



Osage County Republican Committee

RESPONSE TO UD ARTICLE ABOUT COUNTY COMMISSION AND FACEBOOK COMMENTS

The Osage County Republican Committee holds elected officials, especially Republicans, to the highest standards of conduct in executing their duties. An article in the September 24, 2025, issue of the *Unterrified Democrat* (UD) has come to the Committee's attention and prompts a response from the Committee.

The article title is, "*Commissioners Address Facebook post regarding Senate Bill 190.*" The Commission's [September 16th Meeting Minutes](#) cover this topic in a section titled, "Facebook Posts." Details in the UD and the meeting minutes are similar, with some noticeable differences in tone and verbiage.

In brief, a commissioner raised the issue of statements made on Facebook by an Osage County resident related to a referendum signature drive to freeze property taxes for seniors. The meeting minutes quote the commissioner as saying the posts "contained false information and misrepresented the Commission's position." The UD quoted the commissioner as saying the resident posted "lies and misinformation."

While it is doubtful that the commissioner expected his comment to be used as a salacious focal point of a front-page article in a local paper, it still resulted in what the Committee deems as disparaging the reputation and credibility of an Osage County resident.

No matter what level of importance the commissioners assign to any social media comments, the opinion of the Republican Committee is that making it official Commission business to name a specific resident and alleging lies or falsifying information not only erodes trust in our local institutions but also chills free speech and open dialogue among constituents.

The Chairwoman of the Republican Committee, Linda Rantz, spoke with the commissioner by phone, and recommended and requested that an apology be made to the resident.

Confusing and Misleading Information from the County Commission

What makes this incident particularly concerning is that some of the information provided by the commissioners at that same meeting—and echoed in the UD article and meeting minutes—was itself confusing and misleading, if not inaccurate.

What is Senate Bill 190, referenced in the UD headline?

[Senate Bill 190](#) was pre-filed in the Missouri State Senate on December 1, 2022, for the 2023 legislative session, with the description, “Modifies provisions relating to tax relief for seniors.” The bill was passed in both the senate and state house. It was signed by the governor on July 6, 2023, with an effective date of August 28, 2023 – more than two years ago.

SB190 is no longer a bill, it is a law: statute [RSMo 137.1050](#). The statute was amended in 2024, and again in 2025, to ‘fix’ issues identified since it became law.

How is Senior Tax Relief Implemented in a County?

A county may implement the senior tax relief in one of two ways, as explained by the [Missouri Tax Relief Now](#) group:

“There are two ways to get your primary residence's property taxes frozen. The first, and easiest way, is for your County Council to simply pass a county amendment which implements state statute RSMo.137.1050 in your county. If your County Council refuses to implement the property tax freeze anyone can collect signatures on a petition from 5% of the people who voted in the last governor's election. Your petition will legally force the County Council to put the issue on the next election ballot. If it passes, the statute can't be undone by any County Council action, only a vote of the people can undo it.”

“The Senior Property Tax Freeze is Very Popular”

The Missouri Tax Relief Now website states that they have assisted three dozen counties with referendum signature drives – all of which passed when the issue was placed on the ballot. Seniors in some counties already have the tax freeze, including [Jackson](#), [Miller](#), [Platte](#), [Clay](#), [Greene](#), [St. Charles](#), [Boone](#), [Johnson](#), [Scott](#), and [St. Louis County](#).

Why is the Osage County Commission Delaying Implementation?

The perspective of the Commissioners is delineated in the meeting minutes, which tracks closely to these quotes from the UD:

Griffin: “We’re not saying, ‘If you can’t, we’re not for it,’ but we do something then, all sudden, there’s lawsuits filed, saying stuff is unconstitutional. It’s not fair, and it’s going to cost us a lot of money to employ.”

Peters: “It’s going to cost the county a lot of money. So we’re not going to do it until we know for sure.”

Logan: “So we’re trying to be due diligent [*sic*] and spend the taxpayer money wisely, and doing something that we’re not sure is even going to stay in place does not sound like a good way to spend taxpayer money.”

Commissioner Logan also stated, “we’ve been given a lot of information from the Missouri Association of Counties. They think that a lot of it is unconstitutional and it may be overturned.”

Is the Advice the Commission is Relying Upon Accurate?

It is important to note that the [Missouri Association of Counties](#) is an NGO – a non-governmental organization, and a **lobbyist organization**, as noted on their own website.

Missouri Ethics Commission provides this definition of lobbyists:

A lobbyist is an individual who attempts to influence state executive, state legislative, or state judicial actions; ...

*An elected local government official’s lobbyist is an individual employed specifically for the purpose of attempting to influence any action by a local government elected official in a **COUNTY**, city, town, or village with an annual operating budget of over \$10 million dollars.*
[emphasis added]

The Missouri Association of Counties does not answer to voters. It does not answer to any government agency. It is a private organization, not subject to Sunshine Requests. It is unelected, yet influences all our elected county officials.

As is true with any lobbyist, their job is to serve those who are paying them – not necessarily what would be best for citizens.

The Republican Committee would like to be reassured that the County Commission receives qualified advice on issues from sources other than lobbyists.

Is There a Possibility the Commissioners Misunderstand What They Are Being Told? There is ANOTHER law recently passed with Tax Relief for ALL homeowners.

Less than a month ago, another tax relief law went into effect. It is [statute 137.1055](#) and the title is, “**Homestead property tax credit, certain counties.**” The title is very similar to 137.1050, except that it omits the reference to “persons, 62 or older” and is replaced with “certain counties.”

Signed into law by the governor, 137.1055 became effective on September 9, 2025.

It appears that “certain counties” includes Osage County. The implication is that 137.1055 includes all homeowners in the county (with some eligibility requirements) regardless of age.

Also, 137.1055 states that the county **SHALL** place this issue on the ballot no later than the April 2026 election for voters in the county to decide (on freezing tax rates for all homeowners).

Regarding statute 137.1055, the Republican Committee has been cautioned that there will likely be legal challenges. Also, there may be a decision that it is unconstitutional because it was added to the Kansas City stadium funding. The Missouri Constitution requires that laws passed be single issue. Adding tax relief to stadium funding may violate the constitution and overturn this statute.

Is 137.1050, the Senior Tax Relief law, Unconstitutional? Are there Legal Challenges?

A search of legal filings in the state did not show any results for lawsuits against the senior tax freeze (RSMo 137.1050). And, as previously mentioned, dozens of counties have already implemented this tax freeze.

What is Missing from Commissioner “Perspective” Statements?

Returning to the perspectives of the commissioners as to why they are delaying implementation of the senior tax freeze, it is important to consider what is missing from their statements.

How Does this Impact Seniors and Help Them Afford to Stay in Their Homes?

Missing from the meeting minutes and the UD article are any mentions of what concerns the County Commission has for ensuring seniors can afford to stay in their homes. Taxing seniors out of their homes is a very real issue, and there are examples from other states where this has occurred over many years and even decades. The perspectives of the commissioners focused on county funds.

Signatures for a Referendum Vote

While it may not coincide with the commissioners’ approach, the Republican Committee asserts that the Commissioners are duty-bound to inform Osage County residents that, if they disagree with the Commission’s approach, their option is to gather signatures to put the issue on the ballot and let voters decide.

Citizens collecting signatures for a referendum vote on this issue must submit signatures equal to 5% of the total number of voters who cast ballots in the November 2024 election (7,608). That equates to 391 signatures.

Our Committee’s Position and Actions Regarding Senior Property Tax Relief

Position Statement: The Osage County Republican Committee will be publishing a Statement explaining their position on the tax relief law for seniors.

Informational Meeting: The Committee will host an informational meeting at 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 7th, featuring Dennis Ganahl, PhD, from Missouri Tax Relief Now. Details available on our social media platforms.

With Respect,
Linda Rantz, Committee Chairwoman

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