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Kansas Senate Utilities Committee

WRITTEN TESTIMONY in SUPPORT of SB 478

Chairman Mike Thompson and Members of the Committee:

Some months ago, the Neosho County Commission established the Neosho Ridge Wind Farm Advisory Committee and appointed me chairman.

I own and live on a farm in the footprint which I had named “Starlight Meadow Farm.” As the name suggests, for many of us, one of the joys of Kansas rural living is the splendor of the night sky.

Clearly Kansas has embraced wind energy. I am a green guy; however, wind energy is a mixed blessing. James Stovall of Apex Clean Energy, Inc, the construction company of Neosho Ridge turbines admitted, “they (turbines) will make some noise.” The presence of the turbines negatively impacts daylight countryside aesthetics.

Our committee members agreed that the wind farm was here to stay. We could nothing about the appearance of the countryside and could have limited success with the noise issue. We unanimously agreed that the most important change that could be made to make a moderately good neighbor of the wind farm was to change the lighting to radar-activated lights. At least then we could have rural living during the night.

My cousin from Parsons, who grew up in rural Galesburg, was driving back to Parsons from Chanute a few nights ago. He told me that sorrow overcame him on the trip as he realized that his rural home was now an industrial park, an accurate description of the reality of 139 flashing light turbines.

Senate Bill 478 is a noble effort to make wind energy a better neighbor. It is an appropriate use of governmental police power, in my opinion, to preserve the attractions of rural living. Wind energy should be compelled to be a good neighbor. We were living here before they arrived and have

made investments in our homes. The Neosho Ridge footprint contains many country homes. The availability of country living is another selling point for Kansas. For many Kansans, that is their dream.

Please advance and ultimately enact Senate Bill 478. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Rev. Dr. Stan Basler, Chairman, Neosho Ridge Wind Farm Advisory Committee