Senate Utilities Committee
January 25, 2023
SB 46

Kansas Association of Counties
Proponent Testimony – Written Only

Chairman Olson and members of the Select Committee:

Thank you for allowing the Kansas Association of Counties (KAC) to offer proponent testimony on SB 46, which would address wind turbine light mitigation standards.

Before looking at the issue of wind turbine lighting, it is important to note that KAC believes the issue of whether or not to have wind turbines is a primarily local issue. Local leaders, such as county commissioners are best positioned to listen to and respond to the needs of their local communities on an issue like wind turbines. Some communities support wind energy development. Others do not. A "one-size-fits-all" approach is ineffective for an issue like this in a state as large and with communities as different as those we find in Kansas. I will also note that some counties in Kansas have placed moratoriums on wind turbine development, or prohibited this type of development in certain areas with zoning regulations. Again, these are local decisions tied specifically to where and how these developments will exist in the local communities.

Specifically to the issue of lighting, this issue is one facet of the wind turbine debate that is not a local issue. Lighting on wind turbines exists for safety purposes. The Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) provides these standards to increase the visibility of wind turbines for pilots. The standards that counties adopt reflect this, requiring that lighting adhere to minimum FAA standards. It should be noted that even in situations where a county had no standards for wind turbine lighting, FAA requirements would still be in effect. KAC supports SB 46 as introduced, as it requires light mitigation consistent with FAA standards.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony, as well as the rest of the information presented.

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