



# South Central Kansas Library System

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Serving Barber, Butler, Cowley, Harper, Harvey, Kingman, McPherson, Reno, Rice, Sedgwick, Stafford, and Sumner Counties.

January 30, 2024

**House Bill 2176** Creating the Arkansas city area public library district act and the Udall area public library district act, requiring an election for the creation of such district and authorizing unified school districts No. 470 and 463 to levy a tax on behalf of such library district.

## Neutral Testimony

### Senate Committee on Local Government

Senator Carolyn McGinn, Chair  
Senator Elaine Bowers, Vice Chair  
Senator Marci Francisco, Ranking Minority Member  
Senator John Doll, Member  
Senator Oletha Faust-Goudeau, Member  
Senator David Haley, Member  
Senator Ronald Ryckman, Member  
Senator Tim Shallenburger, Member  
Senator Mark Steffen, Member  
Senator Alicia Straub, Member  
Senator Mike Thompson, Member

The Arkansas City Public Library and Udall Public Library are members of the South Central Kansas Library System (SCKLS) in accordance with Kansas Statutes Annotated (KSA) 75-2547 Regional systems of cooperating libraries and following statutes. A cooperating member library of the South Central Kansas Library System may seek to expand its local public library tax area, but any expansion of a local public library tax area reduces the total taxing area of a regional library system and has the potential to reduce funding for the grants and services that SCKLS provides to its 72 cooperating member public libraries. Based on these competing interests, South Central Kansas Library System presents this testimony as neutral.

Taxpayers residing within the boundaries of the City of Arkansas City and the City of Udall do not pay any tax support to the South Central Kansas Library System. The Arkansas City Public Library and the Udall Public Library do not pay any membership fees nor are cooperating member public libraries charged for the grants and services they receive from South Central Kansas Library System. Each of the three libraries receive tax support from tax payers within the boundaries of their respective tax districts. The 2024 Arkansas City Public Library mill levy rate is 5.409 and Udall Public Library mill levy rate is 6.723. The South Central Kansas Library System tax rate is 1.061 (Source: Kansas Department of Administration County Tax Levy Sheets). The regional library system tax is levied on property outside the boundaries of an established local public library.

Each of the cooperating member public libraries of the South Central Kansas Library System annually receive grants and support services. In 2023, the Arkansas City Public Library received a total of \$44,336 in grants and services from the South Central Kansas Library System including \$39,284 in direct grants and \$5,052 in cataloging, interlibrary loan, continuing education and other support services. The Udall Public Library received a total \$14,750 in grants and services from SCKLS in 2023 of which \$5,771 were in direct grants and \$8,979 were in interlibrary loan, continuing education, rotating collection and other supports services.

In addition to the grants and services the South Central Kansas Library System provides free-of-charge to the Arkansas City and Udall public libraries, SCKLS annually contracts with cooperating member public libraries in accordance with Kansas Administrative Regulation 54-1-18 to provide free service and permit any citizen of the territory comprising the South Central Kansas Library System “to borrow materials and receive services without charge and subject to reasonable library rules”. In 2022, more than 91,877 register library users who reside outside of the boundaries of a local public library taxing district had access and use to one or more of the 72 cooperating public library members of SCKLS.

All Kansas public libraries would benefit from increased funding and the proposed Governor’s 2025 Budget recommends increased state-aid for public libraries statewide. While HB 2176 may provide increased funding for two public libraries, it does so at the expense of the South Central Kansas Library System and the rural taxpayers who would be incorporated into the expanded Arkansas City and Udall public library tax districts. Consequently, the South Central Kansas Library System believes the passage of special legislation like HB 2176 will have a negative impact on regional and statewide long-term funding by reducing the tax areas that support regional library systems of cooperating member libraries.

**Prepared on behalf of the** South Central Kansas Library System Board and Executive Committee  
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