



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

P.O. Box 4267, Topeka, Kansas 66604-0267 • 7332 SW 21st Street, Topeka, Kansas 66615 • 785-478-4554 • (Fax) 785-478-4852 • www.kec.org

**Testimony in Support of SB 11
Before the Senate Judiciary Committee**

Dave F. Holthaus
Vice President Government Relations
Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc.

January 22, 2015

My name is Dave Holthaus, Vice President of Government Relations for the Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. (KEC). I appreciate this opportunity to testify in support of SB 11 on behalf of the electric utility industry in Kansas:

***Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc.
Kansas Electric Power Cooperative, Inc.
KCP&L
Kansas Municipal Utilities
Midwest Energy, Inc.
Empire District Electric Company
Sunflower Electric Power Corp.
Westar Energy***

The electric utilities in Kansas support SB 11 and applaud this additional effort to slow the theft of copper and other metals used in our industry. Metal theft is a statewide problem, both urban and rural, which requires a statewide approach to regulation and enforcement. SB 11 with its inclusion of the Attorney General's oversight, dealer registration, central database reporting, new civil action and penalties and focused enforcement would be a welcome improvement to existing law.

Our electric infrastructure, due to its remote, abundant and secluded nature, remains a target of opportunity for those willing to expose themselves to this potentially hazardous larceny. The theft of copper with only a small salvage value costs Kansas business, industry, churches, schools and individuals thousands of dollars in repairs, while jeopardizing insurance protection to many who are the victims of this crime. The electric utility industry has been a definite target of this theft. Over the past ten years, as the rise in metal thefts has remained steady, Kansas utilities have endured numerous thefts and collateral damage to substations, warehouses, vehicles, pole yards, distribution lines and appurtenances.

As you would expect in our business, all electric utilities have safety as a core value and advocate it daily. The utilities have examined our safety and security operations making any appropriate fortifications to the extent possible, however theft still occurs. Certainly curtailing metal theft is important for the safety of the public, our employees and the reliability of the electrical system.

Thank you for your consideration of SB 11 and I will stand for questions at the appropriate time.