

March 18, 2021

To Sheila Wodtke Sheila.Wodtke@senate.ks.gov

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Representative Stephanie Clayton stephanie.clayton@house.ks.gov

Comment to the Public Record

Regarding: Kansas Senate Bill 279, a bill designed to stop wind energy development in Kansas-
Testimony in opposition

Kansas wind power has delivered economic and environmental benefits to the state. Wind power lowers electric prices, creates jobs, helps rural communities, and significantly benefits our environment. A new “Economic impacts of Kansas Wind Energy” report indicates Kansas counties and landowners with leases will receive **\$1.51 billion dollars in direct economic benefits for wind farms operating at the end of 2020**. Kansas has benefitted from **9,000 direct jobs** during construction and operation and another **12,000 indirect and induced jobs** thanks to this growing industry. Wind turbine service technician jobs are projected to be the fastest growing occupation in the US between 2019-2029. Kansas should continue to be a national leader in wind energy and continue to play an important role in meeting the challenges of climate change.

SB 279 threatens to take Kansas in the opposite direction.

I strongly oppose SB 279 for three reasons.

1) Restricting Kansas citizens and companies from siting windmills in Kansas would slow the increasing use of less expensive, less polluting renewable wind energy over more expensive, more polluting fossil fuel based energy sources. This, in turn will prevent proactive steps to head off the consequences of Climate Change. Climate Change has caused and is causing extreme weather events including torrential rains that wash out spring herbicide and fertilizer applications before they can serve their intended purpose, floods, mid and late summer droughts that reduce crop harvests, damaging wind events, and more powerful tornadoes (notably, the Greensburg tornado). Climate change is the greatest threat to the future wellbeing of Kansas. Kansans should not have their hands tied when it comes to responding to the threat.

2) Restricting Kansas citizens and companies from siting windmills in Kansas -- will slow or eliminate the beneficial job gains related to the expansion of wind resources; will reduce the lease income to rural property owners who benefit from lease payments will reduce the benefits realized by utility ratepayers when windmills replace more expensive technologies. The economic benefits of wind energy in Kansas are well documented. Why would we want to give Wyoming coal or Kansas gas an unfair regulatory advantage over Kansas wind in the competition for tomorrow's energy sources?

3) Restricting Kansas citizens and companies from siting windmills in Kansas based on burdensome, unreasonable regulations is an affront to the established philosophy of a state that has for many years been - universally - pro business, pro- development, and anti-regulation. The one mile setback from a neighboring property line combined with the one windmill per square mile language appears to be intended to prevent a single additional windfarm in Kansas. If one were to site a windmill

dead center in one section, you would have to pay leases to whoever owned parcels on the closest quarter sections n the surrounding eight sections ... and your next windmill in a windmill farm would have to be at least a half mile away from that first windmill ... which would expand your need to pay more leases to put a mile between that windmill and every other windmill and the nearest property line not involved. Also, the 40 decibel sound limit is ridiculous. 40 decibels is the background noise in a library!

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