



"Dedicated to Progressive Agriculture"

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McLean County Farm Bureau® opposes the efforts of the Bloomington-Normal Airport Authority (BNAA) to expand the boundaries of its taxing district to include all of McLean County - SB 2447.

As an organization whose membership includes more than 65% of farmers and farmland owners in the county, we strongly object to an increase in property taxes on farmland that provides little if any direct benefit to agriculture. If the boundaries of the BNAA taxing district are expanded to include all of McLean County, about one third of the increase in Equalized Assessed Value would be farmland. If the BNAA imposed its 2021 tax of \$0.14267 per \$100 EAV (total rate including bonds), the new airport authority would collect more than \$653,000 total in new property taxes from farmland owners annually.

McLean County is home to highly productive farmland, which contributes to a robust local economy and to the property tax base relied upon by local governments including school districts and townships. As certified farmland values used to calculate property taxes rise, farmland owners experience property tax increases every year even if the property tax rate remains flat.

The total Equalized Assessed Value of farm property in McLean County has increased 67% in the past 10 years – growing from \$274 million in 2011 to \$459 million in 2021. The number of acres has not increased, which means farmland owners are paying significantly higher property taxes based on certified values alone. Adding on an additional taxing body with its associated property tax rate would result in a ‘double-whammy’ for farmland owners – higher rates multiplied by higher certified values.

The majority of the economic activity generated by Central Illinois Regional Airport occurs within the city limits of Bloomington and Normal in the form of dollars spent on hotel stays, restaurant visits and sales tax revenue. Farmland owners would be paying additional property taxes with negligible direct benefits.

We urge all of our elected representatives to join us in opposing SB 2447 – a bill to expand the corporate limits of the Bloomington-Normal Airport Authority taxing district.

Sincerely,

Brian Dirks, President
McLean County Farm Bureau