



**Testimony of Randy Leis, Kansas Legislative Policy Group
Before the Senate Committee on Local Government
In Opposition to Senate Bill No. 312
March 23, 2023**

Member Counties

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

Barber

Chair McGinn, Vice Chair Bowers, Ranking Member Francisco and members of the committee, thank you for allowing my written testimony in opposition to Senate Bill No. 312.

Barton

Clark

I am Randy Leis, a Meade County Commissioner. I appear today and offer testimony in my capacity as president of Kansas Legislative Policy Group, a non-partisan group of 33 rural western Kansas counties that work collectively on issues of mutual interest.

Ellis

Finney

Ford

Gove

Grant

Gray

The bill would require that no electric or transmission only public utility holding a certificate of convenience and necessity issued by the state corporation commission, may exercise eminent domain unless the board of county commissioners where real property is located that may be the subject of an eminent domain proceeding has adopted a resolution approving such taking by such public utility.

Hamilton

Harper

Haskell

Hodgeman

Constructing new high-voltage electric transmission lines is essential for maintaining electric reliability, and the transmission network allows the movement of large amounts of energy over long distances. This process is complicated and must consider multiple factors, including siting.

Kearny

Kiowa

Lane

The boards of county commissioners may not have the technical and financial resources available and necessary to appropriately evaluate electric transmission line siting cases involving the use of eminent domain. Doing so could be very costly and a burden to the local taxpayers.

Logan

Meade

Ness

Rawlins

Rice

A board of county commissioners' involvement in a complex eminent domain electric transmission line siting case may subject the county and county commissioners to legal exposure and liability.

Russell

Rush

Scott

Under Kansas law (KSA 66-1,177 et seq.), an electric utility must obtain a siting permit from the KCC before it can begin site preparation for a transmission line or exercise the right of eminent domain to acquire land for the line. Initial SPP support for a transmission line addresses the general route, but states control the actual siting of the line. It seems appropriate to continue allowing the KCC the responsibility for these cases.

Seward

Sherman

Stanton

Stevens

Thomas

Trego

We ask that you oppose Senate Bill No. 312. Thank you for your consideration.

Wallace

Wichita

Randy Leis
President
Kansas Legislative Policy Group