

Allen J. Dinkel
City Manager
Administration
www.junctioncity-ks.gov



P.O. Box 287
700 North Jefferson Street
Junction City, KS 6644-0287

Phone: 785-238-3103 Ext. 300
Fax: 785-223-4262

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To: House Financial Institution and Rural Development
From: Allen J. Dinkel, City Manager, City of Junction City

Re: Testimony in Support to City Utility Low-Interest Program

Chairman Kelly and Committee Members, thank-you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of the City Utility Low-Interest Program on behalf of the City of Junction City.

Even though the City of Junction City does not operate a municipal electric or natural gas utility, I have previously served as Manager/Administrator in Oakley, Hoisington and Neodesha who operate a municipal electric utility and Neodesha also operates a municipal gas utility. This background gives me a great understanding and compassion for those cities that are dealing with increased utility bills these cities must pay and then pass on to their customers.

The "Arctic Blast" has caused unprecedented price concerns due to astronomical increases in energy costs. Municipal utility cities are being faced with bills that literally are 3 to 4 times higher than their bill was for all of last year. Naturally, Federal assistance is needed, but this bill will allow these cities to have resources available so they can stay current on their bill payments and be complying with the Case Basis Law.

Cities such as Junction City will have challenges to deal with that will be passed on by the Electric and Natural Gas providers to all customers. Hopefully, these companies will be working with the Kansas Corporation Commission to minimize the impact to all.

Based on this testimony, the City of Junction City requests you to support this program and move it through the legislative process as soon as possible to provide relief to Kansas cities and their residents, businesses, and industries. There are approximately 160 Kansas cities who operate a municipal electric and/or natural gas utility. As a former President of the League of Kansas Municipalities, I encourage you to provide any tools you can to assist cities.

Allen J. Dinkel
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City of Junction City