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RE: Written Testimony on HB 2446 as Amended

March 15, 2012

Dear Chairman Holmes and Members of the Committee,

EDP Renewables North America LLC (“EDPR”) appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony to the House Energy and Utilities Committee regarding HB 2446 as amended. EDPR respectfully stands in opposition of this bill as amended.

EDPR is the third largest wind developer in the United States. EDPR develops, constructs, owns and operates wind farms throughout North America; with over 275 employees, 15 offices, and 28 wind farms across the United States, EDPR has developed more than 3,700 megawatts (MW) and operates over 3,500 MW of wind farms. This includes a substantial investment in Kansas.

EDPR owns and operates the 201 MW Meridian Way Wind Farm in Cloud County. Today, both Westar Energy (“Westar”) and The Empire District Electric Company (“Empire”) purchase clean, renewable electricity from Meridian Way through power purchase agreements (Westar: 96 MW; Empire: 105 MW). This purchased electricity contributes toward both utilities’ Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) requirements. EDPR has invested over \$340 million in the Meridian Way Wind Farm, and EDPR and the Cloud County Board of County Commissioners have entered into a gift agreement worth \$5.5 million. Construction of Meridian Way created 285 local construction jobs; today, 19 Kansans are employed at the facility. Local landowners receive royalty payments for the duration of the project.

Out of the Overland Park Development Office, EDPR maintains its Kansas development pipeline. EDPR has over 1,000 MW of projects at various maturity levels in Kansas.

EDPR respectfully opposes HB 2446 as amended. It is irrational to tie the business interests of one industry to that of another when those industries are mutually exclusive. Wind energy is cost-competitive with other forms of new electricity generation, including conventional generation. Kansas ratepayers benefit from an increased wind energy portfolio in the state, as Kansas utilities (such as Westar and Empire) have procured wind energy at a fixed cost for in some cases 20 years or more. Thus, the procurement of wind energy by Kansas utilities provides a hedge against the unpredictable fuel costs associated with conventional generation. Wind energy development and operation across the state has created local jobs and provided billions of dollars in economic investment in rural Kansas.

The presence of an RPS in Kansas is indicative of the state’s commitment to energy security, local and rural economic development, and the interests of its ratepayers. Diminishing the RPS would be counterproductive.

EDPR values its presence in Kansas and its relationships with landowners, community leaders, state officials, and power customers.

Rorik Peterson
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