



County of **GREENE** State of Missouri

GREENE COUNTY COMMISSION

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JIM VIEBROCK
Presiding Commissioner
HAROLD BENGSCHE
Commissioner 1st District
ROSEANN BENTLEY
Commissioner 2nd District

July 10, 2014

The Honorable Missouri Representative

Dear Representative:

The Greene County Commission wishes to convey our sincere appreciation for your hard work this session leading to a long desired and greatly needed improvement in the state prisoner per diem payment. For the calendar year 2014, our estimated cost for housing inmates will be \$11,300,000. Out-of-county housing due to overcrowding of our jail is projected to be \$580,000. You can see the \$3 per day or \$550,000 increase is desperately needed.

We are also very appreciative of the \$10 fee attached to certain court cases to be used in the improvement of court facilities and services. In addition, the funding of an additional Circuit Judge for Greene County is most appreciated.

Along with these thanks come grave concerns. After this year's legislative adjournment we found there are several sales tax exemptions which, if they were to become law, could be devastating to Greene County. We are aware that the Governor's estimate of a \$7,437,715 impact on Greene County may or may not be accurate. However, even if his estimate is in error by 50% it would still be devastating to county operations.

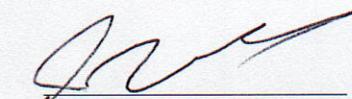
Over the last several years, hard work and determination by our county employees served to begin building back our cash balance that has suffered greatly during the recession. To do so, our employees have sacrificed without any type of salary improvement since 2008. Simply put, the results of their sacrificial labors would be wiped out. This will place many more already hard strapped critical county functions at risk of being severely crippled if not eliminated. We want to assure you that these are not idle words. They are words of reality growing from sound analysis of our finances. We are aware of the Governor's veto of this legislation. Now, with the announced Governor's withholds on the prisoner per diem increase and the current \$3.00 Assessor per parcel fee and increased parcel count, things are going from really bad to an outright disaster.

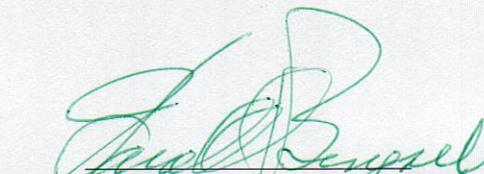
As with many issues regarding legislation, there is always the potential for "unintended consequences". The drastic sales tax reductions may fall into that category due to Proposition C. When the sales tax goes up or down an adjustment is called for, affecting the prevailing property tax level. With the amount of the forecasted sales tax reduction, property owners may be facing an unexpected increase in that tax which could prove very unpopular.

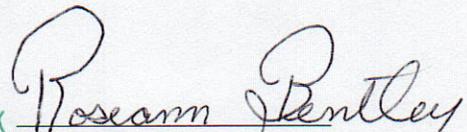
We are pleading with you to carefully consider the devastating financial impact to, not only Greene County, but local governments across the state that a veto override will create. Please, help us in this crucial matter of financial sustainability.

If you desire, we would be more than happy to sit down with you at your convenience to explain more fully the basis of our concerns. Once again, thank you for your hard work.

Sincerely,
Greene County Commission


Jim Viebrock
Presiding Commissioner


Harold Bengsch
Commissioner District 1


Roseann Bentley
Commissioner District 2