

Written Only Proponent Testimony
SB 133 – Electric vehicle charging stations would not be considered a public utility.

Senate Committee on Utilities
February 10, 2021

Provided by Doug Shepherd, V.P. of Management Consulting Services
Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc.

Chairman Thompson and members of the Senate Committee on Utilities, thank you for the opportunity to comment on behalf of Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. (KEC) and our members in support of SB 133.

KEC is the Kansas statewide service organization for 27 electric distribution cooperatives and three generation and transmission cooperatives. KEC represents the interests of, and provides needed services and programs to, the electric co-ops that serve Kansans. Our major programming areas include advocacy, education, communications and safety/loss control.

Under SB 133, an electric vehicle (EV) charging station would not be considered a public utility. It is envisioned this change will help facilitate deployment of a robust EV charging network across Kansas. We believe expanding electric vehicle use in Kansas could have a significant impact on electric energy sales, creating a positive benefit for the utility industry in Kansas and our member cooperatives.

Electric cooperative service territories cover nearly 80% of the land mass in Kansas and key transportation arteries bisect our service areas. Thus, opportunities to site charging stations in regions served by our members are abundant.

Many areas of the state are experiencing stagnant or even declining electric loads. Increased electric vehicle use is one prospect for growing our load factor, stabilizing or growing that load and potentially allowing fixed cost to be spread over a greater number of kilowatt hour sales. That is good for the co-op's bottom line, and as member-owned cooperatives where margins are returned to the members, that is good for our consumer-owners, too.

A key component in furthering electric vehicle use is a dependable, well-spaced charging network. Residents of Kansas and those traveling through our great state will need assurance that they can re-charge quickly and reliably throughout the state. Building a state-wide charging network to ensure Kansas is the preferred travel route for those going across country or to spur EV use in-state has a symbiotic connection to increased electricity sales. It can be a win-win-win for the state, travelers, and electric cooperative members across Kansas.

In closing, we appreciate the opportunity to share our support for SB 133, a measure designed to spur EV use, and thus kilowatt hour sales, in Kansas. We respectfully encourage your committee to act favorably on SB 133.