

LEGISLATIVE BILL 708

Approved by the Governor March 3, 2010

Introduced by Stuthman, 22.

FOR AN ACT relating to revenue and taxation; to amend sections 77-202.03 and 77-202.09, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska; to change certain date provisions relating to property tax exemptions as prescribed; to provide an operative date; and to repeal the original sections.

Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

Section 1. Section 77-202.03, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

77-202.03 (1) A properly granted exemption of real or tangible personal property, except real property used for cemetery purposes, provided for in subdivisions (1)(c) and (d) of section 77-202 shall continue for a period of four years if the statement of reaffirmation of exemption required by subsection (2) of this section is filed when due. The four-year period shall begin with years evenly divisible by four.

(2) In each intervening year occurring between application years, the organization or society which filed the granted exemption application for the real or tangible personal property, except real property used for cemetery purposes, shall file a statement of reaffirmation of exemption with the county assessor on or before December 31 of the year preceding the year for which the exemption is sought, on forms prescribed by the Tax Commissioner, certifying that the ownership and use of the exempted property has not changed during the year. Any organization or society which misses the December 31 deadline for filing the statement of reaffirmation of exemption may file the statement of reaffirmation of exemption by June 30. Such filing shall maintain the tax-exempt status of the property without further action by the county and regardless of any previous action by the county board of equalization to deny the exemption due to late filing of the statement of reaffirmation of exemption. Upon any such late filing, the county assessor shall assess a penalty against the property of ten percent of the tax that would have been assessed had the statement of reaffirmation of exemption not been filed or one hundred dollars, whichever is less, for each calendar month or fraction thereof for which the filing of the statement of reaffirmation of exemption is late. The penalty shall be collected and distributed in the same manner as a tax on the property and interest shall be assessed at the rate specified in section 45-104.01, as such rate may from time to time be adjusted by the Legislature, from the date the tax would have been delinquent until paid. The penalty shall also become a lien in the same manner as a tax pursuant to section 77-203.

(3) (a) If any organization or society seeks a tax exemption for any real or tangible personal property acquired on or after January 1 of any year or converted to exempt use on or after January 1 of any year, the organization or society shall make application for exemption on or before ~~August~~ July 1 of that year as provided in subsection (1) of section 77-202.01. The procedure for reviewing the application shall be as in sections 77-202.01 to 77-202.05, except that the exempt use shall be determined as of the date of application and the review by the county board of equalization shall be completed by August 15.

(b) If an organization as described in subdivision (1)(c) or (d) of section 77-202 purchases, between ~~August~~ July 1 and the levy date, property that has been granted tax exemption and the property continues to be qualified for a property tax exemption, the purchaser shall on or before November 15 make application for exemption as provided in section 77-202.01. The procedure for reviewing the application shall be as in sections 77-202.01 to 77-202.05, and the review by the county board of equalization shall be completed by December 15.

(4) In any year, the county assessor or the county board of equalization may cause a review of any exemption to determine whether the exemption is proper. Such a review may be taken even if the ownership or use of the property has not changed from the date of the allowance of the exemption. If it is determined that a change in an exemption is warranted, the procedure for hearing set out in section 77-202.02 shall be followed, except that the published notice shall state that the list provided in the county assessor's office only includes those properties being reviewed. If an exemption is denied, the county board of equalization shall place the property on the tax rolls retroactive to January 1 of that year if on the date of the decision of the county board of equalization the property no longer qualifies

for an exemption.

The county board of equalization shall give notice of the assessed value of the real property in the same manner as outlined in section 77-1507, and the procedures for filing a protest shall be the same as those in section 77-1502.

When personal property which was exempt becomes taxable because of lost exemption status, the owner or his or her agent has thirty days after the date of denial to file a personal property return with the county assessor. Upon the expiration of the thirty days for filing a personal property return pursuant to this subsection, the county assessor shall proceed to list and value the personal property and apply the penalty pursuant to section 77-1233.04.

(5) During the month of September of each year, the county board of equalization shall cause to be published in a paper of general circulation in the county a list of all real estate in the county exempt from taxation for that year pursuant to subdivisions (1)(c) and (d) of section 77-202. Such list shall be grouped into categories as provided by the Property Tax Administrator. A copy of the list and proof of publication shall be forwarded to the Property Tax Administrator.

Sec. 2. Section 77-202.09, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

77-202.09 Any cemetery organization seeking a tax exemption for any real property used to maintain areas set apart for the interment of human dead shall apply for exemption to the county assessor on forms prescribed by the Tax Commissioner. An application for a tax exemption shall be made on or before December 31 of the year preceding the year for which the exemption is sought. The county assessor shall examine the application and recommend either taxable or exempt to the county board of equalization on or before February 1 following. If a cemetery organization seeks a tax exemption for any real or tangible personal property acquired for or converted to exempt use on or after January 1, the organization shall make application for exemption on or before ~~August~~ July 1. The procedure for reviewing the application shall be the same as for other exemptions pursuant to subdivisions (1)(c) and (d) of section 77-202. Any cemetery organization which fails to file on or before December 31 for exemption may apply on or before June 30 pursuant to subsection (2) of section 77-202.01, and the penalty and procedures specified in section 77-202.01 shall apply.

Sec. 3. This act becomes operative on January 1, 2011.

Sec. 4. Original sections 77-202.03 and 77-202.09, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, are repealed.