



Climate Action KC Testimony, February 19, 2020

A failure to plan is a plan for failure.

As Chairman of the coalition of more than 100 elected officials in the Kansas City metropolitan area, I applaud this body's bipartisan efforts in performing the London Economics Rate study. As you recall, that study stressed the importance of a state energy plan to better utilize our energy resources and lower rates for businesses and communities. This is an important step in building an energy market that is affordable, efficient, and meets the needs of Kansas businesses and residents.

In Kansas City, we are planning for our future on issues such as energy and infrastructure through a comprehensive Climate Action Plan. We are excited to partner with diverse stakeholders including utility, corporate, educational, and municipal partners in a bipartisan, data driven process to identify future needs and opportunities. Kansas should do the same.

When starting our Plan, we recognized that we needed not only organizational framework, but policy expertise to guide our process. We chose a big-tent approach, welcoming a diverse range of stakeholders to have substantive, productive planning. Similarly, Governor Kelly is committed to unlocking the potential of Kansas' diverse energy landscape, building on Kansas' nation-leading successes in renewable energy development and energy efficiency, while charting the path for a sustainable and balanced energy future

Kansas is behind the times when it comes to planning for our State's energy future. When compared to peer states regarding energy planning, it is clear more can be done.

- Kansas is one of only three states that houses its energy office within a regulatory agency like the KCC.
- All states, except South Dakota, have some form of an energy plan to unlock the economic benefits of their energy resources.
- In 38 states, State Energy Offices lead or guide the planning process and plan development.

We are falling behind states like Iowa, North Carolina, and worst of all, Missouri, which have already engaged stakeholders to create comprehensive state energy plans. An independent state energy office is crucial to the success of the state's energy future. An energy office would allow our state to engage in many of the necessary energy policy and planning discussions that are critical to a successful energy plan and the energy future of our state. Currently, because the KCC regulates the energy industry, these conversations are left unspoken.

We need an independent, highly-visible, and accessible hub of policy expertise on energy issues. Just like our water office, a new energy office will help us understand and analyze complex energy issues, vet policy, and educate policymakers, business leaders, and residents. Without these efforts, we fear Kansas' energy policy will be reactive, as opposed to proactive, costing the state valuable time and resources. Kansans deserve better.