

Written Only Testimony

**Before the House Committee on Energy, Utilities and Telecommunications
Testimony in Opposition to House Bill 2589**

**Submitted by IBEW Local Unions 53, 304, 1464 and 1523
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW)**

February 7, 2023

Chairman Delperdang and Members of the Committee:

We, as the Business Managers, are **OPPOSED** to HB2589. Upon review of this bill, it is a tool for law enforcement to effectively and efficiently perform their surveillance work in a legal manner when using utility poles. The consequence of HB2589 will elevate our electric line workers' being placed at risk in harm's way with potential dangerous public interactions. This will be "prime" to occur when electronic monitoring for criminal activity becomes more commonly installed in neighborhoods while targeting specific addresses and individual citizens.

We, as the Business Managers for electric line workers located in Kansas understand our members perform this function for law enforcement on occasion when requested, for decades. With this knowledge, we also understand public interaction has been "stressed" with our members in local neighborhoods after judiciary activity relying on the surveillance disguised as our equipment is used in evidentiary proceedings. Our electric line worker members desire to be known as workers delivering power and restoring service, we desire to maintain a positive public perception of what we do for a living while serving customers first.

We, as the Business Managers for the electric industry in our respective jurisdictions, also realize technology is a helpful tool for many positive improvements into our daily lives. Traffic cameras delivering traffic reports, traffic signal cameras used to monitor intersections are a few examples. Remote audio and video devices alike have made safer environments for the public.

Combined, we represent many major utilities, cooperatives, municipalities, and electric line construction workers across Kansas and Missouri with thousands of potentially impacted members. Our members consistently strive to maintain a safe worksite for all employees and public, while performing highly skilled, extremely focused interaction with energized circuits. This work is imperative not only in "keeping the lights on", but also in being a good steward while interacting with the community, and the citizens of Kansas. HB2589 will add a level of danger that cannot be mitigated. HB2589 would require our line workers to be "looking over their shoulder" when performing any normal daily work in those neighborhoods under surveillance. This additional liability to support surveillance duty in an already high-risk work occupation is not welcomed. We as the Business Managers cannot endorse HB2589

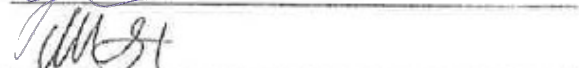
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