



**Proponent Testimony Concerning HB 2609
Laura Lutz, Director, Government Affairs, Evergy
For the House Committee on Taxation**

February 15, 2024

Thank you, Chairman Smith, and members of the committee, for the opportunity to comment on HB 2609. Evergy serves more than 1.6 million customers throughout Kansas and Missouri and has a variety of electric generating sources in its generation fleet, including coal, natural gas, and nuclear power plants, as well as wind and solar facilities.

We appear before you today in support of HB 2609, which we believe would provide consistency on property tax exemptions applicable to electric utilities. As Kansas responds to unprecedented economic development growth opportunities, the need for additional electric generation is apparent in order to meet growing demand. Because traditional nuclear is too expensive to build, and small modular reactor technology is still evolving, utilities are looking to natural gas as the next baseload fuel. Having consistency and uniformity around the timeline for property tax exemptions on various sources of generation assists a utility with planning, and it also benefits customers by reducing the overall cost when adding needed generation facilities to ensure reliability.

Evergy is aware of ongoing discussions between the proponents of HB 2609 and the concepts in HB 2768, which strives to achieve parity on property tax exemptions for all electric public utility property, and is supportive of the concepts in 2768.

We appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today, and will stand for any questions the committee may have.