

Testimony Provided to the
Senate Assessment & Taxation Committee - March 16, 2015
Dean Haselhorst, Ellis County Commissioner
In Opposition to S.B. 257

Chairman Donovan, Vice-Chairman Tyson, Ranking Member Holland *and Members of the Committee,*

I respectfully oppose S.B. 257. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on S.B. 257. My name is County Commissioner Dean Haselhorst and I am an Ellis County Commissioner. I have been a commissioner in Ellis County for a period of four and a half years and before that a member of planning and zoning that helped write the policy for wind development in Ellis County.

I am opposed to S.B. 257 – the repeal of the property tax exemption for renewable energy resources.

There is a wind farm under construction in Ellis County - a 200 MW facility. The developer of the project, Invenergy, has spent in excess of \$13,500,000 in development costs, including nearly \$600,000 in land payments to landowners. During the construction period, they estimate to employ 200-300 construction workers. Overall, Invenergy will invest more than \$250 million in the project.

The wind project will bring in hundreds of thousands of dollars to our community to help maintain roads, provide jobs to local people and lease payments to local landowners and in turn this money is reinvested within the community.

I have always supported wind development. It's a clean way to make the electricity we need every day. None of us know how long oil will last before it runs out. In Kansas we have a clean resource and it's called Wind. Let's use it and help preserve our environment for future generations

Without companies like Invenergy making large investments in counties like Ellis we wouldn't be able to make use of our wind resource. Let's support them, not deter them. Missing out on any development in rural America is detrimental to a community when oil evaluations are down and layoffs are happening every day in our community with the price of oil the lowest it's been in years. A company like Invenergy comes in and is hiring 200 to 300 people and using many local vendors to help stimulate our economy. They have invested hundreds of thousands of dollars in the past five years to make this development happen. When you take away an exemption like Bill 257 is worded, this not only kills new development, we will never see expansion of existing wind farms in **our** State. This would be detrimental to the State's economy. Let's be a leader and not a follower.