



BARBER COUNTY REGISTER OF DEEDS

BETTY JO SWAYDEN
REGISTER OF DEEDS
KATHY ARMSTRONG DEPUTY
STEPHANIE MARSHALL DEPUTY
KATHY FORTUNE CLERK

120 East Washington
Medicine Lodge, KS 67104
Phone: 620-886-3981
Fax: 620-886-5045
E-mail: bjswayden@barber.ks.gov

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Senate Standing Committee on Federal and State Affairs

RE: Senate Bill 10

Dear Senators,

Thank you for this opportunity to address your committee. I am Betty Jo Swayden, Register of Deeds for Barber County, KS and I am testifying in opposition to Senate Bill 10.

As Register of Deeds I have many duties, but my most important duty is to record documents with a high degree of accuracy. There are over 140 years of land records housed in the Barber County Register of Deeds Office. They begin with the original land patents issued by the federal government and continue right up through the current deed of ownership. Every recorded document involving the land is preserved in these old books.

These records are used daily by the oil and gas industry, right of way acquisition companies, land/title companies and attorneys, just to name a few. Nearly all of our copy requests come from the business sector. We provide friendly and efficient service and have a good working relationship with the every company that does business in Barber County. However, I do not feel like the tax constituents in my county should have to pay for the copies these companies require for their business. (The taxpayers in my county currently receive copies of their deed records at no cost.)

We have had out-of-state companies request a copy of every document recorded on a full section (640 acres) from 1872 to 2012. Some of these companies have sent teams of researchers with as many as 20 people per team to acquire these copies. We have had the entire office staff working all day, every day, to meet these demands. These large copy requests have often left no time for recording new documents during regular office hours.

The copy money we receive helps offset the cost of paper, toner, the copy machine contract and the copier itself. Our copier contract agreement allows for a limited amount of copies at set cost. Every month we go over the contracted number and the price charged to us per copy goes up substantially.



The proposed Senate Bill 10 will cause a shortage of revenue at the county level. I am strongly opposed to the good taxpayers of Barber County having to absorb the cost for companies to do business.

Respectfully,

Betty Jo Swayden

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