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Opinion

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An increase in the Kansas sales tax would fall hard on the poor because it is considered a regressive tax. So said a state representative, as quoted in a recent news story. Question: Who will suffer the most if the sales tax is not raised?

Answer: Heading the list are the thousands of disabled poor across Kansas. These folks are in a terrible situation. They cannot get help from a state in-home care program because the Legislature does not adequately fund it. Without the services, they face the likely option of entering a nursing home.

The new revenue from a tax increase would allow the thousands of Kansans in need of in-home services to remain in their homes.

This is a small corner of the sales tax issue.

The one-cent, three-year sales tax increase proposed by Gov. Mark Parkinson earlier this month would help far more Kansans than the disabled.

The estimated \$380 million of added income a year from the sales tax and a boost in the tax on tobacco products could prevent larger, overcrowded classes in K-12 schools. The extra money would reinstate some of the funding cuts suffered by public universities. It would restore some reductions that have forced cutbacks in the supervision of prison parolees.