



Kansas Grain and Feed Association  
Kansas Agribusiness Retailers Association  
Renew Kansas Biofuels Association  
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March 8, 2022

To: Senate Committee on Utilities  
From: Randy Stookey, Senior Vice President of Government Affairs and General Counsel  
Re: **Joint, Proponent Testimony on HCR 5023, denouncing price gouging and market manipulation in the natural gas marketplace and supporting investigations into the extraordinary price increases of wholesale natural gas during the extreme cold weather event of February 2021.**

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Chairman Thompson and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HCR 5023. This testimony is submitted jointly on behalf of Kansas Grain and Feed Association (KGFA), Kansas Agribusiness Retailers Association (KARA), and Renew Kansas Biofuels Association (Renew Kansas).

KGFA is the state association of the grain receiving, storage, processing, and shipping industry in Kansas. KGFA's membership includes over 950 Kansas business locations and represents 99% of the commercially licensed grain storage in the state. KARA is an agribusiness industry trade association whose membership includes over 700 companies across Kansas. Renew Kansas is the trade association of the Kansas biofuels processing industry.

Across Kansas, our member grain elevators, biofuel processing plants, and agribusiness facilities contribute to the Kansas economy and provide gainful employment for thousands of Kansans. These industries also pay millions of dollars annually in property taxes that help support schools and state and local government.

Members of these industries are high commercial & industrial users of energy, many of which were greatly affected by the exorbitant natural gas bills following the February 2021 polar vortex, "Uri." Many businesses and other natural gas users were unable to foresee the unprecedented price spike, or could not decrease natural gas use during that time period. Those users were hit with the full force of the price spike.

Following the winter storm, the Kansas Legislature responded to pleas for state assistance from the accompanying exorbitant natural gas costs. House Sub for Senate Bill 88 was then signed into law to create a \$100 million low-interest loan program to help cities cover their utility bills and spread out their costs.

House Concurrent Resolution 5023 states that the State of Kansas denounces instances of price gouging and market manipulation involving natural gas, supports state efforts by the Office of the Attorney General and federal efforts by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to investigate increases in natural gas prices during the extreme cold weather event of February 2021, and encourages efforts to protect Kansas ratepayers.

We stand in strong support of this resolution and would respectfully request that the committee pass the resolution out favorably. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to testify in support of HCR 5023.