



## Other Viewpoints

# Wind energy push gets state backing

In an unusual yet welcome show of bipartisanship, Republicans and Democrats have teamed together to convince Congress to maintain an important tax credit.

Count Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback among Republicans on the right side of the move to push for extension of a federal wind energy production tax credit needed to protect tens of thousands of jobs in the industry, many of them in Kansas.

The tax credit is set to expire at the end of the year, unless extended as part of a new budget deal.

As for Brownback, he had ample cause to join a group of 28 Democratic and GOP governors calling for preservation of the tax break.

Earlier this year, an American Wind Energy Association report showed the Sunflower State leading the nation in the number of wind turbines under construction. Kansas also ranked 14th in installed wind power generation, with enough momentum to climb the list.

The bountiful supply of wind in Kansas – ranked second among windiest states after Texas – wasn’t the only driving force in new turbines, as the tax credit helped fuel those projects.

Now, however, that progress hangs in the balance.

Some of the Brownback’s fellow GOP conservatives – including First District U.S. Rep. Tim Huelskamp, whose own district holds great wind potential – fiercely oppose the tax credit.

As good wind-energy jobs disappear before our eyes, Huelskamp and others still see the tax credit as wasteful spending – even though the federal government has subsidized fossil fuel-based energy production for more than a century.

Ideally, economic conditions would allow all wind-related projects to thrive without a subsidy. But eliminating such an incentive when others in energy production receive as much makes no sense.

Manufacturers in Kansas and beyond who fear loss of the tax credit already have cut jobs. An estimated 37,000 additional jobs could be lost if the tax credit is allowed to expire.

Such setbacks hurt in challenging economic times, and especially in a state like Kansas that’s naturally suited to be a leader in wind production. It’s good to see the governor on the right side of an economic issue of such importance to the state.

– *The Garden City Telegram, via the Associated Press*

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roberts.senate.gov/public/

**U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran**, 354 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510 (202) 228-6966. Fax (202) 225-5124 moran.senate.gov/public/

**U.S. Rep. Tim Huelskamp**, 126 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. (202) 225-2715 or Fax (202) 225-5124. Web site: huelskamp.house.gov

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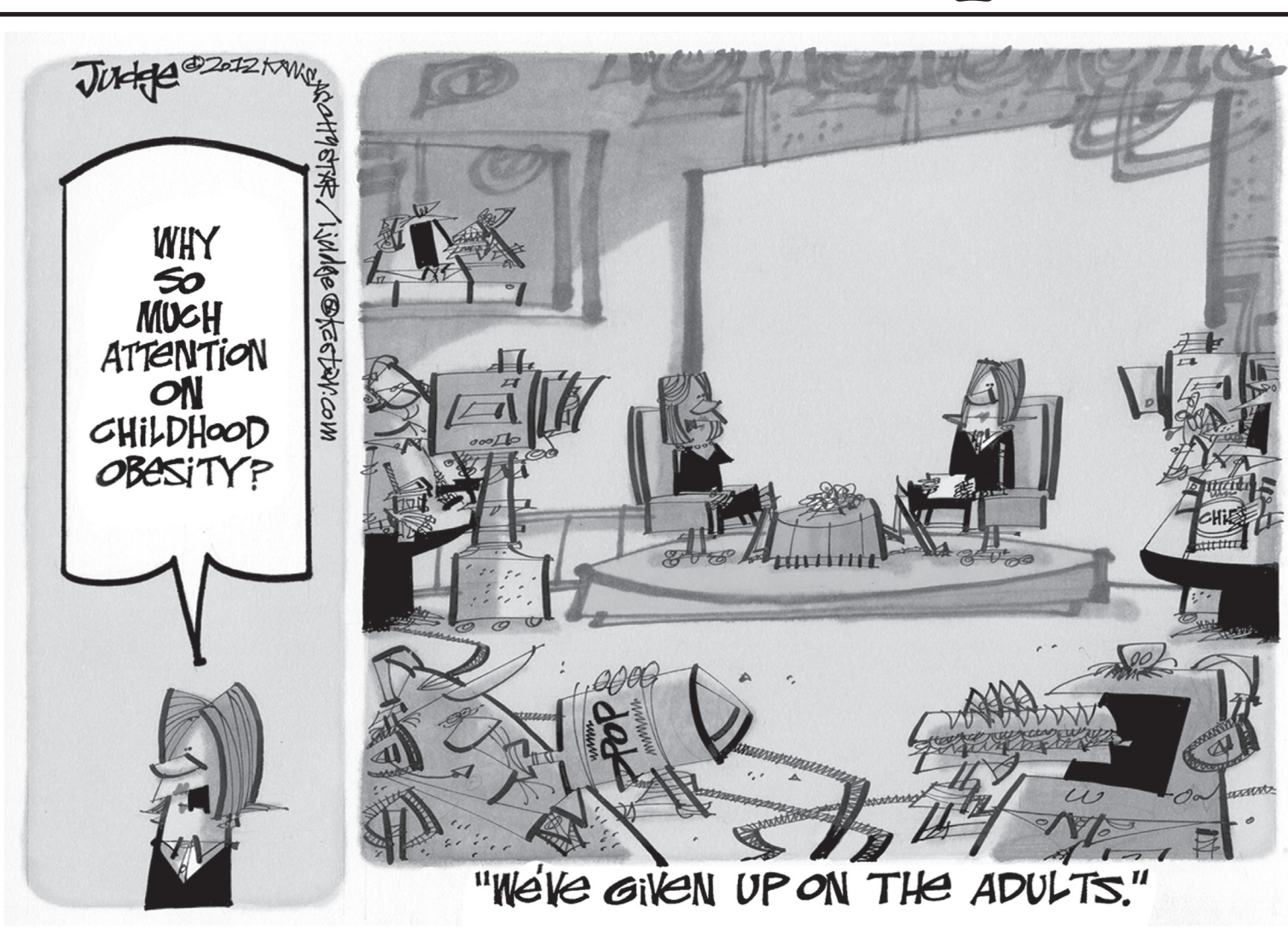
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# Answer the call; be an adoption angel

In many columns, I discuss how today’s decisions impact the next generation. But, the decisions that are made in the voting booth or in the halls of Congress pale in comparison to the decision of a family to adopt a child.

The willingness of men and women to use the blessing of their family to become dads and moms for children in need is an amazing sacrifice – as well as a sign of commitment to the most vulnerable and defenseless members of the next generation.

Although there are so many threats to the family as the foundation of society, the family still remains the most influential force in a child’s life. Children in homes with actively involved parents are less likely to engage in risky behavior, more likely to do well in school (and ultimately professionally) and more socially well-adjusted. These factors all have major implications for public policy. It is an investment in society to ensure that all children have loving, caring and engaged moms and dads.

November is National Adoption Month, and my wife Angela and I encourage all Kansans who have felt called to adoption to act. The number of finalized adoptions in Kansas has grown in the past two years: from 721 in fiscal year 2010 to 761 in 2011 and 777 in 2012. While the state provides help for families to



**U.S. Rep. Tim Huelskamp**

## Capitol Notes

bring children into their homes, hundreds of children remain in the Kansas foster care system without “forever families.” Many lack a relative able to adopt them.

We have been blessed with the opportunity to adopt four children, two from America and two from Haiti. We are a testament to the fact that you do not have to be wealthy or have a special education or background to provide a child a home. All you need is the willingness to answer the call and a desire and commitment to provide a loving and nurturing environment for a child in need.

We have also been blessed with the opportunity to meet other families that have opened their homes to adoption. In September, we awarded the Meyer family of Salina the Congressional “Angels in Adoption” award. Twenty-five years ago, they never could have imagined having more than two children. But they followed their hearts and have adopted

eight, several of whom have special needs. They have served as foster parents to many other kids. In their humility, the Meyers will admit they are not perfect, but to their credit, they are in the eyes of their children.

Oftentimes a child enters the foster care system when a judge decides that his or her parents are unfit to care for them. But there are many birthparents out there who decide – often before a child is even born – to put their baby up for adoption. What a tremendous and beautiful sacrifice it is to put your child with a “forever family.” There are many paths by which a child can join an adoptive parents’ home, and we encourage Kansans to explore all options.

We know not every family can or is called to serve as an adoptive family, but there are things all can do to provide community for those families that do. There are nearly four dozen instances in the Bible of God calling on us to take care of widows and children. This is not a call to cede that responsibility to the government; no, this is a call for us to act personally for and with our neighbors.

For information about how your family can help a child in need, go to [www.adoptkskids.org](http://www.adoptkskids.org).

*Tim Huelskamp of Fowler represents the 1st Congressional District of Kansas.*

# Frontier justice needed in forgotten West

## Other Opinions

- Deborah E. and Frank J. Popper  
American Geographical Society

area. The center’s definition, which depends on both density and distance from metropolitan areas, shows that people living in small, remote places with poor transportation and communication links to the rest of the country are disproportionately poor and elderly.

Many Americans visit the frontier. It has the country’s best outdoor adventure and ecotourism – glorious parks and fly-fishing. All of us depend on its agriculture, energy, mining and timber. But in important ways, it remains invisible, its special needs overlooked.

In some moods, Americans romanticize the frontier as the last bastion of community neighborliness, with a rural can-do spirit. But that model does not serve the surviving American frontier. Many essential services urban/suburban Americans take for granted are costly and hard to deliver in isolated desert, plains, mountain or forest settings that may have five-month winters or 115 degree summers.

Frontier communities have trouble attracting or retaining doctors, nurses, teachers and clergy. Their professionals suffer from limited equipment, scant back-up and meager pay. They need telemedicine, yet their broadband capacity and cell reception may be spotty.

Frontier places often lack the resources for adequate law enforcement and fire protection, which have to cover vast areas with bad, hard-to-navigate roads. The frontier is a prime spot for meth labs, supremacist groups and militias. It has space for waste-disposal services, but few resources to ensure safe disposal.

Many frontier tourist and second-home areas experience big seasonal population swings that increase demands on their small public sectors. They must handle upticks in accidents or illnesses, rescue lost hikers and restrain hard-partying groups. They must satisfy visitors who put money into the local economy, but often less than they take from it.

Longer-term population swings – say, for energy boomtowns – also strain resources and finances. Housing, health, school, water, road, electric and waste services must suddenly accommodate transients and newcomers.

Frontier communities tend to have a small tax base, but may lack control of it because they are tiny enclaves amid vast federal lands like national forests and parks. They must rely on a federal in-lieu-of-taxes payment system.

Frontier communities have difficulty seeking public- or private-sector money. They have small staffs, few grant-writing skills and some lack the computer capacity to submit their applications as demanded.

Simple obstacles hold frontier communities back. The barriers are not deliberate. Americans mostly assume the frontier vanished. Therefore it cannot have distinctive issues or needs that demand unorthodox responses.

Frontier justice once meant gunslingers and local lawmen, vigilantes and posses. It was often rough, terrible. Today we need a new kind of frontier justice, fairer national treatment for a vital but overlooked American place.

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## Mallard Fillmore

- Bruce Tinsley

