

## **Rep. Sloan Speaks at Emerging Issues Policy Forum**

Rep. Tom Sloan (R, Lawrence) spoke several times at the Emerging Issues Policy Forum, a conference that includes utility company CEOs, state public utility regulators, and selected state legislators. The Forum's themes were the utility of the near future and workforce challenges.

Sloan's comments focused on how increasingly the confluence of customers' ability to self-generate electricity and communicate in real time with their utility company and the customer's HVAC system and appliances is changing the dynamics of utility-customer relations. "Customers no longer are captive to the electric utility, simply accepting the levels of service and pricing offered," Sloan said. "The ability to self-generate cost-effectively and the ability to vary the electric load in their home or business means that they can be true partners with the electric provider, and consequently expect to be compensated for their part of the partnership."

Sloan's work as a member of the U.S. Department of Energy's Electricity Advisory Committee, the Federal Communications Commission's Intergovernmental Affairs Committee, and the DOE-created GridWise Architecture Council provided him the knowledge necessary to talk about electric grid technologies, customer capabilities, and the communications revolution.

Rep. Sloan also spoke about workforce development, encouraging utilities to expand their efforts to recruit service men and women who are returning from overseas deployments and exiting the service. Veterans have one of the highest unemployment rates of any subgroup within the American workforce-eligible population. He also recommended that employers support the National Conference of State Legislatures' Military & Veterans Affairs Task Force efforts to encourage military base personnel to post on-line the job skill sets of service members who will be leaving the service within the next few months. The NCSL Task Force, of which Sloan is a leading member, believe that if employers and state employment agency staff members know what type of skills military veterans have, it will be easier to match those skills with employer needs.

"My comments also reflected Kansas' success in bringing Dept. of Defense and state licensure agency personnel together so that the exiting veterans can receive the academic and professional credits they have earned as they seek to complete their education and/or enter the workforce," Sloan said. "This is a continuation of legislation that I successfully sponsored in which the military 'interpreted' their program and certificate language so that the State's licensure agencies and academic institutions could verify equivalency with civilian experiences and education."

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Sloan is serving his 11th term in the Kansas House of Representatives and is Chairman of the Vision 2020 Committee and a member of both the Transportation and Agriculture & Natural Resources Committees.