

March 17, 2021

Dear Committee Members,

We are writing the letter to ask you to vote yes to SB 279. Kansas needs a state wide law to protect its citizens from wind development.

We live in the footprint of the Irish Creek Wind Project in Marshall County. We are second generation cattle ranchers. We built a new house in 2009 on our family ranch. Our house is located in Pottawatomie County but just 1,500 feet south of the Marshall County border. The closest wind turbine will be 2,086 from our house. Another turbine will be 2,825 ft and the third turbine will be 3,233 feet from our home. We will have four more turbines within a mile of our home. We are thankful for the Tallgrass heartland wind moratorium that protects the Flint Hills from wind development.

We understand that every landowner has the right to do as they please with their land. We realize we will have to look at the turbines for the rest of our lives. However, the fact that sound, infrasound and flicker carry to the neighbor's property needs to be addressed. The neighboring non participating residences need additional protection from the turbines.

According to the modeling data we received from NextEra, we will have a wind turbine noise level of 47 decibels at our doorstep. According to the World Health organization, 50 decibel noise levels at night cause health issues. We will never be able to escape the constant noise. The wind turbine noise and infrasound will infiltrate our home. Even when the wind is not blowing, the turbines are still turning to keep the blades from warping. The turbines use backup electricity from our local electric cooperative. We are concerned about the health and well being of our family, which includes two daughters, age 5 and age 3.

According to the Beatrice Daily Sun article, one of the reasons the Gage County (Nebraska) Board of Supervisors approved the one mile setback from residences was the "unknown long-term health impacts of wind turbines."

The night time flashing red lights will also affect our quality of life. We can see the flashing lights from the Marshall County wind farm near Beattie and the Soldier Creek wind farm in Nemaha county. After the Irish Creek wind farm is constructed, will all three sets of lights flash in unison or will we have random flashing lights all night long?

The well being of our family continues to be our top priority and main concern. As a responsible herdsman, we are concerned about negative effects on our cattle herd health caused by wind turbines sited too close to our pastures and lots. We own a cow/calf operation and raise our own breeding stock. Research shows that animals living near wind turbines experience reproduction problems, have weakened immune systems and are more susceptible to parasites and health issues. According to our herd veterinarian, Dr. Don Musil, studies on the dairy industry have shown decreased milk production in dairy cows. Our cows are beef cattle, but decreased milk production in a beef cow means lower weaning weights for her calf and less income for the producer.

The excavation during the construction of wind turbines can disturb groundwater sources. If the excavation into the bedrock requires blasting or pile driving, it may change the groundwater flow. This can result in changed spring water patterns and can reduce or stop the flow of ground water. The turbine construction process can also cause groundwater contamination. When we built fence on our ranch, we encounter limestone when digging post holes. There is no doubt they will encounter layers of limestone during wind turbine construction.

The well on our ranch has been a reliable water source for over 100 years. In the 1930's, several neighbors came to the well on our ranch for water when their wells ran dry. The only source of water for

our house is well water. During the winter, we water hundreds of head of cattle with well water or spring water. Any decrease in water output or contaminated water would be devastating to our family and livestock.

A state law regulating wind development is so important when the county commissioners fail to protect their citizens. The Marshall County commissioners showed no concern for residences with a wind turbine 2,000 ft from their home. The Marshall County commissioners did not reply to emails from concerned citizens. When we called the commissioners with concerns about a turbine being placed too close to our home, their response was "You will be fine." When the citizens tried to express their concerns in person at the weekly county commissioner meeting, each citizen was allowed 5 minutes to speak with a total of 6 citizens speaking in the 30 minutes allowed. This 30 minutes of public comment was only allowed once a month. When the Marshall County commissioners were ready to sign the Irish Creek agreements, a group of approximately 70 people gathered to protest the signing. The concerned citizens asked the commissioners to wait 30 days before signing the agreements. All three commissioners voted to sign the agreements that day.

The manufacturer of the wind turbines that will be used in the Irish Creek project recommends that any person within 1,300 ft of the turbine needs to wear personal protective equipment. When my daughters and I walk to our mail box almost daily, do we need to wear PPE?

Please help us protect our quality of life and way of life for our family, neighbors and future generations.

Sincerely,  
Ron and Regan Raub

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