



**Testimony of Westar Energy & KCP&L
In SUPPORT of SB184
Before the Senate Judiciary Committee
March 9, 2017**

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Thank you Chairman Wilborn and members of the Committee for the opportunity to appear before you today in support of Senate Bill 184. Most Kansans are likely unaware that their state boasts one of the most well-respected Fusion Centers in the nation, serving as a focal point for information sharing in support of efforts to protect America.

There are more than 70 fusion centers across the U.S. that coordinate and distribute information to and from the federal government when local and regional threats are detected. Fusion centers conduct analysis and facilitate information sharing, assisting law enforcement and homeland security partners in preventing, protecting against, and responding to crime and terrorism.

While many fusion centers are law enforcement centric, what makes the Kansas Intelligence Fusion Center (KIFC) unique is its focus on Homeland Security issues. It's been said that electric grid security is national security. Westar Energy is a private-sector, critical infrastructure partner with KIFC, which allows us to share information and have access to the most sensitive threats the government is aware of. This helps us further safeguard our state's utility assets and better understand physical and cyber threats that could impact our customers and our state.

Whenever KIFC assists a critical infrastructure, private-sector member like Westar, operating costs are incurred. As more and more companies recognize the unique qualifications of the KIFC and desire to partner with KIFC, these operational costs will continue to rise and could become significant. Without financial assistance from KIFC partners, like Westar, this critical information sharing service will most likely further burden state budgets—or worse, impair KIFC's critical mission.

Westar supports an arrangement like that suggested in Senate Bill 184, where critical infrastructure companies using resources provided by the KIFC are allowed to assist in their share of these added operational expenses. The Kansas National Guard and the KIFC are leading the way in the nation with respect to effective collaboration on important security topics at the state level. Westar Energy is proud to partner with KIFC and we hope that our support of this bill furthers the work of KIFC and the efforts to safeguard critical infrastructure in Kansas.

Thank you, Committee, for your time and attention, and I'm pleased to stand for questions at the appropriate time.