



Testimony in support of:
HB 2738 County Wide Retailer Sales Tax.
Amending K.S.A. 12-192, (Atchison County, KS)

House Committee on Taxation
Submitted by, Jonathan Mize – CEO & President

March 15, 2022

Mr. Chairman – Representative Adam Smith, and members of the House Committee on Taxation. My name is Jonathan Mize, CEO & President for Blish-Mize Co. We are a 151-year-old regional wholesale hardware distributor, located in Atchison, KS.

I appreciate you allowing me to testify in support of House Bill 2738 - County Wide Retailer Sales Tax, thus amending K.S.A. 12-192, allowing Atchison County to re-vote a 1993 ballot initiative where state law would be changed to allow our county the option to by-pass the states apportionment formula.

In 1993, our County of Atchison, voters approved a general wide use sales tax to fund amongst other things, two services, solid waste and joint communications. Everything worked fine for a few years because our municipalities made ordinances passing the county monies back to the county as intended by the voters. Then the City of Atchison created a way to control the monies coming from this tax by removing their ordinance that was originally agreed upon. In seeing this, other municipalities within Atchison County followed suit, except one town, Lancaster, who has been honoring the original “vote” of the County voter.

With this change, the City of Atchison leveraged the county to initiate a “Tipping Fee” to be assessed when using the County Landfill. Where there was no tipping fee applied to this service prior. The purpose of this “tipping fee” is for the City of Atchison to keep even more of the county’s sales tax money by making people pay twice. Once at the sales tax level and then again by adding a tipping fee. It would appear that the City of Atchison is holding the County hostage, on how they run their services. Not living within the city limits, I could not vote for those city commissioners that have done this. Furthermore, regarding this “tipping fee”, I’m not sure, how an agreement like this would have ever been approved by both parties, as there’s no written agreement, which I find very troubling.

I can't imagine any business / taxpayer wanting to pay any additional fees / charges for these services, outside of the sales tax to fund. Or why a City within a County should even be able to unilaterally get to keep this additional income. If the City of Atchison is so strong about needing this income, they should be visiting with businesses / taxpayers, but they haven't. And how could they, when no one wants to pay more for something outside of what taxes already pay for within the County to run the landfill.

In reviewing all of our invoices from trash service expenses from the past three years, 2019, 2020, & 2021 we have paid an additional \$3,284.30, \$2,769.90, and \$4,860.50 respectively, in tipping fees alone! I dare look back further to see the total expense incurred since this "tipping fee" was initiated, as all this unneeded / additional expense could have been used elsewhere within our business.

In just starting off the first three months of 2022, invoices from trash service vendor, tacked on for a "tipping fee" have come to a total so far as of, \$1,091.65. Even though within any distribution operation, unusable corrugated must be disposed of, we shouldn't be charged extra for what we are already helping pay for in taxes!

In conclusion, when a body of voters, "Vote" for what the majority wants, as intended, without any additional side agreements, (in writing, mind you), the vote / decision needs to be upheld. Therefore, I respectfully ask this committee to support amending K.S.A. 12-192, as presented, and encouraging the rest of the Legislative Body to do the same.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jonathan Mize". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Jonathan Mize
CEO & President