



Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

Thank you for allowing me to give testimony today. My name is Jennifer Byer, and I am here once again on my own behalf and also on behalf of Kansans for Clean Energy, a coalition of **agricultural, energy, environmental and faith-based** groups across the state. We thank you for the opportunity to express our opposition to Senate Bill 253, which would repeal Kansas' Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS).

My siblings and I own a stake in the Caney River Wind Farm in Elk County. A portion of it (6 of 111 turbines) is on land owned and ranched by my great-grandfather, grandfather and uncle. Distant cousins own other parcels of the wind farm land. The nearest town, Howard, KS, is one of the poorest in the state, and has benefited enormously from the wind farm.

I honestly can't understand what we're doing here - again. It is the responsibility of our legislature to develop sensible policies to promote economic development throughout the state, and in that, the RPS has been wildly successful, bringing wide-ranging **economic, social, and environmental benefits to Kansas**. Wind farms benefit our entire state with an inexpensive, plentiful and clean energy source that keeps our air clean while neither consuming nor endangering our precious natural resources, particularly water.

Elk County, home to the Caney River Project, is one of the poorest counties in the state. **Wind farm payments enable revenue-poor counties to maintain other essential government services** like education, law enforcement, fire protection and much more. The wind farm has provided an unprecedented economic boost, with the developers providing the county approximately **\$1 million per year, for the next 20 years**. That amount is equal to one-half of the entire annual budget. Improvement to roads and infrastructure, a basic obligation of county government, was the first order of business when the initial payments were made.

Population decline in rural Kansas is a serious issue. Legislators should place a higher value on the **lost opportunities for economic development and job creation** for rural Kansans caused by repealing the RPS.

By repealing the RPS requirements, this legislature sends the message that Kansas is not as serious as it once was about attracting new business and jobs, about improving our health and environmental quality, and about adding a plentiful, dependable and inexpensive energy resource that our children and grandchildren can rely on.

Oklahoma, Texas and Iowa are going "all-in" on developing their clean energy sectors. Do we really want to say to these businesses that we don't want them in our

state? Because that's what RPS repeal would do.

As a person of faith, I feel that stewardship of God's creation is one of our most sacred responsibilities, as is looking out for the health and well-being of our fellow Kansans. This too is personal for me, as my two sons suffered seriously from asthma for many years, often related to air pollution. The development of the clean energy sector is an important element of this stewardship, and the RPS is the most effective policy we have to support the growth of that sector. **And it doesn't cost state government a dime, or significantly increase utility rates.**

In conclusion: the RPS works. There is no need for repeal. When it comes to the RPS, we can take some good old-fashioned, sensible Kansas advice: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it."

Sincerely,

Jennifer Byer, on behalf of Kansans for Clean Energy

Including:

- Climate and Energy Project • Kansas Farmers Union • Kansas Rural Center
- Kansas Interfaith Power & Light • Kansas Natural Resource Council
- Kansas Sierra Club