

Dear Representatives,

February 14, 2019

My wife, Susan, and I were born and raised in rural Kansas. We both attended college for our bachelor and master's degree programs in cities across Kansas: Lawrence, Hays, Pittsburg, and Topeka. Much of our large extended family lives in towns across the state, so we are familiar with many of the rural areas in Kansas and have a great appreciation for the people and values of each of these rural areas. Early in our careers, we spent four years out of state before ultimately determining that the beauty and way of life in rural Kansas is where we wanted to put our roots and raise our family. We have been living in rural Nemaha County near Seneca for the past eleven years, choosing rural Kansas over more lucrative options elsewhere. We now have five children and hope that they too will grow to see the beauty of rural Kansas the way we did.

Recently, several companies have arrived in our county with plans to install *nearly 500* industrial wind turbines. And that would only be Phase I. Their stated plans include turbines that are almost 500 feet in height, with the possibility of even taller turbines. We've asked ourselves, "Why here?". The fact is, our county was ill-prepared to understand the facts surrounding industrial wind turbines, and by the time many of our residents (including signed leaseholders) began to better understand, we found ourselves at a disadvantage in negotiating with a multi-billion dollar company, hoping to obtain what we consider even reasonable baseline regulations. Unfortunately, self-imposed regulations proposed by these companies are based on recommendations crafted by no other than wind energy associations and companies themselves! Independent research is not a solid foundation of these recommendations, nor is input from individual nearby landowners who ultimately are the ones most affected by the presence of industrial wind turbines. We are exactly those type of landowners, and we need your help.

Industrial wind turbines of this size no doubt alter the landscape of rural Kansas, dwarfing even the tallest trees and buildings. We are very disappointed that we may soon be looking out from all sides of our property, seeing a literal forest of industrial wind turbines where a calm, rural Kansas horizon once was.

Industrial wind turbine companies frequently state that property values decrease little, if any. Consider for yourself whether you would choose a property that has even one 500 foot tall turbine (that produces unwanted noise) near your property. Now imagine hundreds, scattered in every direction for miles and miles. It is simply illogical to think that when a person eventually sells their property that it will not be worth less than if industrial wind turbines were not located nearby. My wife and I have worked hard to buy our home and have recently undergone a major remodel. Property value is very real to us.

There is much research that acknowledges the risks to personal health and safety when living near industrial wind turbines. My wife and I do not want to put ourselves, let alone our beautiful young children at risk of developing health issues now or in the future. Unfortunately, as non-participating property owners, we have no protections against these risks.

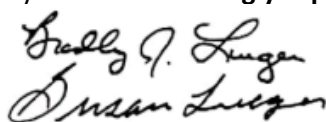
Nemaha County has a number of national and global businesses that are dependent on workers (both blue and white-collar) moving to or remaining in the local area. Unemployment is near zero. At a time when many students are encouraged to pursue professions that lead them to move away from rural Kansas, we cannot allow those rural areas to be exploited by industrial wind turbine companies and give students one more reason to move away. This affects the long-term viability of these businesses and thus their large contribution to the Kansas economy. I can say *for certain* that the presence of 500 or more industrial wind turbines would have made our decision to move to Nemaha County unlikely. I also believe it will be a deciding factor for many more people in the future, including my own children.

Rural county commissioners, however well intended, are often ill-prepared for industrial wind energy and what it means for their county and its residents. While it is important that the State does not overreach in its authority, minimum regulation should be in place in order to provide reasonable baseline protections to Kansas residents, particularly non-participating property owners who will be adversely affected, and otherwise have few rights to protect them. HB2273 does this very well, as it provides for reasonable baseline protections while leaving any additional current and future regulation to the discretion of the individual counties. Through agreements with the industrial wind turbine companies, landowners can choose to "opt-out" of the regulation, thereby requiring industrial wind turbine companies to also respect the rights of non-participating property owners, something they have only done with a fig leaf approach.

While Susie and I are heartbroken that Federal Production Tax Credits and the lack of reasonable baseline regulations allow these multi-billion dollar companies to so easily pollute our countryside with these behemoth industrial machines, there is even more at stake than simply a beautiful skyline, health and safety, property values, or business growth. It is our rural Kansas way of life. **We strongly support HB2273 and encourage you to as well.**

Sincerely,

Brad and Susan Lueger, Seneca, KS

Handwritten signatures of Brad and Susan Lueger in black ink.