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SENATE CHAMBER

DAVID B. HALEY
SENATOR
DISTRICT 4
WYANDOTTE COUNTY

BEFORE THE SENATE UTILITIES COMMITTEE / FEBRUARY 18, 2019

RE: SB 145. Board of Public Utilities & Kansas Corporation Commission

SUPPORT

Chair Masterson; Vice Chair; Ranking Member & Members of the Committee:

We, supporters of this Utilities' Committee Bill, genuinely appreciate your hearing this simple matter today *and* immediately, humbly, request the bill be worked by your Committee *before* turnaround. This same provision, which passed the Kansas Senate 40-0 in 2007, only provides access and insight to ratepayers of the Boards of Public Utilities (or "municipal" utilities) by the Kansas Corporation Commission.

I would personally like to express my surprise, and grudging appreciation, to each traditional Opponent to this simple legislative attempt for ratepayer parity that appear here today on this often well-compensated, as they are all, holiday; President's Day. It would be refreshing for an average consumer to appear once and suggest any merit to a sad status quo exists beyond these listed beneficiaries.

- **SB145 is necessary to provide oversight for thousands of ratepayers.**

In Kansas City, the catch phrase guise of "local control" and local elections as remedies to unanswered ratepayer concerns and equitable customer service has effectively left average

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CORRECTIONS & JUVENILE JUSTICE OVERSIGHT

consumers trapped by a non-responsive, often unbalanced, monopoly utility. The K.C.C. is a neutral, well-established authority whose research and opinions reflect best practices in the utility industry. The Commission can be relied upon, with little allegation of corruption or political or economic favoritism, to render timely resolutions consistent to equal protection application, on par statewide.

- **SB145 affords the utility opportunities for precedent rulings or guidelines.**

Rather than alleged lethargic or discriminatory by customer service responses, the BPU can affirm procedural and/or substantive policy decisions with the KCC opinions already established. The bill offers no rate adjusting rulemaking authority which is still maintained by the local authority.

Finally, Mr. Chair and Members, I ask you please pardon my but cursory utility industry understanding. My role here, as only a citizen legislator and not as a well-rehearsed representative, is to reflect once again the genuine desire from thousands of Wyandotte County ratepayer-residents to have answers for legitimate issues and questions that continue to come up from our solo “take-it-or-live-without-electricity-or-water” utility. Little has changed to ease public confidence since this very measure nearly passed over a decade ago. Despite what you will soon hear to the contrary, though often a jewel since its inception in the 1920’s, the Kansas City Kansas Board of Public Utilities now has a severe image problem that can be eased with the sunshine SB145 affords; access and review by the KCC which mostly all of your constituents and the vast majority of Kansans currently enjoy.

Again, thank you for this hearing.

Please report SB145 favorably to the Committee of the Whole prior to turnaround

I am happy to stand for any questions at the appropriate time.

Respectfully Submitted,

David.

David B. Haley (4th District-Wyandotte)