

# Testimony in Support of HB2233

By

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**House Local Government Chairman Thompson, Vice-Chair Blex,  
Ranking Minority Member Curtis and Committee members.**

For far too long, Kansas taxpayers have had to pay to have buildings torn down so that developers, architects and contractors can make a huge profit. Currently, there are **over \$6 BILLION in school bonds** which many local communities must repay with interest over the next 20 to 30 years. However, there is NO evidence that student achievement has improved after these new buildings and renovations were completed. So—**who benefited??**

HB2233 is a major step in the right direction. Unlike school bond elections which are held when few voters come to the polls, this bill will require that no taxpayer funded buildings over 80,000 square feet can be demolished without being put on the ballot for a binding **GENERAL ELECTION** when turnout will be representative of the registered voters.

The greed of special interest developers, architects and contractors is astounding. They are good at coming up with taxpayer funded projects which make them a large profit. However, throughout the rest of the world, most public buildings are still in use centuries after they were built. In fact, there are universities in Europe built in the 1200's which are still considered elite educational institutions.

In Wichita, Century II is an architectural icon which is recognized for its unique design all across America. In addition, the Wichita Library received a national design award from the American Institute of Architects when it was built in 1968 and is still very functional. I have personally enjoyed concerts, festivals and performances in Century II for years. There is ample seating and the acoustics are excellent. The three story library is also very sound if maintained by the City.

Unfortunately, a few developers, architects and contractors want the City Council to approve **over \$1 billion dollars** for them to spend to tear these two buildings down and start over. **What a waste!!** Forcing the taxpayers pay to replace these wonderful buildings in hopes of bringing more conventions to Wichita is totally unnecessary. And for the City Council to approve the project without a vote of the taxpayers who will have to pay for this pipe-dream is beyond belief.

**I ask that you work and pass HB2233 out of your Committee so the full House and Senate can pass it into law this Session.**