

HB 2101

Written Testimony of Mark Lawlor

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America's electricity transmission system has been called one of the greatest engineering achievements of the 20th century, as well as, out dated and in need of investment and modernizing. It is an extensive system of interconnected networks in which high-voltage power lines transport electricity from generators to customers. It is the life blood of our everyday lives and our economy.

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 includes a provision that may help solve some of the challenges transmission developers face. The law allowed states to get together and create state-managed electric transmission siting compacts. These compacts will not solve all the challenges, but could be a part of the solution if taken seriously and enacted by states.

One of the biggest challenges to developing multi-state transmission lines is coordinating the timing and regulatory requirements of each state. When proposed facilities cross boundaries between states the potential for delays and uncertainty is greatly increased. Differing state laws present a significant planning challenge to these types of projects and delays in permitting discourages investment in improving our transmission grid.

A state compact that would standardize siting processes, timelines, applications and comment periods could cut years off of the siting process. One such effort has been undertaken by the Council of State Governments (CSG). The Compact envisioned would provide states a tool that will attempt to coordinate state efforts and ensure interstate cooperation.

The need for states to work together is no more apparent than the Grain Belt Express Clean Line HVDC transmission line that Clean Line is developing. This Grain Belt Express project is a \$2 billion dollar investment that will spur over \$7 billion in additional investment in wind farms across Kansas and its neighbors.

The Grain Belt Express will move 3,500 megawatts of renewable electricity from Kansas to distant markets in the Midwest ISO and PJM to the east. This project will move some of the highest capacity factor wind to markets that can use a stable, cost-effective renewable energy product to either diversify their generation mix or satisfy state renewable portfolio goals.

I applaud Representative Tom Sloan for his efforts to address this issue. I believe that this piece of legislation provides a real opportunity for states to actively address a complex set of issues that sometimes inhibits capital investment in our nation's infrastructure.

Thank you allowing me to voice my support for this measure and taking the time to consider the positive effects this bill may have on the development of wind resources in Kansas.