

**Jackie Augustine, Executive Director**  
**Kelley Hurst, Director of Philanthropy**  
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Date of Testimony 1/25/2023

Bill Number SB49

Disposition: Proponent

ORAL In-Person Testimony

Conferee: Jackie Augustine, 785-537-4385, [jackie@audubonofkansas.org](mailto:jackie@audubonofkansas.org)

Interest represented: Audubon of Kansas

January 24, 2023

Re: Testimony for SB49

Dear Senator Mike Thompson, Chair Utilities Committee,

I am Jackie Augustine, Executive Director of Audubon of Kansas (AOK), representing this nonprofit environmental organization with 3000 members and supporters throughout Kansas. The proposed legislation requires lighting systems on future industrial wind facilities that dim or extinguish when aircraft are absent, and return to full intensity when aircraft are present. This legislation is described as a 'good neighbor' bill to restore tranquility to rural areas. **Audubon of Kansas supports SB49 as minimizing lighting on industrial wind complexes also has the potential to lower bat and bird attraction to wind turbines.**

The proposed legislation will not only have a positive impact on rural residents, it may also affect wildlife. The two taxa of most concern are birds and bats, which both have the potential to be negatively affected by industrial wind. Regarding bats, a recent scientific review<sup>1</sup> conducted an extensive search of the literature and summarized eight studies that examined the link between lights on industrial wind complexes and bat behavior mortality. Red lights have a tendency to attract migratory bats, although flashing red lights attract fewer bats than those that did not flash. There does not seem to be any differences in bat attraction between lit and unlit facilities. Birds show a similar reaction to lights on industrial wind turbines as bats. Another review<sup>2</sup> suggests that birds can be attracted to red lights and that flashing lights attract fewer birds than steady lights. Virtually nothing is known about how lighting affects resident birds and bats. We acknowledge that that differences in bird and bat mortality among steady, flashing, and no lighting is small, but we believe this legislation will have a slight positive impact on both birds and bats migrating through the area but also those that reside under turbines.

Support for this bill would be a useful starting point from which to build momentum for further action to protect rural communities, to convert wind siting guidelines into statute law, and to protect the rights of wildlife and wild lands.

<sup>1</sup> Guest et al. 2022. An Updated Review of Hypotheses Regarding Bat Attraction to Wind Turbines. *Animals* 12:343.

<sup>2</sup> May et al. 2015. Mitigating Wind-turbine Induced Avian Mortality: Sensory, Aerodynamic and Cognitive Constraints and Options. *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews* 42:170-181.

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Thank you for providing this forum so Audubon of Kansas can be the voice for wildlife.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jackie Augustine". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jackie Augustine  
Executive Director  
Audubon of Kansas