



March 22, 2021

The Honorable Mike Thompson, Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Utilities  
300 SW 10<sup>th</sup> Street  
Topeka, Kansas 66612

RE: Testimony in OPPOSITION to SB 279: Establishing the wind generation and property protection act and imposing certain requirements on the siting of wind turbines.

Senator Thompson and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding SB 279. The City opposes the bill.

Local governments have sufficient regulatory oversight for the siting of wind generation facilities through their zoning and land use powers, which exist for the protection of public health, safety and welfare. The state-level land use restrictions proposed in SB 279 create an additional level of unnecessary regulation by county commissions which run contrary to the well-established principle of local control of land use and development. If enacted, the bill compels local decision makers to conform to state parameters, regardless of whether those parameters are appropriate for a particular community.

The City of Lenexa has been a pioneer in local environmental sustainability strategies. As a participant in the Evergy Renewables Direct program, the City continues that legacy by investing in renewable energy to help generate the electricity needed to power its own facilities, homes, and businesses and to support job opportunities in this growing employment sector.

The bill undermines the advancement of renewable energy by excessively regulating wind production as a competitor in the energy generation marketplace. Wind energy production is integral to bolstering electric generation capacity across the state and ensuring a resilient power grid. The City believes the bill's proposed restrictions would unnecessarily constrain additional development in wind energy.

In addition to several municipalities, many commercial customers have made the business decision to purchase their energy from renewable sources by participating in the Renewables Direct program. The provisions of this bill may negatively impact them when it comes to their choice of energy source and their opportunity to manufacture, supply, and service wind generation components.

The report *Economic Impacts of Kansas Wind Energy (2012)* outlines the potential economic benefits of developing wind farms across the state. The report highlights wind turbine service technicians as one of the fastest-growing jobs by 2029. The employment opportunities and capital investments in developing wind energy would be highly beneficial to the local, regional, and state economy and cannot be ignored.

The City appreciates your consideration and urges the Committee to deny passage of SB 279.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julie Sayers", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Julie Sayers  
Lenexa City Council, Ward 4

Cc: Lenexa City Council  
Mike Boehm, Mayor