

Helen Hands
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Dear Members of the Senate Committee on Utilities:

I am writing to urge you to oppose Senate Bill 279, a bill known as the Wind Generation Permit And Property Protection Act. The provisions in this bill are extremely onerous and will severely slow the development of wind energy in the state.

Wind energy provides direct economic benefits to counties and landowners and jobs to Kansans. In 2020 alone, economic benefits were estimated to \$1.51 billion. Wind facilities also have provided 9,000 construction and operations jobs and 12,000 more jobs indirectly. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, wind turbine service technician jobs are predicted to grow faster in 2019-2029 than any other job in the country. According to Cloud County Community College, Kansas' wind-energy production potential is second in the nation. Why would we want to stifle such an industry that can provide good-paying jobs in Kansas?

Because wind energy provides such significant economic benefits to Kansas, I suggest that the Legislature study this issue more carefully before passing such stringent regulations. Some of the provisions may provide important health and safety protections, but others are too strict relative to the likelihood or severity of the potential harm. For example, the provisions relating to light flicker. Thus, I suggest that the Legislature form a commission to study all provisions in this bill before going forward. The commission should consist of concerned landowners, scientists and doctors knowledgeable about the health concerns, engineers knowledgeable about the public-safety concerns of wind turbines, legislators, and members of the wind-energy industry.

In past years when there were concerns about the effects of industrial wind farms on wildlife, wildlife biologists and wind-energy developers worked together to develop wind-siting recommendations in Kansas. A similar effort could allow Kansas to be a leader in wind-energy production while protecting the health and safety of its residents and reaping tremendous economic benefits.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Helen Hands