



Testimony Provided To
House Agriculture
Joshua Svaty, Senior Adviser
February 18, 2020
In Support of HB 2623

Chairman Highland, Vice-Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Carlin and members of the committee,

This afternoon I appear before you on behalf of the Advanced Power Alliance and the nearly forty members of our organization which represent a diverse cross section of the world's leading energy companies. Most of these organizations have business interests in Kansas via operating wind farms, wind farms under development, purchase power agreements, development headquarters or manufacturing facilities. A rapidly growing element of our members' fleet are solar and battery storage projects. Our member assets in Kansas span the state from the most densely populated to the least, from the fastest growing to those with the most rapid population decline. Since the first wind farm came online in 2001, the wind energy industry has invested more than \$14 billion private dollars in Kansas and created more than 12,000 jobs in both rural and urban Kansas with several billion dollars of new wind farms under construction. **The Advanced Power Alliance stands in support of HB 2623.**

While APA members have brought a tremendous amount of wind energy development and thus private capital investment to Kansas in the last two decades, we are poised to make similar large investments in solar and battery storage in the next two decades. Kansas is home to several utility-scale solar installations and our developers are actively pulling together future solar sites around the state. It is members of the Advanced Power Alliance that have spurred the innovation of the renewable energy sector, made the investments and put the steel in the ground. Our members are the businesses which makes these projects happen. First and foremost, we are dedicated to providing reliable, affordable renewable power housed by supportive landowners and communities and we will design, site, build, and maintain projects that achieve this end.

We do not operate in a vacuum. While our members own and operate successful businesses, they are based on principles that seek to improve our environment and surroundings rather than negatively impact them. We understand the pressures being placed on pollinator species from a variety of directions. We also know that while the ideal pollinator habitat is native prairie, a utility-scale solar installation could, if the developer chooses, provide the opportunity for creating some pollinator-friendly habitats. HB 2623 creates a scorecard which, in our estimation, would just give end customers more information about the source of some of their power. It may also incent developers to explore ways to potentially leverage USDA dollars encouraging the large-scale planting of more pollinator-friendly species.

As we said earlier, Kansas is experiencing the early stages of solar development. We applaud the committee for exploring methods of voluntarily guiding smarter, more synergistic projects and we look forward to working with you as you begin to see more utility-scale solar projects around the state.