

Opposition to SB 253, March 10, 2015

As representative of the Dodge City/Ford County Development Corporation, I see daily the impact that current legislation has had on Ford County and the tremendous investment that has been made in wind generation and transmission in our County. Not only have I seen the direct impact of the wind farms and transmission line projects, but also the tremendous impact that it has made in our hotels, restaurants, and other service industries.

The uncertainty of changes to the legislation that has put Kansas in a very positive competitive advantage for wind generation could be the death of this industry, which will also have a tremendous downward affect on our front line businesses.

It has taken several years to get the momentum moving forward for the wind energy in Kansas primarily due to the need for transmission infrastructure. Now that several of transmission projects have been created and more are in the planning stages, it is crucial that we remain competitive to bring the wind farm projects into the state to utilize the investment that has been and continues to be made in transmission.

We can see first hand the impact that positive legislation can have on the energy industry in both the wind industry and oil and gas. Two new motels opened last year here in Dodge City, and the hotel occupancy was at an all time high. Once the federal production tax credit expired, we experienced a substantial drop in occupancy rates.

Wind energy projects in Ford County have injected millions of dollars into our local communities. Dodge City has seen a substantial impact in retail and service. Spearville, a community of 900 residents, is currently under construction with an \$8.2 million school addition, which is being paid for from the proceeds of just the first of four wind farms developed around their community.

Unfortunately, SB 433 threatens the continued growth of this industry. Current legislation is working and changes to that legislation are detrimental to our community and State. We ask that you vote "No" on this bill.

Respectfully,

Joann Knight  
Dodge City/Ford County Development Corporation