

Rep. Sloan Speaks to DOE Advisory Committee

July 3, 2015

Rep. Tom Sloan (R, Lawrence) participated in a panel on electric policy and technical issues before the U.S. Department of Energy's Assistant Secretary for the Office of Electricity and the Department's Electricity Advisory Committee (DOE EAC). The EAC members are appointed by the Secretary of the Department of Energy and represent electric industry, consumer advocates, environmental and large customer stakeholders. Rep. Sloan served on the EAC for six years (two terms) as the only State Legislative member.

Sloan provided specific recommendations to the Department and EAC on how to more effectively communicate technical issues and the public policy implications of the decisions made to state legislators and regulatory officials. As customers increasingly have the opportunity to generate their own electricity and sell that power to other customers and the utility (transactive energy), the role of regulators will necessarily change. Legislators will have to provide the statutory authority for state regulators (e.g., the Kansas Corporation Commission) to protect consumer and utility interests in this evolving environment.

"The increasing interface between communications and generation technologies poses challenges and opportunities for utilities, customers, and regulators," said Sloan. "The DOE has the opportunity and obligation to help state policy-makers understand these technological advancements and suggest policy options that state officials can evaluate to determine which one(s) is best suited for each state. Just as the development of 'smart phones' and 'apps' have changed the way that people communicate, so too the development of 'apps' to manage electric consumption and buy/sell decisions by customers will impact the electric industry and the reliability of the grid."

Rep. Sloan serves on the EAC's Energy Storage Subcommittee and as a result of his comments at their recent meeting has been invited to serve on several other subcommittees. He is Chairman of the Kansas House of Representatives' Vision 2020 Committee and a member of the Transportation and Agriculture & Natural Resources Committees. He is a member of the DOE-created GridWise Architecture Council (GWAC) and the Federal Communications Commission's Intergovernmental Advisory Committee (IAC). Rep. Sloan is serving his 11th term in the Kansas Legislature.

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