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Testimony in support of HB 2770  
To House Taxation Committee  
March 8, 2018

Chairman Johnson and fellow members of the Taxation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to spend a few moments to talk about HB 2770. This bill would provide for a sales tax exemption for vendors and contractors working on the Ellis County Courthouse restoration project. Last year, the courthouse was recognized for 75 years of service and it continues to be a vital part of county government.

Less than a month ago a group of private sector volunteers came together to raise money not through a local sales tax or direct assistance from the state or federal governments. The estimated cost of this project is \$150,000 and nearly \$107,000 has been raised from over 200 donors. What HB 2770 does, would be to provide approximately \$12,750 in taxes on food and services to bring success of the restoration efforts.

What happens next? The "Plan B"? The fundraising efforts continue still today, there could be some reductions in the effort, but much like those who built the Ellis County Courthouse in 1942, the community will continue moving forward.

In closing, I want to share a quick observation this week in Ellis County. Two days ago, with winds blowing at record velocity and the ongoing dry conditions made the county a tinder box. Tuesday, local volunteer fireman and first responders along with state officials worked together to put out fires in the city of Hays and parts of my district. Even as the fires were raging, small business owners and community members were offering relief supplies to those who put themselves in harm's way.

And many restaurants are offering free meals to the area firemen and firewomen who battled mother nature. They weren't prompted, they just did it. This is the Ellis County I know, this is the Kansas I know.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I will stand for questions at the appropriate time.