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WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT

House Energy, Utilities, and Telecommunications Committee

HB 2156

Low-income Residential Rates

**Whitney Damron
On Behalf Of
Liberty Utilities**

February 9, 2023

Good Morning Chairman Delperdang and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of Liberty Utilities, we respectfully submit these written remarks in support of HB 2156 that would authorize the Kansas Corporation Commission to establish rates beneficial to low-income customers.

We appreciate the work of the Citizen's Utility Ratepayer Board on this issue that included input by the affected utilities.

First and foremost, providing rate relief to those who struggle to pay utility bills that are a necessity of life makes for good public policy. We believe the KCC, CURB and utilities can work collectively to insure rates for the remainder remain fair and just.

Secondly, from a practical standpoint, it is better for a public utility to keep customers on its system, as disconnects cost time and money, which leads to increased costs for a customer who has their service shut off and then turned back on, whether due to payment of the bill or through Cold Weather Rule connection requirements. Or when payment and collection of past due bills cannot be obtained from the customer, these costs become costs borne by remaining customers and the utility.

Liberty supports HB 2156 and asks for the Committee to advance this legislation forward.

Thank you for your consideration of our position.

WBD

Liberty Central Region serves approximately 180,000 customers in a six-state area composed of Kansas, Missouri, Arkansas, Iowa, Illinois, and Oklahoma with approximately 10,000 customers located in the southeast corner of Kansas. Liberty serves over 1 million customers in North America, Bermuda, and Chile.

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