

Testimony before the
House Taxation Committee
Supporting Comprehensive Tax Reform

By

Benjamin D. Temple

February 7, 2017

Mr. Chair, Members of the Committee:

My name is Benjamin Temple. My wife and I have lived in Johnson County for most of our lives. We are regular working-class people: she works at Sprint, and I am a small business owner that has produced hundreds of events in Kansas over the years. I'm also a passionate Volunteer Wish Granter with Make-a-Wish here locally.

I appreciate you taking your valuable time to listen to a regular - but proud - Kansan like myself. As a small business owner, I have benefited financially from the current administration's tax cuts for small business, but never did I expect these tax breaks to have such horrific ramifications for my neighbors and the people in my community. I am writing in staunch support of HB 2237 "Rise Up, Kansas" Tax Reform Package, because as we like to say around here - it's common sense.

Kansans, and the nation, are all aware of our massive and embarrassing budget shortfall. We have been gutted - not just financially, but emotionally. We've watched massive cut after cut to education. Imagine what it feels like to be a hard-working, tax-paying Kansan that doesn't work in government, and to have to read almost daily about budget cuts to institutions that used to make our state great. I understand that closing the budget shortfall with spending cuts would require an across-the-board reduction of nearly 7%. We're worried when we hear numbers like K-12 public schools losing \$225 million, KU losing \$9 million, KSU losing \$11 million, the Department for Aging and Disability Services losing \$25 million, the Board of Regents losing \$13 million, and the Department of Corrections losing \$11 million. Frankly, some of us regular folks wonder what the heck is going on in our own state government, and you may have noticed that there are a lot more of us paying attention now.

The sentiment in my communities - including my business community - is that HB 2237 will begin to restore some sanity to the Kansas economy. ITEP says it'd restore \$820 million to the general fund and put \$100 million back into the pockets of my neighbors. Every child I work with at Make-a-Wish, whether battling brain cancer, muscular dystrophy, or cerebral palsy - every child has a parent that needs that money. We must end this so-called "March to Zero."

We must close the LLC loophole. We must turn the tax code right side up, and I say that as a Kansan that would be paying more in income taxes. This is just common sense that makes good sense for Kansans. We ask you to restore our faith in the state by committing your vote in favor of HB 2237.

Thank you for taking the time to hear from a constituent.

Sincerely,
Benjamin Temple
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