



**Bill Hall
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Testimony in Support of HB 2690

Members of the Committee: I am currently serving my third term as a Lincoln County Commissioner and have been a long-time advocate for the development of affordable housing. I appreciate this opportunity to let you know of my enthusiastic support for HB 2690. Exempting property that will be developed for low- and moderate-income housing will be a valuable tool for developers while minimally impacting revenues for local and state government. Right now, Habitat chapters and other developers have to weigh accepting possible property donations against the potential cost of paying several years of property taxes while they put together financing arrangements to develop homes on these sites. Property development deals rarely come together quickly and simply. Those taxes on undeveloped land could represent a significant financial burden for a low-income housing developer.

I don't advocate for removing properties from the rolls, even temporarily, without due consideration. Government at the local and state levels faces service demands that are greater than available resources. But I think this is a worthwhile tradeoff for two reasons.

First, it's trading a short-term loss for a long-term gain. If we take undeveloped property off the rolls for a year or two, we'll make up that loss in the long run when homes are built on that property. Second, housing is at the foundation of virtually everything good we want to accomplish for our society. We want stable, healthy children and families. We want to protect the environment and build stable prosperous businesses, and having people able to live where they work is a key element of those goals. HB 2690 isn't the complete answer, of course. But it's one more useful tool in the toolbox.

