

BOARD OF FRANKLIN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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Gayla Wilkins
Director of Human Resources
1428 S. Main, Suite 2
Ottawa, KS 66067
(785) 229-3444

May 8, 2017

The Honorable Steven Johnson
House Taxation Committee
Capitol Building, Room 346-S
Topeka, KS 66612

Re: Written Testimony in Support of HB 2424

On behalf of Franklin County Commissioners and the Human Resources Department of Franklin County, we support HB 2424, exemption from the tax lid which excludes:

“Increases in employer contributions for social security, worker’s compensation, unemployment insurance, health-care costs, employee benefit plans and employee retirement and pension programs”,

Our request is based upon the following facts:

*Franklin County employee health insurance costs, which are part of the State of Kansas Health Plan, have increased 6% from 2015-2016 and 7% from 2016-2017. Our budget for health insurance alone, increased between \$80,000-\$85,000 from 2016 to 2017. We anticipate a cost increase of at least another 7% for 2018. This excludes the 30% increase many employees sustained to their premium costs in 2017, with minimal increase to their wages to offset these costs. When coupled with cost of living increases, our employees LOSE money to retain employment. Recruitment and retention suffer dramatically.

*KPERS requires a mandatory contribution from Franklin County (including the Death and Disability Benefit) of 9.46% for 2017 and 9.39% for 2018.

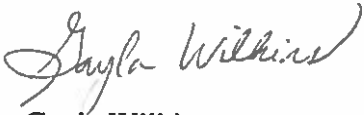
*KP&F requires a mandatory contribution from Franklin County of 19.03% for 2017 and 20.09% for 2018.

Other mandatory employer costs are based upon actuarial calculations of usage and statutory requirements regarding Social Security, Worker's Compensation and Unemployment Insurance withholdings. Since these costs are not within Franklin County control, it is appropriate for such costs to be excluded from the tax lid.

Franklin County Personnel costs consume approximately 50% of our General Fund budget. The County's ability to provide a competitive level of wage and benefits for our valued staff is critical, if Franklin County is to continue to provide a high level of "customer service" to our taxpayers.

We appreciate your consideration of our request in support of HB 2424.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gayla Wilkins".

Gayla Wilkins
HR Director