

MINUTES OF THE SENATE UTILITIES COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Pat Apple at 9:30 A.M. on February 20, 2008 in Room 526-S of the Capitol.

Committee members absent: Senator Jay Scott Emler- excused

Committee staff present: Raney Gilliland, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Cindy Lash, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Mike Corrigan, Revisor of Statutes
Ann McMorris, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Senator Roger Reitz
Stephen Weatherford, President, Kansas Housing Resources Corporation
Paul Johnson, Kansas Catholic Conference
Ken Frahm, Kansas Energy Council
Dave Springe, CURB
Senator Roger Pine
Ben Myers, Tonganoxie
John Flower, Basehor
James P. Washington

Others in attendance: See attached list

Vice Chair opened the hearing on:

SB 580 - Establishing the weatherization assistance program account of the state housing trust fund, providing annual transfer from state general fund

Proponents

Stephen R. Weatherford, president, Kansas Housing Resources Corporation, explained the purpose of the weatherization program which KHRC administers and its long term program which addresses energy loss in homes and provides home improvements that increase energy efficiency. He noted the program is funded entirely with grants from the US Department of Energy and Low-Income Energy Assistance Program. **SB 580** would provide sorely-needed dependable funding. (Attachment 1)

Senator Roger Reitz noted **SB 580** would provide weatherization grants to low income home owners to increase housing energy efficiency. A summary of the state funding was prepared by Kansas Energy Council and attached to his testimony. (Attachment 2)

Paul Johnson, Kansas Catholic Conference, expressed hope that passage of **SB 580** would provide state funding on a regular basis for weatherization services. He felt that accountability is vital and an annual report to the Senate Utilities and House Energy and Utilities Committees should be required for the next three years. (Attachment 3)

Ken Frahm, Co-Chair, Kansas Energy Council, stated KEC supports the establishment of annual state funding for the Kansas Weatherization Assistance Program. The Council voted unanimously to include this recommendation for \$2 million in annual State funding in its Kansas Energy Plan 2008. He encouraged support of **SB 580** to: (1) promote energy conservation and efficiency statewide; (2) improve the comfort and safety of homes occupied by low-income Kansans; (3) reduce utility bills for more low-income Kansans; and (4) provide improved affordable stock. (Attachment 4)

Written testimony by David Springe, Citizens' Utility Ratepayer Board (Attachment 5)

Tom Thompson, Sierra Club (Attachment 6)

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE Senate Utilities Committee at 9:30 A.M. on February 20, 2008 in Room 526-S of the Capitol.

Committee questioned how high priority needs were targeted for the funds; distribution of grants; and whether the \$2 million was in the state budget for 2008.

Chair closed the hearing on **SB 580**.

Chair opened the hearing on

SB 555 - Notice for customers of certain utilities of proposed rate increases by such utilities, CURB intervention in such rate increase proceedings subject to deadline.

Proponents

Senator Roger Pine provided a balloon amendment to **SB 555** for discussion. The Chair indicated no action would be taken on the proposed amendments at this hearing. (Attachment 7)

John Flower of Bonner Springs, favored **SB 555** regarding the notification of patrons and others when utilities apply for a rate change. Two issues of concern were: (1) extension of time of notification to customers of impending rate cases, and (2) KCC's oversight of water rate cases and how advanced notification can make a difference. He supplied detailed information on how the request for a rate increase by Suburban Water System was handled by KCC. (Attachment 8)

James Washington of Basehor, hopes that **SB 555** becomes law as this is a step in securing the rights of the people. He also provided details on the Suburban Water System rate increase hearing held by KCC. (Attachment 9)

Ben R. Myers of Tonganoxie, spoke briefly on steps he had taken in the rate increase hearing by Suburban Water System. He provided copy of a letter he had sent to KCC. (Attachment 10)

Neutral

David Springe, CURB, had provided testimony on **SB 555** prior to seeing the amendments offered in the balloon. (Attachment 11)

Chair requested those testifying on **SB 555** provide written comments on the proposed **SB 555** balloon for consideration by the committee at a future meeting.

Hearing on **SB 555** was left open.

KCC provided the committee with information requested at a prior meeting - a list of price deregulated exchanges and competitive exchanges. (Attachment 12)

Adjournment.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann McMorris, Secretary

Attachments - 12