

4200 S. 4th Street
Cantwell Hall
913-758-6564



OFFICE OF JUSTICE, PEACE, AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION

Testimony in Opposition to SB No. 24

Chairman Seiwert and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to address SB 24 today, my name is John Shively, and I am the Director of the Office of Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation at the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth. Our community of Catholic Sisters and Associates has long maintained a Care of Creation committee. This committee's stated mission is to educate and collaborate with others to heal the Earth and ourselves of the destructive effects of climate change. This long-standing commitment to caring for the planet is why I speak to you today in opposition to Senate Bill 24. Climate Change is real, it is caused by humans, and it is already creating significant harm in Kansas and across the world. Worst of all, climate change harms marginalized communities, like people of color and those living in poverty, the most. ¹

Climate Change is a Moral Challenge and Opportunity

While I would posit that climate change is one of our greatest moral challenges, it is also a moral opportunity to create a better world for Kansans. Sadly, Senate Bill no. 24 limits the opportunities for local entities to establish reasonable ordinances that decide their energy future. The irony of titling this bill the Kansas energy choice act is that it expressly prohibits local communities from making their own clean energy choices and codifying those choices into law.

¹ [US Global Change Research Program: *Impacts, Risks, and Adaptation in the United States: Fourth National Climate Assessment, Volume II*. 2018.](#) Summary Finding 1.

Future Benefits to Kansans

I would urge Senators to vote no on SB No. 24 because it is a moral opportunity for us to chart a cleaner energy future. This imagined future benefits the farmer, whose work and livelihood are currently threatened by extreme flooding. It benefits the people across the country and the world who are currently displaced by intensifying storms and wildfires. It benefits those with health issues that are currently exacerbated by intensifying heat and the production of unclean energy. We should not create any more barriers to the transition to a clean energy future that helps Kansas protect our economy, our homes, and our health.

Closing

We oppose SB 24 because the bill:

- Fails to allow cities to set their energy policy as decided by local democracy
- Impedes the ability of localities to respond to the climate crisis
- The bill is a solution in search of a problem, to our knowledge no city in Kansas has outright banned the use of any source of energy. Even if a city were to pass something similar to the bills concern, it would likely only apply to new construction – not all existing buildings – as seen in California. ²

² <https://www.axios.com/cities-ban-natural-gas-hookups-98c292b7-a48f-465a-af87-d8b107882549.html>