**Senate State, Veterans, & Military Affairs**

**02/09/2023 01:30 PM**

**SB23-107 Senior & Veterans With Disab Prop Tax Exemption**

**Typed Text of Testimony Submitted**

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| **Name, Position, Representing** | **Typed Text of Testimony** |
| Jeanette Savoy  Amend  themself | Good Afternoon,  I am writing to you to provide my testimony regarding the Homestead Property Tax Exemption Expansion bill, Senate Bill 23-107. I am currently recovering from, successful; cancer treatment so am unable to testify in person.  As a senior personally affected by this, I am very much in favor of changes to this Colorado statute. I am 74 years old and have lived in Colorado my entire life. I qualified for the Property Tax Exemption when I turned 65 and had owned my home for 37 years. However, as I was getting older, I realized that my 5 bedroom home with a very large yard in which I had raised my family could be difficult for me as I aged.  Like many in my generation, I decided to downsize to a smaller home before health conditions required me to do so. I sold my home in July of 2016, after owning it for 40 years. It took almost 6 months to find and take ownership of my new, much smaller home.  I have been in my current home now for 6 years and have not been able to qualify for the exemption, though it would help greatly as I am now retired and on a fixed income.  I am asking you to make one or two changes to the bill. I would like to see a provision added for situations like mine in which a resident downsizes their home before there is a medical necessity. In my current situation, I do have a medical necessity, as I am unable to go up and down stairs but that situation did not exist when I sold my home and purchased my new one. Had I waited until my current health situation existed, selling my home and moving would have been extremely difficult, if not physically impossible.  I understand this would have a big fiscal impact, so suggest adding an income requirement to quality for this exemptions That would allow those who are on fixed incomes and really need the exemption to obtain it without having a huge fiscal impact on the state budget.  Having been a home owner in Colorado since 1972 with the exception of those 6 months, I don’t think I should be penalized for downsizing when I felt it was necessary.  Thank you very much for your consideration and your work on this important bill. I’m happy to provide more information by phone if needed.  Sincerely,  Jeanette Savoy  303-507-6006 |
| Stephen Schleiker  For  themself | Mr. Chair and members of the Committee, my name is Steve Schleiker, former El Paso County Assessor and the newly elected El Paso County Clerk and Recorder.  As County Assessor for the last eight years, I have been at the forefront of a housing market that continually broke monthly records. Many of our sixty four County Assessors have seen their properties trend upwards 16% - 25% each year.  Historically, why did our Legislatures need to bring the Senior Homestead Exemption Referendum before the Colorado voters in early 2000? It was because Colorado's residential single-family market was beyond 'hot', it was 'scorching'. Home values were increasing by double digits during this time, and sadly many of our Colorado seniors faced losing their homes to foreclosure or local County Treasurer tax sales.  Does this scenario sound familiar to what our statewide single-family residential market has seen over the past eight years?  Unfortunately, the voter-approved Referendum has yet to keep up with the historical value increases in Colorado.  Currently, we all are seeing many of our seniors moving from our mountain communities to lower altitude counties; we are seeing many seniors moving to be closer to their primary care physicians, dialysis centers, veterans' centers, etc. Sadly, these seniors are giving up their earned exemption and must wait another ten years to reapply.  In addition, seniors that occupy larger homes that they can no longer maintain and unfortunately cannot use because of medical reasons will not sell and allow these homes to come onto our local market inventory because they know they will lose their Senior Homestead Exemption.  Our seniors have historically been treated as a dormant part of society for ages. Who should assist them is always a debatable topic these days.  Both family and government are morally responsible for supporting our senior citizens. Moreover, you have an opportunity today to help them lead a happy and respectful life by providing this very important financial assistance through the Senior Homestead Exemption, and allow many of our seniors to AGE IN PLACE.  SB23-107 does precisely this, and I ask each of you to help the thousands upon thousands of our statewide seniors by voting yes for SB23-107. |