

**HB 2197 Proponent Testimony – written only**  
**Property tax abatement for natural disaster**  
**House Taxation Committee**  
**Dave Trabert – CEO**  
**February 17, 2021**



Chairman Smith and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Kansas Policy Institute, we appreciate this opportunity to submit testimony in support to HB 2197 as it allows property owners to apply to the county commission for an abatement or credit for property damaged by earthquake, flood, tornado, fire, or storm. We hold the following positions on HB 2197.

1. HB 2197 is in line with tax policies in other states and in the federal government.
2. HB 2197 provides relief for taxpayers as they reassess recovery from a natural disaster.

Many states like Nebraska, California and even the federal government provide tax relief for those affected by a natural disaster.<sup>1</sup> Additionally HB 2197 would align Kansas law with similar tax treatments in surrounding states.

Natural disasters can cause millions of dollars in damage. While those who may not have property tax insurance struggle the most, property taxes can make a bad situation worse. The Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas conducted a survey and found “typical hurricane strike raises house prices for a number of years, with a maximum effect between 3 to 4% about three years after occurrences.” If local leaders don’t lower the mill rate in the area, this means Kansans affected by the disaster can see property tax hikes. HB 2197 keeps property tax hikes away from taxpayers as they recover from disaster.

For these reasons, we urge the committee to pass HB 2197 in its current form, and we thank you for your consideration.

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<sup>1</sup> Internal Revenue Service, *FAQ for Disaster Victims – Affected Taxpayer and Records Necessary to Meet Deadline for Filing and Paying*, <https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/faq-for-disaster-victims-affected-taxpayer-and-records-necessary-to-meet-a-deadline-for-filing-and-paying>