

To: Honorable Leo Delperdang, Chairperson
House Committee on Energy, Utilities and Telecommunications
Date: February 4, 2024

Written Testimony in Support of House Bill 2527 -

On behalf of the Hutchinson/Reno County Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Hutch Economic Development Partnership we write today in full support of House Bill 2527 which will allow us to be more competitive for economic development opportunities by increasing electric power generation capacity.

This bill is imperative to our economic development success as a community, region, and State. Evergy must be able to assure reliable and historic levels of electric power generation over the next few years. This affects not just Reno County, but every community served by Evergy who are competing for projects to bring new manufacturing jobs to Kansas.

In recent years, the types of economic development opportunities for which we are trying to compete require historic levels of electric power capacity never seen before by our communities. The size and scope of the projects recently has necessitated our efforts to develop capacity for larger industrial sites, and the Hutchinson/Reno County Chamber of Commerce has been working to develop a new 500-acre industrial site. Our site on K96 has all the attributes to be successful – 4 lane highway access, rail access, a plan for infrastructure, and was recently annexed into the City of Hutchinson and rezoned for heavy industrial purposes. The key element to aid in our competitiveness is the speed in which Evergy can invest to build generation, transmission, and distribution infrastructure. Our K96 Industrial Park will be a catalytic site to bring new investment to Kansas, but Evergy needs your support for us to be able to respond to projects.

For this reason, I request your support of HB2527 to allow Evergy to continue to develop electric generation capacity in Kansas so that we continue to ensure that Kansas can compete at the highest level to attract new investment from the private sector into Kansas. We view Evergy as a partner in our economic development work, but they need our support on policies to level the playing field with other power companies in other competitive states.

Thank you for your consideration and support of House Bill 2527.

Respectfully,
Debra Teufel, President/CEO
Hutchinson/Reno County Chamber of Commerce