



Hutchinson/Reno County Chamber of Commerce

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WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Kansas State Legislature
House Committee on Energy and Environment
Opposition to HB2241

Tuesday, March 19

Submitted by:

Jason M. Ball, President & CEO of the Hutchinson/Reno County Chamber of Commerce

Members of the House Energy & Environment Committee –

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am here to submit testimony in opposition to HB 2241 on behalf of our members and the Board of Directors of the Hutchinson / Reno County Chamber of Commerce.

I want to express our concern regarding the impact that this bill, or others like it, may have on economic development efforts in Reno County and the State of Kansas.

As you may be aware, the Hutchinson / Reno County area has been the great beneficiaries of job growth made possible through the investment of wind energy companies like Siemens Wind Energy and Draka Cableteq. We greatly value their presence, investment and continued commitment to this community; and stand fully in support of them.

Currently more than 150 people are employed at Siemens Wind Energy and plans have been announced that there will be the addition of 66 positions by the end of this month. As the national economy steadily improves we are hopeful that this trend of increasing employment locally will continue.

This proposed legislation negatively impacts the overall business climate of Kansas for these firms in two ways:

- 1) It may cause companies that currently have a presence in this state to reevaluate their ability to compete here. We believe that the weakening or elimination of renewable energy standards at a state level sends the wrong message to these important corporate citizens and community partners.
- 2) The reduction of renewable energy standards risks hampering our ability to aggressively compete for and win projects from any industry currently conducting site location searches at a



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national level. It is standard practice for site selection consultants to inquire about the energy production mix available. Generally sites offering some portion of energy generated from renewable resources are considered to be more competitive.

We respectfully request as you deliberate on HB 2241 that you keep in mind the potential negative impact to the employees of these firms, the citizens of Reno County and the long term implications to economic development efforts in this area.

Thank you for your time. I will be happy to address any questions you might have.