



Dear Chairman Seiwert and Committee members, thank you for allowing me to speak today. I am opposed to HB 2273. Not only do I direct the Climate + Energy Project, a strong proponent for clean energy in Kansas, but I am also a resident of Reno County, where a new wind farm is being proposed by NextEra. I believe passing this bill will have many unintended consequences for Kansas overall and Reno County as well.

Reno County began exploring wind energy more than eleven years ago with the creation of the Reno County Wind Energy Taskforce. While the task force was not directly involved in bringing Siemens to Hutchinson, the work we did leading up to the announcement was certainly helpful in gaining public support for the project. In 2008, the Reno County Wind Energy Taskforce received the Governor's Award for Clean Energy Education at the state's Wind Energy Conference. Members of the task force, the Chamber, City and Siemens were instrumental in keeping the Kansas Renewable Portfolio Standard in place allowing the wind industry to grow and prosper during legislative sessions from 2012-2015.

I'm telling you all of this because I want to remind you of the long history of support for wind power in Reno County and in Kansas. For more than a decade, my work with the Climate + Energy Project has taken me all over the state. I have heard first hand from landowners and communities, including Chambers, Commissioners and economic development professionals about the benefits they have received from hosting wind turbines.

I believe we are here today in part due to opposition to the Pretty Prairie Wind Farm. I've been involved in community meetings and public hearings about this wind farm in Reno County for several months. I've provided fact based information to the County Commissioners, the Reno County Health Department and the landowners in Reno County to help counter the misinformation and unscientific rhetoric promoting an anti-wind agenda. I was very pleased when the Commission voted late last year to consider what was best for the County overall instead of approving a moratorium on wind farms in Reno County. Wind energy attacks against the Pretty Prairie Wind Farm and others in the state seem to be using the same false information about health and property values we've seen in Oklahoma and Texas. Kansas doesn't need outsiders telling us about wind farms – we've seen the economic and environmental benefits first hand over the past ten years.

You have heard some folks say the setbacks are not designed to kill the wind industry, but the setbacks in this bill go well beyond accepted industry standards and the impact would be devastating to wind energy in Kansas. When the moratorium was up for a vote in Reno County, folks in the audience clapped and said great when NextEra indicated a moratorium would likely stop the project completely. Kansas has, until recently been exempt from the attacks on wind power and in fact, our polling shows more than 90% of Kansas voters support expanding wind and solar across the state.

I hope you read the written testimony from Alan Albers, a farmer in Kingman County who missed out on a sizable amount of money because folks outside the project area harassed the developer so much they moved the project. How fair is it that he was unable to use his land the way he wanted because his neighbors didn't like wind energy?

You've heard today from the Hutchinson Reno County Chamber, representing 750 businesses and you have written testimony from the Reno County Commission asking you to vote no on HB 2273, as another voice from Reno County and as the executive director of the Climate + Energy Project, please don't pass HB 2273 and take away the opportunity we have to benefit from wind power. Thank you.