

NEWS RELEASE

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KS Consumers Group Sounding Alarm On Skyrocketing Electric Rates

Kansas businesses demand regionally competitive rates and call on state officials to help

OVERLAND PARK, Kan. (Feb 1, 2018) -- The Kansas Industrial Consumers Group, a coalition of high-volume energy users in Kansas, today called on the Kansas Department of Commerce to help reduce electricity rates to a level that is competitive and comparable to rates charged in neighboring states and the region.

The Commerce Department plays a key role in bringing new businesses to Kansas, and its job is made harder with Kansas having the highest electric rates in the region. The consumers group is urging the Commerce Department to work with the Kansas Legislature to develop strategies to reduce rates. Until that can happen, the consumers group is asking the department to find ways to provide interim utility rate relief to businesses wanting to locate in Kansas.

“Kansas has an energy problem. Our rates are simply too high and not competitive with the region,” said Jim Zakoura, an Overland Park lawyer who represents the consumers group. “We want the Commerce Department, the Legislature and the Kansas Corporation Commission to recognize this is a problem and help address it.”

Electric rates for all Kansas customers – businesses and residents – have been sharply increasing since 2007. Westar Energy alone has increased rates 30 times over the last decade. This week, the Kansas Industrial Consumers Group filed written testimony in the merger case for Westar and KCP&L at the Kansas Corporation Commission (KCC Docket No. 18-KCPE-095-MER), with multiple charts showing the repeated increases in Kansas and how Kansas compares to other states.

The group also announced a website today -- www.kansasenergyproblem.com -- that shows Kansan’s how rates have escalated over the last 10 years. In addition to the website, the group is working with legislators to advance legislation to bring visibility to the issue of high electric rates.

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About: *The Kansas Industrial Consumers Group is a coalition of large-volume energy users in Kansas. The members collectively represent billions of dollars of investment in the state and employ thousands of Kansans. They believe high energy costs are negatively impacting residential consumers, schools, hospitals, and large and small businesses.*