K A N S A S

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Analysis of Corporate Income Tax 2000-2002

Executive Summary

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Purpose of Study

The Kansas Department of Revenue recently completed an "Analysis of Corporate Income Tax 2000-2002." The purpose of the study was to provide historical information concerning the corporate income tax and the 4 largest business incentive tax credit programs (business and job development, high performance incentive program, research and development, and business machinery and equipment property tax credit). The study also examined where the corporate income tax burden falls by industry sector, and made limited comparisons of the employment performance of corporations claiming the largest amounts of tax credits to the employment performance of similar sectors of the Kansas economy as a whole in recent years.

The analysis focused specifically on tax years 2000, 2001 and 2002, which included the 2001 recession and the aftermath of 9/11. Unfortunately, these were the only years where data was readily available. The downturn in the economy following the events of 9/11 is clearly evident. This study should provide tax policy makers information for future decision-making. However, its scope did not encompass other taxes, such as individual income, sales, or property tax, nor did the scope include other business tax incentive programs, such as the enterprise zone sales tax exemption, STAR bonds, or local property tax exemptions. KDOR will update this document on an annual basis and continue to expand the study as more tax years are included, making it more useful to policy makers to see longer term trends.

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Recent History of Corporate Income Tax Receipts

Despite a recent upturn, the long-term trend for corporate income tax receipts reflects significant shrinkage. Receipts for FY 2004 ($141 million) are below receipts for FY 1981 ($162 million) and half of the receipts for the peak year, FY 1998 ($281 million). Corporate income tax receipts are a smaller portion of total state taxes collected by the department and deposited in the state general fund than they were a decade ago. For FY 1991, corporate income tax receipts accounted for 8.4% of the total state taxes collected by the department and deposited in the state general fund. For FY 2003, corporate income tax receipts accounted for only 2.6% of total state taxes collected by the department and deposited in the state general fund. (Pages 1-2)

Distribution of Corporate Income Taxpayers

The largest 200 corporations account for almost three-fourths of the corporate income tax revenue. Most of the 25,000 to 30,000 corporate income tax returns received reflect zero tax liability. (Page 3)

Corporate Income Tax Credits

Rapidly expanding tax credit programs have decreased corporate income tax receipts. The most significant business income tax credit incentive programs in size are the business and job development (B&J) credit, high performance incentive program (HPIP) credit, research and development (R&D) credit, and business machinery and equipment property tax (B M&E) credit.

These credit programs favor capital-intensive, higher wage-paying businesses, such as manufacturers, as they were designed to do. The total credits allowed under these programs increased from $18.5 million in process year 1997 to $54.1 million in process year 2002, while corporate income tax receipts have declined. A relatively small number of corporations claim most of these credits. The B M&E credit, the only refundable credit of the 4 credit programs, had 4,450 corporate claimants in process year 2002, and $18.8 million in B M&E credits allowed. Of the 4 credit programs, HPIP, the largest in terms of fiscal impact, was claimed by the smallest number of corporate taxpayers. In process year 2002, $20.3 million in HPIP credits were allowed to 39 corporations. The B&J credit was claimed by 329 corporations, and the R&D credit was claimed by 59 corporations in process year 2002. (Table 1, Page 5)

Corporate Income Tax Burden

The study sample of 250 corporations included the largest 100 companies with Kansas corporate income tax liability in each of the three sample years (before credits) and the largest 100 Kansas employers in tax years 2000, 2001 and 2002. In this sample the manufacturing sector, as expected, reduced its income tax liability the most with tax credits. The whole sample averaged 27% reduction of Kansas income tax liability with tax credits. Manufacturers in the sample averaged 54% reduction of Kansas income tax liability with tax credits. (Table 2, Page 6)

Manufacturers also accounted for the largest portion (29%) of Kansas corporate income tax liability (and Kansas taxable income) during tax years 2000, 2001, and 2002 (liability measured before credits were taken) of any industry sector. The retail trade sector accounted for the largest portion (21%) of income tax receipts (measured after credits are taken). (Attached Charts 2 and 3)

Based on a group of 58 corporations included in the top 20 corporations claiming the most B&J credits during tax years 2000, 2001 and 2002, wide disparity exists between the average effective tax rate paid by those in the manufacturing/transportation/warehousing category vs. the retail/wholesale/other category. Wide disparity also exists in effective tax rates paid by individual corporations within each category. In tax year 2002, the 9 corporations in the manufacturing/transportation/warehousing category had an average effective tax rate of 2.59%, although within that category, the effective tax rates ranged from –1.8% to 6.34%, with 4 either receiving refunds or with zero net tax liability. Of the 11 corporations in the retail/wholesale/other category in tax year 2002, the average effective tax rate was 4.14%, although within that category, the effective tax rates ranged from .02% to 6.13%. (Page 7)

The study compared the manufacturing firms (13) and retail firms (9) within the group of 58 corporations included in the “top 20” in B & J credit claimants for tax years 2000, 2001 and 2002. Manufacturing firms offset 76% of their Kansas income tax liability with credits, while retailers in this group offset only 20% of their income tax liability with credits. The manufacturing corporations in the group also claimed the largest amounts of refundable and non-refundable credits from the other tax credit programs. (Table 3, Page 8)

The Kansas Economy—Retail Sector Compared to Manufacturing Sector

Since 1998 and in particular since the 2001 recession and 9/11, Kansas manufacturing sector employment has significantly declined. Retail sector employment experienced only modest decline during 2001 to 2003. The gap between retail sector employment and manufacturing sector employment has narrowed: manufacturing sector employment exceeded retail sector employment by only 20,000 jobs in 2003. (Chart 5, Page 9)

Employment Data on Top 20 Business and Job Development Credit Claimants

Comparison of the percentage rate of change in the employment levels of manufacturers among the top 20 B&J tax credit claimants during tax years 2000, 2001 and 2002 to similar data for the entire Kansas manufacturing sector from 2000 through 2003 shows that employment levels of manufacturers claiming the largest B&J credits performed worse than employment levels of the Kansas manufacturing sector as a whole during much of this time period. No correlation could be found between the tax credit programs and improved employment performance for manufacturers claiming the largest amounts of those credits when compared to the employment performance for the Kansas manufacturing sector as a whole. (Chart 7, Page 11) Caution in drawing conclusions must be exercised because of the severe dislocation in the aircraft industry in the aftermath of the 2001 recession and the 9/11 attacks, which dominated the sample period.

Employment performance of retailers claiming the largest B&J credits in tax years 2000, 2001 and 2002 was somewhat better than employment performance of the Kansas retail sector as a whole during much of this time period, although retailers claimed a much smaller portion of the credits than manufacturers. (Chart 8, Page 11)

The aggregate employment level of corporations included in the group of top 20 B&J credit claimants in tax years 2000, 2001 and 2002 performed worse than the aggregate employment level in the private sector as a whole in Kansas during most of this time period. (Chart 9, Page 12)

Conclusions

Manufacturers have utilized the business tax credit incentive programs and have claimed the largest amounts of the credits. This result is consistent with state economic development policy that has been in effect for 10 years. Some larger claimants have used the credits to eliminate their corporate income tax liability entirely—even obtaining refunds.

Because tax credits are used to lower tax burden, the effective tax rate varies greatly within industry groups of all types.

Generally, the manufacturing sector bears a smaller share of the corporate income tax burden than other sectors of the economy, compared to the taxable income generated by those sectors. The tax credit programs do not appear to have shielded manufacturers claiming the largest amounts of B&J credits from the economic downturn experienced by the Kansas economy in the 2001 recession, and in the aftermath of 9/11.

The retail sector contributes the largest portion of the corporate income tax receipts, although the manufacturing sector generated the largest amount of Kansas taxable income in tax years 2000, 2001 and 2002. The retail sector is less able than the manufacturing sector to benefit from the tax credit programs, typically bears a higher share of the corporate income tax burden, and pays higher effective tax rates. Retailers in the group of top 20 B&J credit claimants showed stronger employment performance in the aftermath of the 2001 recession and 9/11 than the Kansas retail sector as a whole.

In general, corporations claiming the most tax credits did not show employment performance matching that of the Kansas private sector economy during most of the 2000-2003 time period. This result should be tracked and measured over a longer period of time before conclusions are reached because of the recession during the sample years.