

Citizens' Utility Ratepayer Board

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SB 385 Testimony
Citizens' Utility Ratepayer Board
Testimony in Support

The Citizens' Utility Ratepayer Board (CURB) supports SB 385. As an independent state agency created in 1989, CURB represents residential and small commercial ratepayers in utility cases filed with the Kansas Corporation Commission (KCC). CURB believes that public comment and input is very important in the regulatory process. In major cases heard by the KCC, a public hearing is held with appropriate notice so that Kansas citizens can voice their concerns regarding utility practices and rates. Indeed, the KCC is very mindful of the concerns of Kansas citizens in the cases that come before it. SB 385 is consistent with KCC cases with respect to the benefits of obtaining public comments.

Many decisions made at the Southwest Power Pool (SPP) affect Kansas citizens significantly. Kansas citizens deserve a voice in SPP decisions. In these regards, CURB is aware that SB 278 would authorize CURB to represent residential and small commercial utility ratepayers at the SPP in important cases. SB 385 would not displace the need for CURB's authorization to represent its constituents in SPP cases, since the KCC is obligated to represent Kansans generally (which would include many interests such as those held by industrial utility customers, climate advocates and others). CURB is the only state agency that is obligated to represent the specific interests of residential and small commercial utility ratepayers. Moreover, it is very unlikely that residential or small business utility consumers would find the time necessary to study SPP issues and address concerns to the KCC. Larger utility customers, however, may benefit from SB 385, as these customers have a larger individual economic stake in SPP decisions. CURB believes that SB 385 is a step in the right direction since it allows the KCC discretion to find a feasible manner of receiving public comments regarding SPP matters at a convenient forum.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 385.