



City of Chetopa
"The Pecan & Catfish Capital"

618 N. 11th St.
P. O. Box 205
Chetopa, KS 67336

To: House Financial Institutions and Rural Development

From: Debra Darnell, City Treasurer for City of Chetopa, KS

Date: March 3, 2021

RE: Testimony in Support of City Utility Low-Interest Program

The City of Chetopa has a utility services provide electric, water, sewer and trash services to a population of approximately 1100 people.

The impacts of the dramatic wholesale power purchase increase for the period of February 12th to the 19th has made a major impact on the city's financial stability.

This Artic Blast event could very well result in the total elimination of all unencumbered cash reserves to fulfill our obligations to the power supplier for our city. Our business community has struggled for months from the restrictions and impacts of COVID-19. Our community has over 30% of the population on some type of government assistance who already face difficulty payment their utility bills.

Access to the proposed City Utility Low-interest Loan Program described in the current legislation, would allow our city to borrow from the State to cover this large debt we are currently facing due to the extreme weather crisis event of February 2021.

This program would allow the City of Chetopa to give some much needed relief to our citizens during these already difficult times. We have a single grocery store that has struggled to keep their doors open throughout the COVID-19 restrictions, if we can get the utilities to a more affordable rate we may not have to lose this valuable asset to our community.

We respectfully request your consideration and approval of the City Utility Low-Interest Program legislation.

Sincerely,

Debra Darnell, City Treasurer

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