

Chairman Waymaster and members of the House Appropriations Committee,

Wichita State University stands in support of HB 2109 and respectfully request that you recommend the bill be favorably passed.

Over the past two years, Wichita State University has been in the process of developing its Innovation Campus. The series of projects designed to grow the Kansas economy through applied learning and research will total 125 acres which represents a relatively large development for that area of Wichita. In addition to the campus itself, the area surrounding the main campus of Wichita State University will also benefit from the proposed land exchange through expanded power infrastructure that will support future development.

Wichita State University (WSU) and KG&E have been discussing, and intend to pursue, a mutually beneficial exchange of land. The exchange would provide KG&E the space necessary to replace an aging substation with a new substation to increase reliability and added capacity via larger transformers and additional circuits. These upgrades are essential to the anticipated growth of WSU and the surrounding area. In addition to the aforementioned, the exchange would improve access to WSU's material storage area due to the closer proximity of the Physical Plant complex. In exchange for the difference in land cost, KG&E has proposed their willingness to direct bury overhead electrical lines in connection with a separate project along 21st St., between Mike Oatman drive and Oliver St. Not only will this add safety and reliability to the area by having the lines underground, the aesthetics will hopefully be a contributing factor in promoting economic development along this corridor. KG&E has estimated the costs to bury the lines underground vs. running the lines overhead at \$537,000. Two appraisers were appointed and contacted to perform the appraisals. The property currently held by WSU is appraised at \$260,000, and the property currently held by KG&E is appraised at \$86,400 making the difference in value \$173,600. As noted above, the estimated cost to bury the electrical lines is \$537,000 if the university proceeded without the land transfer.

Wichita State University respectfully ask that you support this legislation that will help provide much needed power infrastructure improvements to that area of Wichita and help foster economic development and support the mission and vision of WSU.

Zach Gearhart
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Wichita State University