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Brownback Defends Mortgage Fee Legislation

TOPEKA, Kan. (AP) - Gov. Sam Brownback says phasing out the Kansas mortgage registration fee will help the state's economy grow, but counties fear they'll be forced to boost property taxes to make up the lost revenue.

Brownback said Thursday that a home is the biggest purchase most people make and phasing out the fee will help borrowers a little bit. He signed legislation Wednesday to phase the fee out by 2019.

The state imposes a fee of \$2.60 for every \$1,000 borrowed to register mortgages, and most of the money goes to the 105 counties.

The new law will increase other fees, but the Legislature's staff projects that counties still will lose \$53 million over the next five years.

And some county officials believe those estimates understate the potential losses.

Associated Press