

TO: Kansas Senate Utilities Committee

FROM: Joe Spease

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Subject: SB24, the Energy Choice Act

Bill position: I oppose SB24

SB24 would do great harm to the economy of Kansas.

Developing wind power, solar power, long-duration energy storage, and renewable hydrogen fuel in Kansas will create tens of billions of dollars of economic development, create thousands of jobs, revitalize western Kansas and rural economies, lower taxes, reduce energy prices, and help save precious water supplies needed for our agriculture. SB24 threatens to kill all of these benefits.

SB24 will do great harm to our economic potential by eliminating markets in Kansas that could use that lower-priced power produced by clean energy. It is outrageous for a state government to collude with the fossil fuel industry to force on us the dangerous, higher-priced, and damaging fossil fuels, against our will.

The entire world is switching from fossil fuels to clean energy because of the obvious and demonstrated economic benefits of that clean power. Climate change is happening now and brings with it tens of billions of dollars of annual economic losses from increasing costs of natural disasters. Munich Re, the giant of the insurance industry, tracks these increasing costs of climate change and warns, after a devastating year in 2020 of wildfires, hurricanes, floods, and other disasters, that states like Kansas that depend so much on agriculture, risk losing that farm economy because of increasingly damaging droughts from climate change. So now, with SB24, the legislature wants to support killing our state's ag industry by promoting the use of natural gas? As of 2016 the use of natural gas for power and fuel surpassed the use of coal power as the number one source of greenhouse gases. The most damaging part of using natural gas comes from the fugitive methane that escapes during the drilling, fracking, processing, and pipeline distribution of natural gas. The gas industry does not like people to hear that truth because they like to tell us that burning natural gas for power is better than burning coal for power. But the real damage from natural gas happens before it is combusted for power.

The gas industry is desperate to force the use of natural gas on people right now, before inevitable carbon taxes are put in place that dramatically increase the price of natural gas. Once a city, or state, or utility has committed to natural gas they will be stuck with extremely high prices for electricity.

We cannot support the use of "big government" to force cities or states to use a dangerous and damaging source of energy like natural gas. We must reject this evil use of "big government" and defeat SB24.