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February 21, 2025

Colorado General Assembly
Attn.: House Finance Committee
C/O Representative William Lindstedt, Chair
C/O Representative Brianna Titone, Vice Chair
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

Subj: House Bill 25-1156

Chair and Members of the Committee,

I sincerely regret that I am unable to testify in person or remotely today. However, I want to express my strong support for House Bill 25-1156 and share the critical importance of this legislation through this letter. As El Paso County's former Assessor, current County Clerk and Recorder, and a Board Member on the Pikes Peak Commission on Aging, I have witnessed firsthand the significant impact that rising property taxes have on our senior residents.

While I am unable to appear before you, I hope my perspective and experience outlined in this letter will underscore why making this property tax relief permanent is essential for seniors across Colorado.

Why HB25-1156 Matters

Seniors across Colorado are facing significant financial strain due to rising property values and tax increases. The temporary property tax relief set to expire after 2026 has been a lifeline for many, allowing them to remain in their homes. HB25-1156 ensures relief is made permanent.

Key Reasons to Support HB25-1156

1. Protecting Seniors from Being Taxed Out of Their Homes

- Many seniors have lived in their homes for decades. Rising property taxes are forcing them to make impossible choices, pay taxes, cut necessities, sell their home, or allow their home to go to County Tax Sale.
- This bill ensures they are not priced out of their communities.

2. Aging in Place Saves Taxpayers Money

- Keeping seniors in their homes reduces reliance on costly public services, such as Medicaid funded assisted living.
- This is a fiscally responsible solution that benefits both seniors and Colorado taxpayers.

3. **No Harm to Local Government Revenue**

- The bill maintains full state reimbursement to counties, municipalities, and school districts for lost revenue.
- This guarantees funding for schools, emergency services, and infrastructure, while protecting seniors.

4. **Providing Long-Term Stability**

- Seniors should not have to wonder if their tax relief will expire every few years.
- Making the reduction permanent allows for financial planning and peace of mind.

Conclusion

HB25-1156 is a common-sense, bipartisan solution that ensures seniors can afford to stay in their homes, protects local government budgets, and supports aging in place.

As a former Assessor, current Clerk and Recorder, and senior advocate, I urge you to vote YES on HB25-1156 and make this vital property tax relief permanent.

Thank you for your time, and I'm happy to answer any questions

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Schleiker". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "S" and a long, sweeping underline.

Steve Schleiker, Clerk and Recorder
El Paso County

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB25-1156: MAKING SENIOR HOME TAX VALUATION REDUCTION PERMANENT

2/24/2025 HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Chair Lindstedt and Members of the Committee:

My name is Leslie Kalechman. I am a volunteer with AARP Colorado. AARP has over 670,000 members in Colorado. AARP's mission is to improve the quality of life for people as they age. This mission includes financial and housing security efforts that are especially important for the 50+ population who are often reliant on a fixed income.

I am a retired Social Worker, who lives on a fixed income consisting of my Social Security benefit plus retirement savings. My property tax bill has nearly doubled over what it was 2 years ago; Homeowner's Insurance has spiked; HOA assessments and Utility costs keep increasing. These rapidly increasing non-discretionary expenses are especially difficult for retirees, who are often on incomes fixed during less inflationary times. This bill, by extending the targeted tax relief to aging Coloradans as provided by last year's SB24-111 will assure financial protections to senior Coloradans into the future, assisting us to be able to keep our homes, in our known communities with our existing social support and caring systems.

The added protection of Portability for those who may wish/need to downsize for health and/or safety reasons is only fair as these individuals have already met the requirements of the Original Homestead Exemption. Seniors down-sizing to smaller homes opens larger and older (less expensive than new construction) homes for young families. This is a not only an efficient solution to housing issues, but an ecologically sensible one. Please support this bill.

Sincerely,

Leslie Kalechman

AARP Advocacy Volunteer

Broomfield, CO

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB25-1156: MAKING SENIOR HOME TAX VALUATION REDUCTION PERMANENT

2/24/2025 HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE

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Leslie Kalechman

AARP Advocacy Volunteer

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