neutral Tax legislation. That law requires counties to send out notices to all taxpayers if the taxing jurisdiction collects more money this year than last year. Sending those notices has cost well over a million dollars. The state agreed to pay those costs for the first two years. That state assistance will end at the end of 2023. HB 2002 would require the state to keep funding those costs. KAC and KCCA will testify in support of the bill. The hearing is Tuesday at 3:30 in House Tax. If you want to submit written testimony, send a PDF copy to the committee assistant at [lea.gerard@house.ks.gov](mailto:lea.gerard@house.ks.gov).

### Election Bills

At least 18 election bills have already been thrown in the hopper. Republicans say the bills are aimed at preventing election fraud. Democrats say the bills are designed to suppress voter turnout by minority populations. Secretary of State Scott Schwab says there is no election fraud in Kansas.

The KCCA will not engage in those debates, but we will analyze all the bills to determine what kind of extra costs these bills will dump on county budgets. Two bills being heard next would mandate all mail-in ballots must be returned to the election office by 7pm on election day. It eliminates the 3 day grace period now allowed. That bill is HB 2056. The other bill will require an election runoff for state positions if no candidate gets more than 50% of the vote. If the state wants to impose runoff elections

that's fine, except County Clerks and Election Commissioners will have to administer them. The timeline will be difficult to meet and it will impose lots of extra expense for counties.

# Kansas County Commissioners Association

## 2023 Legislative Priorities

**Home Rule:** The KCCA supports Home Rule and Local Control. Elected city and county officials should be able to make decisions for their communities and the citizens they serve without legislative interference as mandated in the Kansas Constitution.

**Property Valuations:** The KCCA supports appraisals based on fair market value as historically used in Kansas. We support the traditional and statutory definition of fair market value which in KSA 79-503a “means the amount in terms of money that a well-informed buyer is justified in paying and a well-informed seller is justified in accepting for property in an open and competitive market...” We oppose changes to property valuations which shift the property tax burden to benefit one category of property to the detriment of all others. KCCA contends such changes are unconstitutional and inequitable.

**Property Tax Procedures:** The KCCA supports correcting the burdensome procedures in the property tax disclosure process as called for in Senate Bill 13. While KCCA supports transparency measures in the way budgets are built and tax rates are set, those measures should not add additional costs to taxpayers. In the goal of full transparency, the KCCA calls for the requirements of the revenue neutral tax rate process to be followed by all taxing entities, including the state, school districts, community colleges, and special districts.

**Property Tax Reductions:** The KCCA supports a cooperative partnership with the State Legislature to reduce property taxes. Restarting the Local Ad Valorem Tax Reduction Fund (LAVTR), the City-County Revenue Sharing plan and Special City-County Highway Fund, as required by State law, would help relieve the growing burden on property owners.

**Motor Vehicle Fees:** The KCCA supports the proposal by Kansas County Treasurers to streamline the fees charged for titling/renewing car registrations.

**Elections:** The KCCA believes secure elections and election integrity are essential to our democracy. However, we are concerned about legislation which makes voting harder for citizens who are legally eligible to vote or imposes costly and burdensome regulations on county election officials.

**Government Competition:** County governments should continue to keep local control over services provided to residents and businesses without punitive tax policies imposed by the Legislature.

**Mental Health:** The KCCA supports increased funding for mental health programs to address mental health and substance abuse disorders with a goal of reducing the number of individuals inappropriately incarcerated in county jails.

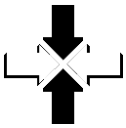
**Medicaid Expansion:** The KCCA strongly supports expansion of the Kansas Medicaid program to make healthcare coverage possible for tens of thousands of at-risk Kansans and to increase support for more rural hospitals and municipal emergency services.

**Medical Marijuana:** If the Kansas Legislature decides to make the sale and use of marijuana legal for medical purposes, it should also allow city and county governments to collect local sales or excise taxes on marijuana sales made in their jurisdictions.

**Public Property and Rights-of-Way:** The KCCA supports the ability of counties to control and manage public rights-of-way and to impose use fees on entities given the privilege of using public property for their business or personal purposes.

**Renewable Energy:** The KCCA supports the expansion of renewable energy technologies. Decisions about placement and appropriate regulation of wind turbines and solar farms should be left to County Commissioners and the citizens they represent.

**Water Quantity and Quality:** Water is the life blood of the Kansas economy. The KCCA urges the Kansas Legislature to assemble plans designed to aggressively conserve the quantity of water and protect its quality.



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