

February 19, 2019

To: Chairman Seiwart and Members of the Committee on Energy, Utilities and Telecommunications

From: Joann Knight, Executive Director, Dodge City/Ford County Development Corporation

Re: Testimony in Opposition to HB 2273

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 2273. Ford County has been very fortunate to have been selected as the location of several wind farms since 2006. This industry has helped us diversify our rural economy and added investment and jobs. These jobs provide good wages for our young adults and we have seen many new residents to our county that have been able to purchase homes and start families here due to these job opportunities. From the very start, the companies have been very engaged with our communities, county commissioners, planning and zoning, and land owners.

HB 2273 unnecessarily dilutes the local control that our County Commissioners, who have been elected by our citizens to represent them, and know what is best for our communities. When working with wind farm developers, local decisions are critically important not only with setbacks, but roads, maintenance, PILOT programs and future developments. HB 2273 unnecessarily takes local decisions away from our community. This bill will limit a wind turbine within 1 ½ miles of any residential structure or public building. This would basically stop all future wind farms in Ford County and the state. If you draw a 1 ½ mile circle around every house in Ford County, there isn't much area remaining for a wind farm. As the Economic Development Director, the number one questions I get from our land owners and citizens is "When are we going to get more wind farms and how do I get them to locate on my land?" This legislation would kill any further growth in this very important industry for our county and region.

Tremendous discussions about how to help grow rural Kansas have been the focus of many legislators. HB 2273 will create a barrier for that growth in this industry, which in turn will have a ripple effect negatively on our communities now and into the future. Please do not put these additional economic barriers on us. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to give me a call.

Sincerely,

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