

To: Senate Utilities Committee
From: Erik Sartorius, Executive Director
Date: March 22, 2021
RE: Testimony in opposition to SB 279 (written)

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, the League of Kansas Municipalities appreciates the opportunity to offer testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 279. Such complicated and far-reaching legislation should not be considered on a rushed schedule.

While counties are generally more involved in the siting of wind turbines, cities do have a keen interest in development of any kind in their vicinity. Further, future development patterns could place cities in a more involved role in the siting of wind or solar energy decisions. When that becomes the case, cities will want the flexibility to respond to the individual needs and preferences of their communities.

Senate Bill 279 places very strict requirements and high hurdles on wind energy projects, and would leave local governments little leeway in fostering economic development. Further, some elements of the bill appear to allow adjacent landowners to impinge on the property rights of others. For local governments, we would not want to be dragged into property rights issues disputes based on state mandates that are out of our control.

Again, we thank the committee for its attention to the concerns of the cities of Kansas. The League looks forward to working with the committee and stakeholders on the legislation.