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February 18, 2021

The Honorable Senator Jeff Longbine  
Chair, Senate Committee on Financial Institutions and Insurance

Re: SB 245, Oppose - Providing for the financing of electrical corporations through the issuance of securitization bonds.

Mr. Chairman and committee members, thank you for this opportunity to present our written testimony. My name is Ernest Kutzley and I am the Advocacy Director for AARP Kansas. We fight for affordable utility rates to make sure that people are able to remain in their homes and communities.

On behalf of our more than 290,000 members across the state, we strongly oppose SB 245. We believe that it is harmful to Kansas Ratepayers.

The current blackouts and power shortages demonstrate the need to have all hands on deck and the potential danger of retiring anything prematurely. Let's evaluate what happened this week. For the last 2 days, coal- and gas-powered plants serving Mid-Continent Independent System Operator, Inc. (MISO) and Southwest Power Pool (SPP) provided most of the power to our region. SPP, which serves Kansas consumers, blacked out customers Monday and Tuesday due to the power shortage caused by the winter storms and dangerously low temperatures. Monday was the first blackout in their 60-year history.

SB 245 will be harmful for Kansas ratepayers. Utility expenditures should have full regulatory review and useful power plants should not be incentivized to retire prematurely. Kansans cannot afford it. AARP supports full regulatory review of utility expenditures. We know that it is essential that older Kansans and their families can count on affordable and reliable utilities to cool, heat and light our homes and power the devices they rely on.

Therefore, we oppose SB 245. All Kansans must be able to depend on reliable energy services. We respectfully urge you reject SB 245.

Ernest Kutzley

