

March 21, 2023

Bill Number: SB312

Disposition: Proponent

Testimony Type: Written only

Chairwoman McGinn and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in support of SB312, and ask that you support this much needed legislation as well.

The power of the people is strongest at the most local level. It is also the strongest when those who are elected to serve the people at the most local level are able to, at the very least, have input on issues that greatly impact our citizens, their property, and our communities as a whole. Out of state development and utility companies acquiring large amounts of land through eminent domain to plant large transmission lines throughout our landscapes SHOULD be reviewed at the very local level. SB312 would allow that to happen.

Large utility companies, the Kansas Corporation Commission, and those awarded the contracts to build these massive projects have little to no regard for the citizens, the infrastructure, or the lost production and tax dollars that come with transmission line projects because they know they don't have to. We know this first hand in Cherokee County. We are on the tail end of a transmission line project that spanned from one end of our county to the other. These folks operate solely to gain a profit on the backs of those who foot the bill, lose their land, and combat failing roadways during the project.

Chairwoman McGinn and Members of the Committee, you and I were not elected to ensure that out of state developers thrive on the backs of our people. We were not elected to grow big energy by taking from our property owners. We were elected to meet the needs and protect the interests of Kansans. It is time to put our people first.

Please give a voice to the citizens of Kansas by supporting SB312. Out of state development companies, KCC, and big utility companies should not be allowed the power of eminent domain without significant and meaningful checks by those elected to serve the people and preserve our communities, economies, and infrastructure at the most very local level.

Respectfully,

Lorie Johnson
Cherokee County Commissioner, District 2