



Committee members - it is a privilege to address you today; thank you for the opportunity.

My name is Lafe Bailey; I live with my wife and children in the country outside of Sabetha. My family owns property in both Nemaha and Brown counties. I take deep pleasure and seriousness in my role as Husband, Father, provider and protector of my family's health, well-being and future.

But I also have another role - even more demanding and daunting - as 3rd generation leader and steward of Wenger Manufacturing. That role requires that I, when situation demands, also tend to the health, well-being and future of the 350 Kansas employees (and their loved ones) who rely on the continued growth and expansion of Wenger in Kansas.

Many of you likely don't know, but Wenger is a classic rural Kansas success story. From very humble beginnings, in Sabetha, in 1935; Wenger has grown to be the indisputable Captain of the global industry which we serve.

Wenger is, perhaps, the only Kansas business to be recipient of both the Kansas Exporter of the Year award (indeed our consolidated exports approach \$150 million annually) as well as being a recipient of the Kansas Chamber's - Ad Astra award for Business and Civic excellence.

Despite the daunting challenge of competing on the world's stage - in heavy industrial capital goods no less - Wenger continues to nurture our rural community roots sunk deep in 1935. Sunk deeply in Sabetha, and reaffirmed via a 2014 acquisition of a manufacturing operation in Cherokee County based Galena, KS.

With 84 years in business, during boom times and bust, Wenger has proven that rural community values and work-life balance can not only endure, but thrive. This dynamic mystery is explained in a sound Kansas business environment, international business opportunities, big-city wages and benefits and tiny town living.

However. *However* - that mysteriously balanced equation is under threat that we've never experienced before - not even from Chinese counterfeit copies of our proprietary products. The threat is fostered from circumstances within Kansas and within legislative oversight. This threat to our ability to attract, develop and retain world-class Kansas employees is under persistent and relentless threat from unregulated, indifferent and aggressive Industrial Wind Energy mega-corporations.

I want to be clear; I take no issue with Industrial Wind Energy development in western Kansas, and I know directly the benefit it has so often brought to those very sparsely populated counties. Eastern Kansas, however, is markedly different in many fundamental ways; population density - even of rural areas - is but one.

In my roles, I do take serious issue with legislative absence allowing unregulated wild-cattling of Industrial Wind Energy mega-corporations operating loosely and aggressively in Kansas counties. Kansas County Commissioners are woefully unprepared to deal with such an onslaught of mega-corporation tactics.

Many at Wenger travel the globe. We have friends and employees in Europe, as well as every state in our nation. As we visit with these friends and clients, it is VERY telling that *their* governmental bodies - with decades more experience than Kansas County Commissioners in regard to Industrial Wind Energy development have reigned-in Industrial Wind Energy wild-cattling and have either revised or adopted regulations which astutely balance Industrial Wind Energy development, county tax optimization, and the preservation of citizen's rights of health, property values and well-being.

I urge you, on behalf of Kansans past (honoring their legacy), Kansans present (supporting their diligence) and Kansans future (respecting their aspirations) to adopt legislative guidance as exemplified by House Bill 2273.

Thank you again for this opportunity, and your kind attention.