

Testimony of Representative Mark Schreiber
In Support of House Bill 2381
Before the House Energy, Utilities and Telecommunications Committee
February 23, 2021

Last fall, I spoke with the director of the Iowa energy office about their state plan. He told me they approached their plan with an economic development focus. They wanted new capital to be brought into Iowa, whether it's in the form of dollars or industries or research. From our discussion came this bill. I believe it is time for Kansas to establish a strategy for how to take advantage of the energy transformation that has been occurring for several years in the United States and will continue for many more. As we witnessed the last couple of weeks, energy is an important element in our lives. It's time Kansas joins the rest of its neighbors to create a state energy plan that can further develop our economy and encourage resiliency across the state.

About 24 years ago, Kansas was facing another energy decision. A taskforce was created to determine if deregulating the electric utility business in Kansas was a worthwhile goal. There was a lot on the line, and the taskforce spent more than a year investigating the issue. Ultimately, the legislature did not support deregulation, and looking back that was a wise move. Fast forward to today and we have another energy transformation taking place. We have a large number of the Fortune 500 companies looking for more sustainable energy generation. Energy is more than just heat and power. It is also poised to affect our transportation as alternate fueled vehicles will become a lot more common in the coming years.

The energy industry is huge, and evolving quickly to meet customer, economic and societal demands. Kansas needs a strategy to attract capital and innovation. It needs leaders who understand that "Change is not optional, but growth is." BlackRock is the world's largest asset manager with almost \$9 trillion under management. Their objective is to create long-term value for their investors. A few weeks ago, Larry Fink, BlackRock's Chairman and CEO, wrote a letter to company CEOs saying that the transition to sustainable forms of energy is quickening. They have recognized that capital is flowing to investments with that focus, and it is growing rapidly. I believe a state plan can identify key areas that will help create value and revenue for the state.