

Proponent Testimony on Senate Bill 478
Utilities Committee--Kansas Senate
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Life-Long Kansas Resident, Landowner in the Irish Creek Wind Footprint and Proponent of SB478

Chairman Thompson and Members of the Utilities Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to voice my opinion to you today. My name is Gayla Randel, and I am writing you as a concerned citizen of rural Kansas as we have a chance to protect a national resource in the State of Kansas and that is our dark, star filled rural skies.

Over the past year, I have read industry publications, news releases, websites. I have read anti and pro wind materials and I have talked with individuals across the nation who live within industrial wind energy production plants. SB478 will go a long way to ensure our dark rural night skies are returned and protect it for generations to come.

This is vital because:

- Wind development in Kansas has expanded 500% over the last decade, with many more projects planned in the near and distant future.
- Kansas has close to 4000 turbines, each with a red blinking light that can be seen for 17+ miles away. This is impacting many more people than live in the footprint of the wind developments.
- Rural communities have already voiced their concerns which includes the red lights which feel like they are being mocked by Big Wind every time a red “stop light” blinks every 1.3 seconds.

SB478 MUST pass because it will enhance the chance of retaining at least part of the rural quality of life in Kansas. Kansas is rural. I was told 75% of our State’s communities are comprised of 1500 people or less. This means the majority of Kansas has a great possibility of commercialization. Why do people across Kansas live rural? Other than family connections, one can say it’s for the quiet, the uninterrupted vistas, dark star filled skies, visual stillness of a horizon and nighttime peace. This is lost to turbine development as the blinking red lights is the opposite of all of that.

SB478 will provide guidance to local elected officials when working on wind siting and project parameters. There is limited official guidance for local elected officials related to appropriate on land wind development projects.

On a more personal note, I have red blinking lights on all four sides of my family home. No longer can I just “look away” as there is no place to look! I can see a total of 106 flashing red lights from my yard. The farthest away I estimate being 17 miles away. Kansas has a low, rolling hill terrain and I live on top of a flint hill in NE Kansas. I can no longer enjoy the night activities I once did, in addition we used to be able to watch July 4th fireworks of communities within 15 miles of our property. We can no longer do so as the blinking red lights is all you can see. Please restore my nighttime skies!

Thank you for allowing me to share my insights. Thank you for considering my request.

