



Senate Committee on Utilities

Testimony in Opposition to Senate Bill 279

Presented by Eric Stafford, Vice President of Government Affairs

Monday, March 22, 2021

Mister Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Eric Stafford, Vice President of Government Affairs for the Kansas Chamber of Commerce. We appreciate the opportunity to offer testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 279, a bill we believe encroaches on a business' right to contract with land owners.

Senate Bill 279 would establish very restrictive guidelines for the siting and development of wind energy projects across the state. Today, these companies work closely with land owners and local government officials through lengthy, detailed negotiations and planning processes to develop projects across the state. Counties where these investments take place utilize industry recognized standards for site placement that establish safe distances from facilities in their communities. SB 279 places stringent and unnecessary guidelines on wind energy investment. Ultimately our biggest concern is the negative impact on a the ability for a private business to enter into a contract agreement with land owners.

The Kansas Chamber supports a regulatory climate in Kansas that promotes a healthy business environment and instills regulatory certainty. Burdensome and unnecessary state regulations not only stifles business growth. We support all sources of energy as long as government does not create a more favorable climate for some sources over others. All energy sources should be able to compete freely on the open market.

Our organization supports the most appropriate, least restrictive method of regulation whether we are talking energy policy or occupational licensing. Senate Bill 279 will add both cost and burdensome guidelines that will take additional time and money. Those costs will ultimately be passed through to energy consumers.

We thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 279, and I am happy to answer questions at the appropriate time.