

January 30, 2023

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Penny Massing, and I am a resident of Cuba, Kansas, which is a part of Republic County. My husband and I are both teachers in this area, and we have three children. We live on a 40 acre homestead. Currently, the NextEra industrial wind development, High Banks Wind Farm, is being constructed in our county. It is the largest wind development so far in the state of Kansas.

I am writing in support of SB86. This bill is very needed in our legislature. Our entire project, the largest project in the state, was negotiated and passed by just three people. The three commissioners for our county met with lawyers and officials in executive sessions over several months to decide on the fate of our county. They made a decision that affects every citizen in this county. Two of those three commissioners have relatives that are leasing their land for turbines, substations or other parts of the project. These relatives are receiving financial compensation from NextEra. The third commissioner has a brother that is a wind energy technician. They were absolutely partial to the project. The citizens of our county tried every avenue we knew of to have the decision be made by the county as a whole, but we were blocked at every turn.

I went to commissioners meetings. We asked for larger setbacks, we asked for sound and shadow flicker requirements. We asked for stronger decommissioning agreements. We asked for there to be standards that had to be met, and ramifications if they were not met. We asked questions about the environment, payments made to the county, and we were not heard. The commissioners were interested in representing only one position in the county. Because of this development going in, and the corruption that we feel has happened, our family has decided to leave. We are leaving not only Republic County, but also the state of Kansas, because we have not received any assistance from the state level in these matters. The state of Kansas is now losing two good teachers and their family.

I believe that the bill would benefit from the addition that if the local officials are found to have an interest in a proposed renewable energy development, then the decision should be brought to an advisory vote of the county. An advisory vote could allow the counties to continue with the project if it had enough backing, or give those opposed a voice in the matter.

I would appreciate the consideration of the legislature in this matter. The citizens of this state need to be protected, and all voices need to be heard and represented. Please support SB86.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Penny Massing". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Penny Massing
Cuba, Kansas