

**Testimony
Before Senate Assessment & Taxation Committee**

**By Carol Voran
County Commissioner
Kingman, KS**

Monday March 16, 2015

Please vote no on SB 257. Eliminating the exemption for wind farms would be devastating to the counties where they are located or where there is potential development. Flat Ridge 2 stimulated the economy of rural counties such as Kingman, Harper, Barber and Sumner as well as the economy of our urban neighbor, Sedgwick County, during its construction. Plans have been developed for Flat Ridge 3 to be built in Kingman County and we again hope to see that same economic development in our area. As a rural county, Kingman County, does not have the luxury of attracting large employers. Wind farms are our economic development by providing additional revenue to landowners and PILOT payments to the county to replace our diminishing stream of revenue. The benefits of wind energy are evident in South Central Kansas with the location of Siemens in Reno County and satellite companies locating nearby. 91 percent of Kansans agree that wind energy helps stabilize electric bills, by the use of long term power purchase agreements. The investment in our state helps our communities grow.

An interruption to established funding streams and the obligation of those funds can devastate counties where wind farms are currently located and well as stomp on the future development of Flat Ridge III and other potential sites.

As leases and power purchase agreements differ between companies, it is very dangerous and difficult to see the ultimate effects of taking away the exemption and what it will do to individual communities and their PILOT agreements.

The economic impact of wind development has been quantified and is significant to rural counties. Please support the wind industry and vote No on SB 257.

Counties through long term budgetary planning are dependent upon negotiated PILOT program payment amounts to meet long-term obligations at a specific level. Maintaining that level of revenue without putting the financial structure of the wind farms in jeopardy is extremely important.

FOR THE ABOVE REASONS, IT IS NECESSARY TO VOTE NO ON SB 257. THE PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS SHOULD STAY IN PLACE.