

Senate Ways and Means Committee

February 6, 2012

Written testimony on behalf of Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Kansas Electric Power Cooperatives and Sunflower Electric Power Corporation

Chairman McGinn and members of the Committee:

The cooperative entities listed above very much support the concept of the State providing disaster relief assistance to eligible applicants through the establishment of a more permanent fund. Public utilities along with state and local governments, schools, hospitals and tribal authorities have benefitted from the voluntary matching state fund program over the years. The electric cooperatives in Kansas certainly appreciate the legislative support. Repairs resulting from large ice storms and tornados are the most frequent reason for this funding. S.B 336, as written, would increase KUSF funds (telephone fees) to partially fund disaster relief assistance, and we feel that approach is not ideal.

Until more stable funding is established, we would suggest that the 10% State Voluntary match be administered as it is presently. (In good financial years, the 10% State match be budgeted from the SGF. In difficult financial years, the State delays payments until funding is available). The electric cooperatives feel fortunate to be one of the recipients of the States disaster relief funding and appreciate the premise of the bill's sponsor. Until other means of funding develops, we respectfully remain neutral on SB 336.