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Before the Senate Utilities Committee

March 6, 2025

Written Only Neutral Testimony on House Bill 2107

Submitted by Justin Grady, *Deputy Director*, Utilities Division
On Behalf of The Staff of the Kansas Corporation Commission

Chair Fagg, Vice Chair Petersen, Ranking Minority Member Francisco, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today on behalf of the Staff of the Kansas Corporation Commission (KCC or Commission).

The Staff of the KCC is Neutral towards the passage of HB 2107. Section 1 of this bill would establish limits on a public utility's liability for economic losses and punitive damages that result from an uncontrolled fire event. Section 2 would require the KCC to convene a workshop to assess wildfire risk and mitigation in Kansas. The workshop would cover general wildfire risks in the State; utility readiness to mitigate wildfire risks; risk mitigation strategies and approaches; and cost recovery treatment for wildfire mitigation costs, including investments and expenses.

Staff takes no position with regard to Section 1 of the bill, as we view this as strictly a policy decision within the purview of the Legislature. With regard to Section 2, we are not opposed to providing the workshop requested in this bill. Were this bill to become law, we would likely conduct one or more public workshops streamed on the KCC's YouTube channel. We would likely request the assistance of the State Fire Marshall to address the general wildfire risk to the State, and we would utilize a consultant to aid in the evaluation and assessment of different wildfire risk mitigation strategies and approaches used throughout the Country.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer Staff's perspective on the proposed bill.