

Senate Utilities Committee
SB 279 – Opposition testimony from Siemens Gamesa

My name is Myca Welch. I'm here today representing Siemens Gamesa Renewable Energy at 1000 Commerce Street in Hutchinson, Kansas. I am a US Communications Manager and I also live in Hutchinson. Our plant manager sends his regrets for not being able to be here in person.

Today I want to share with the Committee and the public that I urge the Committee to vote no on Senate Bill 279.

Reno County has been a focal point for wind energy development in Kansas. The county and state's partnership with Siemens Gamesa has been in place since the company built a multi-million dollar factory in 2010. The county has seen job growth as well as significant secondary benefits such as diversifying our workforce, stimulating supporting businesses, and strengthening our durable manufacturing base.

But most important to today's topic: for every wind farm that doesn't get built in Kansas and the United States that means there is less market demand to help sustain our wind turbine assembly facility right here in Kansas. That includes the workforce. That includes the factory itself. It only makes sense for Kansas to continue to embrace this vital industry that has produced so much for our communities across the state.

So please know, that if this bill is passed, it directly impacts our Siemens Gamesa facility. Not only on the local project level in the near term, but also in the long run.

So again, I urge you to vote no on SB 279. This bill is not designed to protect Kansans, it's clearly written to stop wind development completely. We need continued growth in renewable energy to support our economic recovery, protect our environment and support our wind turbine manufacturing facility in Reno County.