

## **Revenue continuing to collapse Brownback tax policy is NOT working!**

In what's become a routine event, the latest revenue estimates for Kansas were released yesterday and the news was bad.

Estimates were once again ratcheted down - this time by a whopping \$98.1 million for FY 2016 and another \$100.8 million for FY 2017.

And as the budget hole continues to grow, Governor Brownback and his Budget Director Shawn Sullivan are making it clear that they have no intention of reversing the reckless tax plan passed in 2012.

Legislative leaders already had a big budget hole to fill (about \$200 million) in order to meet the budget they crafted before the break. That hole doubles with this estimate. Brownback had proposed about \$210 million in tax increases (slowing the reductions in income tax cuts and raising taxes on tobacco and liquor). It is clear now that, even if his allies in the legislature went along with this plan (and they show no intentions of doing so), the budget would require an additional \$200 million in tax increases or budget cuts to balance.

In remarks after the release of the estimates, Speaker Ray Merrick and House Tax Chair Marvin Kleeb both implied that K-12 cuts were off the table. Of course, K-12 combined with medicaid and other social service programs makes up about 70% of the budget so it is hard to imagine how the remaining state programs could absorb a cut of that magnitude.

Democratic Senate Leader Anthony Hensley put it best when he said, "These numbers mean that the budget will be unfairly balanced by raising taxes on low and middle income Kansans while protecting wealthy Kansans who benefit from Brownback's income tax cuts."

Even before these grim numbers came in, school districts have been challenged this year as the Governor's block grant school funding plan has cut revenue to most school districts. A number of school districts have made decisions to cut the school year short to save money. Several have applied for emergency aid from the block grant bill's special "emergency fund." Skyline Schools in Pratt have asked for money just to meet payroll after being hit with a number of emergencies that dried up their savings including the failure of their HVAC

system.

Your legislators are home until April 29 when they return for the wrap-up session. This would be a great time to visit with them and ask what actions they are willing to take to save Kansas from collapse and to protect K-12 and higher education, roads and highways, public safety, and the social service safety net.

We are beyond tinkering with the Governor's tax wreck. It's time to reverse the reckless income tax cuts put in place in 2012.

You can see the details of the latest revenue collapse by clicking here<sup>[1]</sup>.

The Lawrence Journal-World has a good article on the release of the estimates including a chart showing revenue collection changes over time. Click here<sup>[2]</sup>.

### Links

1. <http://click.email.nea.org/?qs=bc8a521231c4d42ba825b8b56777595b94e08a0fc14bb940034d483e80d88e9c806787b3738d29f8>
2. <http://click.email.nea.org/?qs=bc8a521231c4d42b5badab420c4d6b94f471925de6b854896b6114f8f02bdbf583fed1a6b7560d61>

Get a free Evernote account to save this article and view it later on any device.

Create account