



February 13, 2019

Senate Utilities Committee
State of Kansas
Re: Westar charges

To whom it may concern,

I would like to introduce myself and explain how the current state of how we approach renewable energy use in Kansas is directly affecting my business, its opportunity for success, and the ability to remain in Kansas. Here is what and why it impacts us:

I started a construction company in 2010 called TRU-Building, Inc. While the company steadily grew through the first 5 years of business we needed to stand out from the multitude of people that say they build and position ourselves as the leader in what we do. In 2014 I started the journey to become a Certified Passive House Consultant (CHPC) and obtained the certification in 2015. That same year we also joined the Department of Energy's Zero Energy Ready Home (ZERH) program. We are very passionate about this as it is being done all across the country and with great success, providing a better quality of housing using lower utilities and creating a better indoor air quality. We actually built a model home and had a ribbon cutting for on September 12, 2018. What made this even more exciting is that it is the first ZERH certified in the State of Kansas. With the DOE requirements to meet certification we must build these "solar ready", which means conduit, disconnects, and systems in place to make the installation of solar less expensive in the future for the homeowner.

When we learned of the new "penalty" (my words) being implemented on consumers with solar which not only charges them more per month, it also does not give the consumer the option to not be in the "peak load" program which is offered to others. Even if the cost is minor that is being assessed on someone with solar, it is a definite discouragement to anyone considering adding solar or even more, build an efficient, solar ready home. This directly impacts the consumer's perception of even why to build an energy efficient home, which therefore directly impacts our ability to show customers the ability to improve their quality of life. In fact, I have had investors recommend we move to a State that is friendlier than Kansas on renewable resources, particularly those direct to the consumer.

There are some great programs across the country that are leading people to be better stewards of our environment, along with improving indoor air quality. It is a shame that Kansas seems to be taking the role of supporting utility companies over the consumer. Model programs in other states are encouraging solar and other renewable resource usage, not penalizing it. Please revoke the recent increase added to solar customers and instead, work on incentives for people to make a transition into the future easier.

Jeff C. Jones
President
Jeff.jones@tru-building.com