

Wind farming seen as boom to Kansas

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TOPEKA, KS (KCTV) - Kansas is benefiting financially from wind farming, according to a report by a Kansas City area law firm.

Polzinelli Shughart's Wind Energy Practice Group, in partnership with the Kansas Energy Information Network, put together a report analyzing data from the 19 wind projects under way or being built in Kansas. The goal was to determine the farms' true economic impact.

The study was presented Thursday to the Kansas House Committee on Energy and Environment.

The report determined that wind farms in Kansas have created 13,500 jobs that had an economic benefit of \$13 million in lease payments to landowners, largely in rural western Kansas.

"Kansas has an excellent wind resource," said the law firm's Luke Hagedorn. "With that resource, it's a tremendous opportunity for Kansas to attract [investment](#) in those wind developers."

He said the money contributed often makes a sizeable impact on the local governments' budgets.

The Legislature is debating a law requiring less energy come from renewal sources. Currently, state law says 20 percent of energy must come from sources such as wind by 2020.

Opponents say reducing this goal would send a bad message to those who are investing in Kansas with the law in mind.

"If Kansas were to be the first state to reduce or repeal its renewable [portfolio](#) standard, it really does send a strong message to all these companies that have spent billions of dollars in this case," Hagedorn said. "We want to prevent that as much as possible. There will still be wind generation in Kansas, but if there's no standard then it will be to a lesser degree. And that will be to Kansas' detriment."

Companies could choose to go to other states with more favorable environments, he said.

Wind-generated power is considered cheaper than natural gas.

To see the report, click [here](#).

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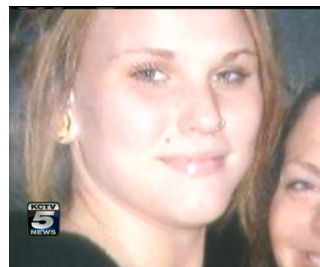
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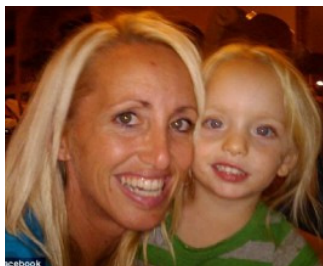
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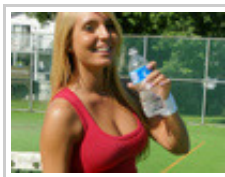
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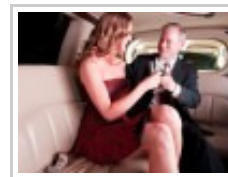
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