

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Leo Delperdang at 9:00 am on Thursday, January 30, 2025, in room 582-N of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Representative Francis Awerkamp – Excused  
Representative John Carmichael – Excused  
Representative KC Ohaebosim – Excused

Substitute members:

Representative Nikki McDonald, appointed substitute member to the committee

Committee staff present:

Jessie Pringle, Office of Revisor of Statutes  
Mindy Sieve, Kansas Legislative Committee Assistant  
Nick Myers, Office of Revisor of Statutes  
Nicole Fielder, Legislative Research Department  
Walter Schmidt, Legislative Research Department

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Hans Coetzee, Interim Vice President for Research, Kansas State University  
Justin Grady, Deputy Director, Utilities Division, Kansas Corporation Commission  
Darrin Ives, Vice President, Regulatory Affairs, Evergy  
Reagan McCloud, Director of Government Relations, Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc.

Others in attendance:

No list available

**Presentation on:**

Chairman Delperdang recognized Hans Coetzee, Kansas State University (K-State) who provided a presentation on nuclear research and engineering. ([Attachment1](#))

Mr. Coetzee explained about the new nuclear age with some tech giants betting big on nuclear power. He added their analysts expect data center power consumption to increase by more than 160% by 2030, while renewables have the potential to meet most of the increased power needs from data centers at some times of the day, they don't produce power consistently enough to be the only energy source for data centers.

Mr. Coetzee introduced Amir Bahadori, Ph.D, Associate Professor, K-State who provided information about the K-State facility and nuclear engineering undergraduate program and Stacy L. Hutchinson, Ph.D. and a water resources engineer with K-State who explained about the advanced reactors for Kansas, water and health issues.

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A period of questions and answers followed from the committee members.

**Request for bill introductions**

Chairman Delperdang ask for request for bill introductions.

Representative McDonald on behalf of Representative Ohaebosim

- RS 0918 - an act concerning disability services

Without objections, the request for bill introduction was accepted.

Nathaniel Blank, Watkins Public Strategies on behalf of IdeaTek

- RS 0355 - dealing with mobile home park tenant's rights to access telecommunication and video services

Without objections, the request for bill introduction was accepted.

J.R. Behan on behalf of ITC Great Plains

- RS 0541 - relating to the construction and ownership of electric transmission lines.

Without objections, the request for bill introduction was accepted.

**Hearing on: HB2040 — Extending the time in which the state corporation commission shall make a final order on a transmission line siting application.**

Chairman Delperdang opened the hearing on **HB2040**.

Nick Myers provided the Revisor of Statutes review of the bill. ([Attachment2](#)) Mr. Myers responded to questions from committee members.

Chairman recognized proponents for in person testimony:

Justin Grady, Kansas Corporation Commission ([Attachment3](#)) testified in support of the bill. Mr. Grady explained the staff of the Commission was proposing a narrow change to increase the time allowed for the Commission to issue a final order in transmission line siting applications from 120 days to 180 days. He added the Commission believes the change would improve the Commission's evaluation of a transmission line siting application by allowing more opportunity for landowner input and involvement

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in the process, because landowners along a potential route may be impacted by the line for many decades to come.

Proponents - Written only testimony as follows:

Jackie Garagiola, Kansas Livestock Association and Claudia Hissong, Kansas Farm Bureau ([Attachment4](#))

Joseph Astrab, Citizens' Utility Ratepayer Board ([Attachment5](#))

Chairman asked the audience if anyone would like to speak.

There were no opponent testimony.

Chairman Delperdang recognized neutral testimony as follows:

Darrin Ives, Evergy, ([Attachment6](#)) testified neutral on the bill. Mr. Ives explained lengthening the approval process could have potential impact to electric reliability and could dramatically slow the process pm everything when siting infrastructure, including acquiring equipment. He added an extension to the approval process would be an additional barrier to timely completion of any new or extended transmission line greater than 5 miles. He also added, Evergy would be happy to discuss some alternatives to the extension, such as having it only apply to certain lines or only having the 180 days apply if the line was not classified as a Reliability or Economic Development project. He explained rather than mandate a 60 day extension, could the KCC staff be allowed to request for good cause an extension up to 60 days.

Reagan McCloud, Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. (KEC) ([Attachment7](#)) testified as neutral on the bill. Mr. McCloud determined KEC members understand the additional time would be necessary for the KCC to provide comprehensive orders regarding line siting dockets. He added, KEC acknowledge that increasing the deadline for final orders from 120 to 180 days could increase costs for those engaging in transmission line siting dockets, however, KEC realizes the additional time might increase the quality of the final KCC orders for the best for KEC members and utilities.

Neutral - Written only testimony: J.R. Behan, ITC Great Plains ([Attachment8](#))

The conferees responded to questions from committee members.

Chairman Delperdang asked the committee for any further questions.

Chairman closed the hearing on **HB2040**.

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The next House Energy committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 4, 2025.

Chair adjourned the meeting at 10:19am.