

Citizens' Utility Ratepayer Board

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HOUSE UTILITIES COMMITTEE

S.B. 128 (as amended)

Testimony on Behalf of the Citizens' Utility Ratepayer Board

By David Springe, Consumer Counsel

March 6, 2007

Chairman Holmes and members of the committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to offer testimony on S.B. 128. The Citizens' Utility Ratepayer Board supports this bill for the following reasons:

SB 128 is a Kansas Energy Council recommendation aimed at creating statewide standards for use in energy education and energy conservation promotion. An "energy conservation education advisory group" under the direction of the Kansas energy office is created for the purpose of developing the education standards and guidelines envisioned by the bill. The bill requires the Kansas Corporation Commission to require all public utilities to deliver programs consistent with the standards developed.

CURB convened a special board meeting on September 25, 2006 to review our position and policy with regard to energy conservation and efficiency programs provided by jurisdictional utilities. At the meeting the Board indicated that it believes additional resources and additional effort should be directed towards energy conservation activities. Part of this policy is an acknowledgement that, while not every program will necessarily reduce every consumer's rate or reduce every consumer's use, the programs may still have value.

The energy education and conservation promotion program envisioned by this bill is an example of such program. Providing some standardization in material presented across jurisdictional boundaries and across targeted groups will benefit Kansas consumers. CURB also hopes that this process will help reduce costs to utility consumers by reducing the inefficiencies associated with each utility creating, staffing and promoting its own materials outside of a standard setting process.

CURB worked with all parties on appropriate amendments to this bill in the Senate. With one exception related to cost recovery, all parties were in agreement on the bill. With respect to our one disagreement, the Senate believed that cost recovery through the normal KCC process was appropriate. CURB supports passage of this bill as amended in the Senate.