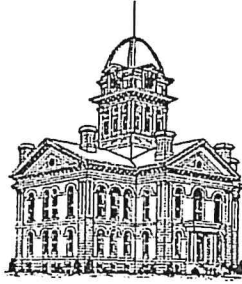


# COUNTY COMMISSION OF SALINE COUNTY

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## Press Statement:

This statement is delivered with respect and importance:

We, as a Commission, are perplexed as to the Assessor's recent public assertions and complaints regarding the transfer of Eighty Thousand Dollars (\$80,000.00) of general revenue funds to the credit of the assessment fund. We have been nothing but transparent with the Assessor and her legal counsel that this transfer would happen in November in accordance with the constraints imposed by §50.630 RSMo. We note that this transfer occurred, as had been planned for quite some time, on November 8, 2023.

The Assessor's current complaint mirrors an identical and false complaint that she made at this exact time last year, which was related to federally funded incentive payments that her employees received. During that dispute, the Commission notified the Assessor that the County would pay for those incentive increases with federal ARPA funds through a budget adjustment. Despite this, the Assessor filed a lawsuit claiming that her office would not get reimbursed those funds, only to have to admit to that Court two months later that she did in fact receive the reimbursements funds as promised. That unnecessary claim came at the expense of Saline County taxpayers.

It also needs to be stated that if the Assessor is successful in the pending appeal of her lawsuit against the Commission and the Collector, she will receive substantially more money at the expense of each levee entity in Saline County, including the public schools, ambulance districts, fire districts, road districts, etc. We additionally feel compelled to state that in her appeal, the Assessor seeks to send Saline County in a backwards direction. After losing her initial lawsuit, which was dismissed entirely by a judge from our circuit, the Assessor has now asked an appeals court in Kansas City to downgrade Saline County to a third-class county. If the Assessor is successful in securing this change, Saline County citizens will more than likely lose their County Auditor and their associate circuit judge, as well as incur losses to the circuit clerk's office and to the county health department. These are but a few of the losses that will occur to our local government institutions in the event that Saline County is reclassified. The Assessor's present lawsuit has already cost Saline County over Sixty Thousand Dollars (\$60,000.00) and, depending on the outcome of the pending appeal, this lawsuit may continue for the foreseeable future at greater cost to Saline County citizens.

We are further concerned that the Assessor has threatened additional legal action against the Commission because she now seeks to block the use of GIS data by other county offices. The use of this data is necessary for these offices to provide additional services to Saline County citizens. Intraoffice access to this data is normal and common across multiple counties in Missouri.

To be blunt, it is simply unfathomable to this Commission that the Assessor can, in good conscience, once again complain about receiving a timely budget transfer, which is subject to statutory restrictions, rather than at her whim, while at the same time she seeks to eliminate, weaken, and frustrate other essential Saline County institutions, such as our schools and courts, for the sole purpose of securing more taxpayer money for her office.