

William Vonderschmidt,

Brown County, KS landowner

Senate Utilities Committee, Proponent Testimony for SB353

Chairman Thompson and members of the Committee, Thank you for the opportunity to testify in favor of SB353.

This bill gives much needed consideration in addressing key concerns and issues for both participating and non-participating landowners. It is not as restrictive as it should be but at least it is a very much needed start.

The key concerning issues are: Setback distance, Noise, Shadow Flicker, Risks of Ice throw, blade shear and tower collapse, Decommissioning, Fire Protection plan, Risks of interference with local weather radars and severe storm radars

The location of wind turbines, the setback distance from nonparticipating land owners is a great concern. The turbine location, especially near rural residences or other occupied buildings causes with noise, shadow flicker and certainly reduction in the value of any home or building site. Wind turbines have been installed long enough, especially in the Midwest, that we now have available documented history of sleep deprivation from the noise, shadow flicker and warning lights for aircraft safety.

This bill outlines the established health, safety and operating conditions participating developers plans must comply with when seeking approval for construction and before installing their wind turbines. Many rural neighbors friendship has been totally destroyed over setback, noise and shadow flicker between participating and nonparticipating landowners because there were no established setback conditions or very minimal pre-established setback requirements.

Decommissioning will be another large issue in the near future. What if the owner/developer goes broke or the turbines become technologically obsolete or something goes wrong in fifteen, twenty or thirty years of operation, who is responsible for taking down the turbine and removing all supporting surface and subsurface equipment? What are the liabilities and cost? These are risks no landowner would ever entertain. Passage of this bill will let the landowner know exactly what should occur by requiring a decommissioning plan in place by the owner/developer prior to approval of operation as it will be several years in the future. The developer will have a defined, approved plan of exactly what will occur for decommissioning along with providing a financial assurance plan, updated at least once every five year.

Risks of ice throw, blade shear, tower collapse, interference with weather radars and fire protection are common sense issues that should be addressed for public safety in every wind turbine installation.

I strongly urge your support in passing this bill.