

March 19, 2021

To: Sheila Wodtke  
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Comment to the Public Record.

Regarding: Kansas Senate Bill 279 of the 2021-2022 Legislative Sessions

I strongly oppose this bill, which claims to be for protecting property, but is designed to eliminate additional wind power altogether.

The benefits of wind power are great and growing. According to the U. S. Energy Information Administration, wind power now supplies over 40% of the power to the Kansas Electrical Grid. Wind farm leases operating as of the beginning of 2021 provide Kansas counties and landowners with approximately \$1.5 Billion dollars in direct economic benefits. Kansas has benefitted from 9,000 direct jobs during construction and operation and another 12,000 indirect and induced jobs thanks to this growing industry, and technician jobs in this industry are projected to be the fastest growing occupation in the next ten years.

It is largely responsible for our 40% decline in carbon emissions, and will play a key role in reducing the impact of climate disruption, which would significantly impact Kansas agriculture, as well as intensify other damage to the state. This legislation would force Kansas to rely more on fossil fuels, or import wind power from neighboring states like Colorado. It would also keep Kansas – located in the “Saudi Arabia” of wind – from the lucrative export of power to the grid, where other states could purchase it.

Not only does this bill contain some of the most restrictive regulations against wind power in the country, it even applies them retroactively to existing leases signed after 2011. It requires a one-mile or more setback, only allows one windmill per square mile, requires a 40-decibel sound limit (less than the noise generated by passing cars on my residential state), and “shadow flicker modeling”. The one windmill per square mile requirement doesn’t reduce the impact to neighboring landowners, but forces the leases to cover more property. It is clearly designed to make any future wind farms infeasible.

If these kinds of restrictions were applied to other sectors, the state of Kansas would never build a new highway, site any additional CAFO’s or expand any intermodal facilities. It is clearly discriminatory against wind power over all other sources, and would be reprehensible public policy.

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