

Testimony submitted for Senate Bill No. 279
Senate Utilities Committee hearing held on March 22, 2021

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Chairman Thompson and members of the Senate Utilities Committee:
Proponent Testimony SB279

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment in support of SB279 which establishes the wind generation permit and property protection act which proposes critical setback requirements for commercial industrial wind turbines.

This is long overdue legislation to protect both participating and non-participating property owners in the siting of commercial wind turbines.

The essential problem has been the lack of zoning regulations in some counties and the overbearing pressure applied to county officials from wind generation companies to accept their proposals; up to and including threatening law suits against counties.

I have been a personal witness to the pressures applied by these companies in McPherson County. Often the setback distance required to protect people and property from wind turbine noise, shadow flicker and catastrophic failure proposed by these companies are less than the distances recommended by the particular wind turbine manufacturers.

County zoning boards and commissioners are often ill equipped to determine what safe setbacks are required from residences, property lines, roads, airports and Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks & Tourism managed properties.

The set backs, wind permit application, and decommissioning proposals in SB279 are exceptionally reasonable to protect people, property and the financial well being of the counties that commercial wind turbine companies are desiring to build in.

Counties are free to further restrict any of the proposals in this legislation. The main goal of this bill is to provide protection to counties; especially unzoned counties from over zealous large companies, both foreign and domestic from imposing their will for financial gain over the citizens of the State of Kansas.

Please consider passing this critical and long overdue legislation as currently written. Kansas already has over 43% of their energy from wind generation and any further construction, if any, should be closely regulated by the State of Kansas.

Thank you,

Larry Kavouras
McPherson County