

Comment Report

HSB 717

A bill for an act exempting certain cities from public hearing requirements related to proposed property taxes.

Subcommittee Members: Sexton-CH, Johnson, Nielsen

Date: 02/22/2024

Time: 12:00 PM

Location: RM 102, Sup. Ct. Consult

Name: Edward Hee

Comment: Honorable Representatives:I wish to go on record as opposing this proposed legislation, and offer the following comments in support of my position. I live in a rural area of Iowa containing many of the small incorporated cities that would be affected by this bill. Property taxes can be a significant burden on residents in these jurisdictions, especially if those people are on fixed incomes or derive income that may be subject to the vagaries of weather or available commodities. Planning for expenses over the year is paramount, and not having any idea or even notice of possible tax increases could be damaging to an individual or family's financial wellbeing. Also, we live under the principle of representative government in this state, and city officers are elected to serve the residents. Not providing accurate and timely notification of proposed alterations to the property tax structure is a disservice. Further, it is possible that such action could be considered discriminatory, in that residents of certain cities may be considered not to receive equal treatment and equal justice under law solely due to an arbitrarily chosen population amount, and may therefore be actionable in court. This proposed legislation would remove some of our most precious rights, that of petitioning government for redress, and the right to be informed in advance of government action that could potentially subject the citizen to sanction and penalty. Remember, one of the Revolution's battle cries was "Taxation without representation is tyranny", and in Iowa "Our liberties we prize, and our rights we will maintain". I respectfully request you vote no on this needless and damaging legislation. Thank you.