

[KANSAS NEEDS POLICIES THAT SUPPORT HIGH VOLTAGE REGIONAL TRANSMISSION LINES]

KANSAS NEEDS TRANSMISSION NOW

The best wind resources in western Kansas - worth billions – cannot be developed yet. The region lacks adequate high voltage transmission lines.

- Studies estimate Kansas wind installations could increase from 1,000 MW today to 19,000 MW by 2030, spreading economic development throughout the state.
- The market for Kansas wind power is renewables-starved energy markets in eastern and southern United States, but there is no transmission to carry the power.

“It’s like having crops in the field, but no machinery to harvest, no grain elevators, no highways, and no trains to get them to market.”

NATIONAL GRID IN BAD SHAPE

The U.S. electric grid is in desperate need of improvement, regardless of what form the upgrades take. Additional power sources, transmission facilities, and distribution stations are necessary. A recent national security study found that the “outdated, fragile, and overtaxed national electrical grid is a dangerously weak link in the national security infrastructure.” Blackouts and brownouts can also lead to severe economic losses.

PROBLEM: The current grid is an out of date patchwork without coordinated regional or national plans. The result is bottlenecks and congestion, and wind developers can’t get adequate access for development.

PROBLEM: Arcane and outdated regulations delay interstate planning of major transmission lines.

POLICY SOLUTIONS

Support long range regional planning processes for interstate extra high voltage (EHV) transmission systems.

Require states to render timely siting decisions within one year for high priority lines.

Allow FERC siting “backstop” authority for said lines if states cannot resolve the issue within timeframe (FERC must act with respect for factors considered in state siting processes).

Authorize federal guidelines or edicts as backstops to provide regulatory certainty for regional cost allocations and cost recovery mechanisms for high voltage lines (FERC must act with respect for regional planning processes).

GOOD FOR CONSUMERS

The cost of grid upgrades pay off in increased efficiency and improved safety and reliability, and the benefits of building new transmission significantly outweigh the costs.

According to the SPP, for only 88 cents on a monthly bill of \$100, seven new transmission projects totaling \$700 million could be built, resulting in monthly benefits of \$1.68 per customer.

GOOD FOR THE ECONOMY

Improving transmission would increase access to lowest-cost generation. A stronger grid also frees up more energy to sell on the wholesale market – better transmission means that generators need to provide less reserve capacity, and can sell the energy instead.