



TESTIMONY

April 3, 2024

MISSOURI HOUSE BILL 2553

By David Stokes

Testimony Before the Missouri House Special Committee on Property Tax Reform

TO THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THIS COMMITTEE

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is David Stokes, and I am director of municipal policy at the Show-Me Institute, a nonprofit, nonpartisan, Missouri-based think tank that advances sensible, well-researched, free-market solutions to state and local policy issues. The ideas presented here are my own and are offered in consideration of proposals that will increase the accessibility of information on tax abated property in Missouri.

The very simple goal of this bill is to collect more information on tax subsidies and abatements and to make it easier to find and compile the information by county by having it all included in the annual Missouri State Tax Commission (STC) annual report.

According to Missouri law (RSMO 137.237), every county assessor is required to identify and publish the county totals for the various tax

subsidy and abatement programs contained in Chapters 99, 135, and 353 of the Revised Missouri Statutes. That information is then published as part of the reassessment notice sent every other year to property owners within each county. This law simply adds the abatement and subsidy program authorized by chapter 100 to that list.

Furthermore, this bill requires that the above totals for each county be included in the STC's annual report. Currently, not every county submits its abatement totals to the STC, and the information that is submitted is not included in the annual report. It would be simple and helpful for that information to be published every other year. While this abatement information is currently public, it is not readily available to Missouri citizens. Putting it in the annual STC report would make it much more accessible.

These small and simple improvements will improve the transparency and accessibility of tax information for Missouri citizens.

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