

Before the House Agriculture Committee
Presented by Zack Pistora, Kansas Sierra Club
Proponent to HB 2623
February 18, 2020



Chairman Highland and Honorable Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit proponent testimony on HB 2623, which would provide for the designation of ‘pollinator-friendly habitat’ for solar farms. I am speaking today on behalf of the Kansas Chapter of Sierra Club.

As the oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization in the country, the Sierra Club is committed to maintaining the world's remaining natural ecosystems, and, where feasible, to the restoration and rehabilitation of degraded ecosystems. Wildlife, plants, and their ecosystems have value in their own right, as well as value to humans and to the health of the biosphere.

The Kansas Sierra Club, which has about 5000 members across Kansas, wish to express our support of HB 2623 as it helps solar development receive recognition for responsible land stewardship and preservation of natural, native habitat for Kansas pollinators.

We consider pollinators to have great value to Kansas, to its natural heritage, ecosystems, and farmers. In fact, I often say that pollinators are ‘farmers’ best friend.’ Recent trends show that pollinators are unfortunately in decline, often to due habitat destruction and pesticide use. Allowing businesses, like solar developers, the incentive to get public credit for good, responsible land stewardship practices is good public policy.

Kansas should encourage solar development for both its economic and environmental benefits, but in a responsible way to protect our lands and habitats.

Solar farms present an incredible opportunity for Kansas to harness its clean, renewable resource. We also have an obligation to protect our wildlife and plant resources already there too. HB 2623 does a good job at fulfilling both obligations.

For those reasons, the Kansas Sierra Club respectfully asks the committee to support HB 2623.

Sincerely,

Zack Pistora | Legislative Director and State Lobbyist, Kansas Chapter of Sierra Club

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The Sierra Club is the largest grassroots environmental organization dedicated to enjoying, exploring, and protecting our great outdoors. The Kansas Chapter represents our state's strongest grassroots voice on environmental matters for more than forty years.