



Kansas Independent Oil & Gas Association

THE VOICE OF THE KANSAS  
INDEPENDENT PETROLEUM INDUSTRY

SPRING 2025



# Our Industry's Most Valuable Asset: Its People

CHANGING THE OIL AND GAS NARRATIVE  
STARTS WITH EACH OF US

Electric Transmission Companies  
Are Now Required to Avoid Direct  
Impacts to Oil and Gas Wells

06

We are Kansas Strong

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2025 Kansas Oil & Gas Day,  
a Resounding Success!

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DANA WREATH  
KIOGA CHAIR

## Exciting Updates and Events for KIOGA Members in 2025

**T**he 2025 Legislative Session is currently in full swing, and KIOGA is actively advocating for our members. We are updating lawmakers, monitoring new legislation, and providing testimony on matters impacting the oil and gas industry. KIOGA's Oil and Gas Day at the Capitol was on January 28, 2025. We had a very good day, and I want to personally thank everyone who was involved in making it a success. This was our first opportunity to work together with our new lobbyists, Watkins Public Strategies, and it is very apparent that we are in good hands. Our intent this year was to increase direct engagement between KIOGA members and legislators. This was very well received and should be a real benefit to us down the road.

Another significant upcoming event is the KIOGA Midyear Meeting scheduled for April 23–25 in Mulvane at the Kansas Star Casino. The agenda is packed with fun and interesting activities, starting with a BBQ dinner, game night, and live music on April 23 at Dick Schremmer's nearby venue in metro Peck, Kansas.

**“**  
**OUR INTENT THIS YEAR WAS TO INCREASE DIRECT ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN KIOGA MEMBERS AND LEGISLATORS. THIS WAS VERY WELL RECEIVED AND SHOULD BE A REAL BENEFIT TO US DOWN THE ROAD.”**

Thursday will kick off with a trade show featuring the latest technologies and services for the oil and gas sector. The morning seminar features our two key lobbyists from Watkins Public Strategies: Jason Watkins and Jessica Lucas. This a great opportunity for them to introduce themselves and for KIOGA members to get to know them better. They also will give us a summary of activities in this year's legislative session. The afternoon seminar, presented by Gil Appelhans of Sunrise Supply, is a downhole pump school. I have attended this presentation/school previously

and highly recommend it—and I plan to attend again because there are always nuances and more to learn about optimizing downhole pumps.

The KIOGA Board and General Membership Meeting will be on Thursday afternoon and will include updates on important state and national issues affecting our industry. Thursday evening's lineup includes cocktails and a steak dinner.

Friday morning offers two recreational events—a golf tournament at Derby Country Club and a sporting clays tournament at Michael Murphy's. Lunch and awards will follow each tournament.

As you can see, the organizers of the Midyear Meeting have something for everyone, given the outstanding lineup of speakers, recreational opportunities, and entertaining social events. I am looking forward to it and hope to see you there. ✍

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Dana Wreath". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

KIOGA Chair



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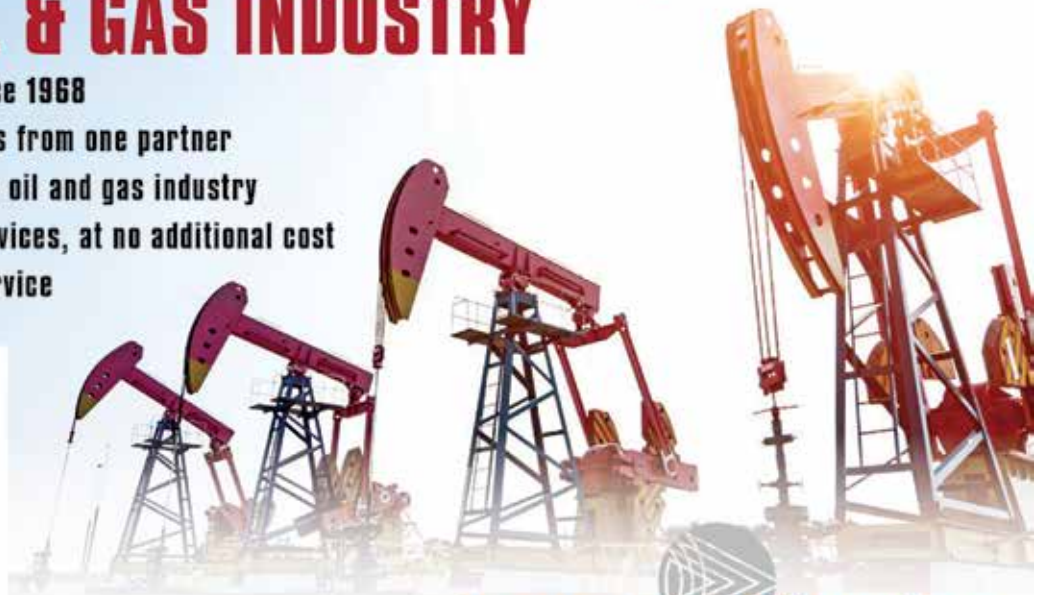
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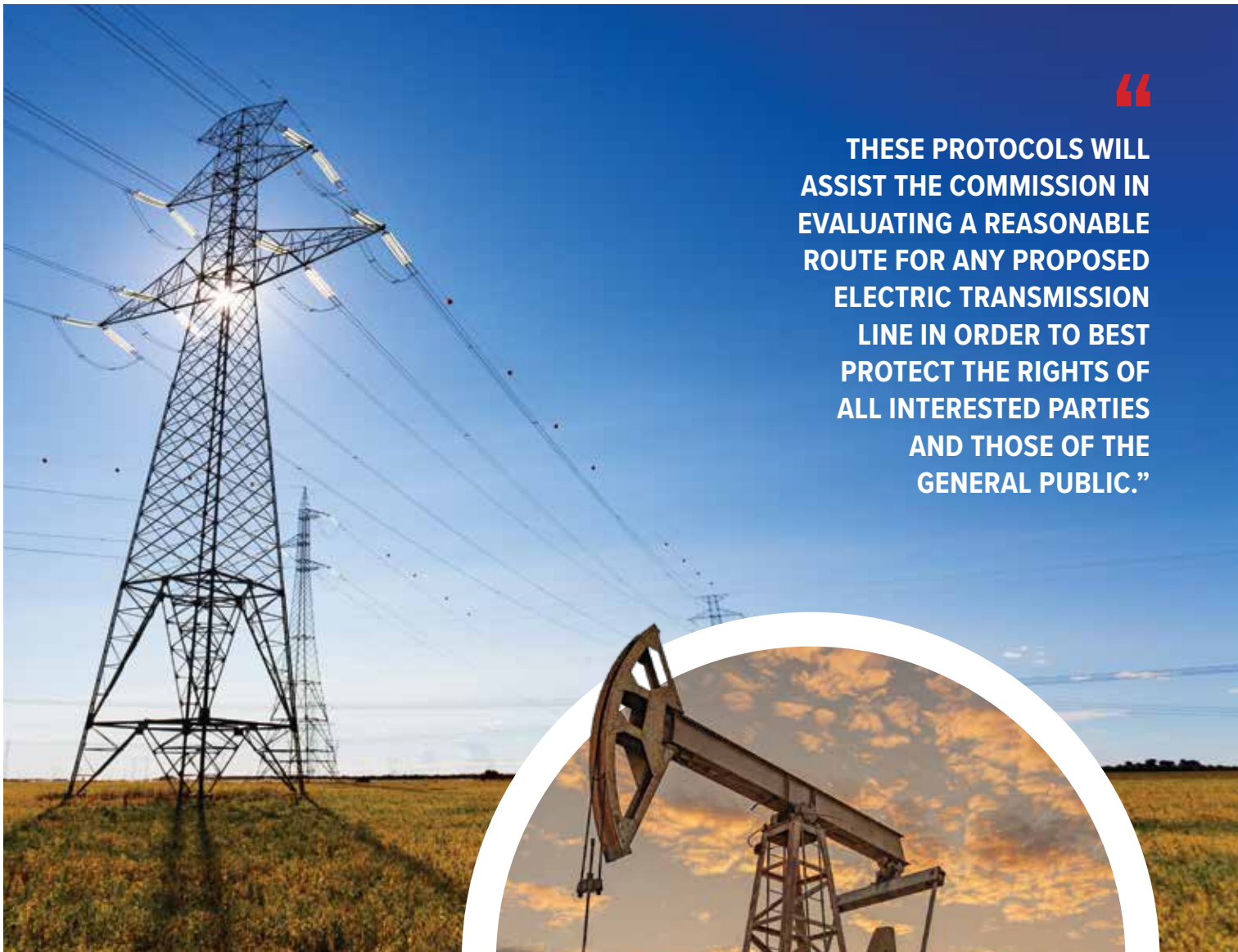
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# ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION COMPANIES ARE NOW REQUIRED TO AVOID DIRECT IMPACTS TO OIL AND GAS WELLS AS A **HIGH-LEVEL PRIORITY** WHEN CHOOSING THE LOCATION FOR ANY NEW ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION LINES

BY KEITH A. BROCK, ANDERSON & BYRD, LLP



“

THESE PROTOCOLS WILL ASSIST THE COMMISSION IN EVALUATING A REASONABLE ROUTE FOR ANY PROPOSED ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION LINE IN ORDER TO BEST PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF ALL INTERESTED PARTIES AND THOSE OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC.”

**R**ecognizing that large transmission lines are anticipated to increase in Kansas in the coming years, the Kansas Corporation Commission recently opened a docket in order to establish principles and priorities used to select the location for electric transmission lines in Kansas. KIOGA intervened in this docket in order to represent the interests of its members by advocating that the location of these lines should be chosen in order to minimize their impact on oil and gas producers. As a result of KIOGA's participation in this docket, the Kansas Corporation Commission (KCC) adopted a Routing Principle, mandating the location of all future transmission lines must be chosen in order to "avoid direct impacts to oil and gas wells." This Routing Principle is a high-level priority that must be applied when choosing the location for proposed electric transmission lines. In addition, the KCC's final order in this docket requires that "oil and gas protocols" be filed as part of all future line siting applications that are filed with the KCC. These protocols are essentially the protocols that the electric transmission company and all of its contractors must employ in their interactions with oil and gas owners and operators during the siting, construction, and operation phases of the electric transmission project. These protocols will assist the Commission in evaluating a reasonable route for any proposed electric transmission line in order to best protect the rights of all interested parties and those of the general public.

In the coming years, the number of new electric transmission lines is expected to increase significantly. With each new transmission line comes potential impacts to oil and gas operators. Measures like those taken by the KCC referenced above, as well as traditional property law rights and constitutional provisions prohibiting "takings" without just

compensation, place KIOGA's members in a better position to protect their rights and oil and gas-related interests as these new transmission lines are being designed and built. Oftentimes, oil and gas producers have far greater legal rights than they realize in these situations. Therefore, it is important that you consult with an experienced attorney to learn what rights you may have in these situations so that you can protect your interests.

KIOGA is appreciative of the proactive and collaborative approach taken by the KCC in the docket referenced above. ✍

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# KIOGA Update

BY JASON WATKINS AND JESSICA LUCAS, WATKINS PUBLIC STRATEGIES



**F**riday, February 7, marked the end of the fourth week of the 2025 Kansas Legislative Session, which means the session is close to a third of the way completed. It's been a fast and furious pace. Leadership instituted two major changes that have dramatically changed the tone and tenor of the session. First, the move from the traditional 90-day session to a 90-calendar-day session eliminated close to 10 working days. In addition, the Legislature created a new budget process where they write their own budget instead of simply receiving the

governor's budget and making adjustments. The House is taking the first shot at the budget with a goal of completing work on an appropriations bill by February 14, then sending it over to the Senate for its consideration.

There have been just a few bills introduced that are of high importance to the Kansas oil and gas industry. The KIOGA lobbying team is monitoring several bills, as well, that do not directly impact our industry but are germane to issues and amendments that could draw the industry in. Below are three issues that have been areas of focus through the first four weeks of the session.

## **SB 93 DIRECT ELECTION OF KANSAS CORPORATION COMMISSIONERS**

A bill was introduced and assigned to the Senate Utilities Committee that would require the direct election of KCC commissioners. These would be partisan elections, with the first being held in the 2026 election cycle for commission position one. Positions two and three would be elected in 2028. Commissioners are currently appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Kansas Senate.

KIOGA strongly opposes this legislation. Direct election of KCC



## “ THE BIG AREAS OF FOCUS WILL REMAIN THE STATE BUDGET AND SOME POLICIES TO ADDRESS PROPERTY TAXES.”

commissioners would lead to a commission created by the highest bidder. While some proponents claim this proposal is the answer to controlling electricity costs, it has the very real potential to have the opposite effect. One only has to look at Evergy’s political activity and campaign spending to see the risk this policy change poses. In addition, some states with direct election of commissioners have seen excessively high spending by extreme environmental groups in efforts to take over commissions and implement radical rules and regulations to the detriment of the oil and gas industry. Those efforts have been successful in some states, including in the Midwest.

KIOGA representatives have been in communication with Chairman Mike Fagg, leader of the Senate Utilities Committee, and expressed our opposition. At this point, no hearing has been scheduled, and time is running out. The KIOGA lobbying team has also been communicating with legislative leadership in both chambers so they understand our industry’s position and the risks involved with such a policy change.

### **CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT CAPPING PROPERTY VALUATIONS (SCR 1603)**

Senate Concurrent Resolution 1603 is a constitutional amendment that would cap real property valuations at 3% annually. It is in response to outcries over the rapid growth in

residential valuations that have resulted in significant increases in property tax bills over the last several years. Legislators have expressed frustrations with local governments over the increases. While mill levies have largely remained unchanged, property tax bills have skyrocketed.

While everyone is concerned about the residential valuation increases, some business and ag groups have raised concerns with the approach taken with the constitutional amendment. The overall concern is that with how cities and counties budget and set mill levies, a cap on residential valuations would likely lead to a shift in tax burden onto ag, commercial, and industrial properties.

The Senate voted on the constitutional amendment on Thursday, February 6, and passed it 28–11. It now heads to the House, where the Speaker has been vocal in his opposition to it.

While the House is unlikely to move the constitutional amendment, they are expected to propose their own ideas to reduce property taxes. We’ll continue to monitor these ideas to ensure they reduce property taxes for all and do not shift property tax burdens from one type of ratepayer to another.

### **KDHE LAND SPREADING BILL**

The House Committee on Agriculture held a hearing on Tuesday, February 4, on HB 2064. The legislation was requested by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and was

presented as a regulatory cleanup bill. HB 2064 would remove the current solid waste permit exception for the disposal of solid waste generated by oil and gas well drilling through the practice of land-spreading. Legislation enacted in 2012 allows the disposal of solid waste generated by drilling oil and gas wells through land-spreading.

The wastes eligible for land-spreading are the water-based drilling mud and cuttings generated during the drilling of oil and gas wells. Produced saltwater brines, fracking fluids, petroleum-based drilling waste, or produced petroleum products are not eligible for land-spreading under statute and are disposed of through alternate methods. Due to changes in exploration and production of oil and gas, and industry practices for handling and disposal of drilling wastes, the land-spreading option is not and has not been in active use for more than a decade. Therefore, it was recommended that the statute and associated regulations governing the land-spreading without a permit be rescinded.

### **MOVING FORWARD**

The Kansas Legislature now enters the final two-thirds of the session. The big areas of focus will remain the state budget and some policies to address property taxes. As mentioned, the Senate should receive the House’s budget on February 15. Both chambers have multiple bills dealing with property taxes. Look for some reduction in the statewide mill levy.

KIOGA is pleased that, to date, we have seen very little that poses a threat to the oil and gas industry. However, we will remain vigilant and will, of course, keep you informed of any significant happenings in Topeka. ⚡



# Our Industry's Most Valuable Asset: **Its People**

CHANGING THE OIL AND GAS NARRATIVE STARTS WITH EACH OF US

BY WARREN MARTIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, KANSAS STRONG

**“I’ve worked in the [oil and gas] industry for over 20 years, and I’ve always struggled with it,” said one attendee at an industry event where I was speaking in Colorado. “However, today is the first day I truly feel proud to be a part of the industry.”**

**S**he is not alone. I’ve traveled through several states, challenging every person working in our industry to become an advocate for our industry. We cannot hope to turn the current tide of favorability back toward our industry unless we first have pride in our work. Everyone in the industry should be proud of the way oil and natural gas have shaped our world and made America the greatest nation on earth.

Kansas Strong runs ad campaigns every year to help improve the industry’s favorability in the state. This is important and valuable. Yet the likelihood of an advertisement changing someone’s opinion about our industry is extremely small. Ads are conversation starters more than they are agents of change. The goal is to pique someone’s interest, make them ask questions, and guide them to more information through engagement.

Those conversations are critical, and we need advocates willing to speak, educate, and stand up for our industry.

I’m not talking about launching a public relations campaign or forming a team of high-profile pundits to advance our position or increasing lobbying efforts to shore up our standing. While all of those are important, the most valuable messenger the industry has on deck is you!

When people are proud of the work they do, they share it with others. That makes you our industry’s most valuable asset.

We have not worked hard enough to educate our own industry about the quality of life provided by petroleum. Our industry is highly technical and diverse. Many people are experts in their job, but



they may not know how to talk about the benefits of the industry or explain how their job helps advance society.

There is much to be proud of when it comes to the U.S. oil and gas industry. I could fill this magazine with examples of how petroleum has shaped our world for the better. While I'm not going to do that, I do want to share just a few examples.

Petroleum provides about 56% of the world's total energy consumption. In recent years, the U.S. became the number one oil-producing nation in the world. We also led the way in cutting CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Methane emissions continue to drop year over year.

In other words, the U.S. does a better job than any other nation when it comes to producing and utilizing petroleum in the most environmentally responsible way. The world needs petroleum, and if you care about the environment, you want petroleum produced here in America.

But oil and natural gas are more than just energy. Petroleum is used to produce over 6,000 raw materials from which millions of products are made. From the extraordinary to the mundane, we depend on these products to drive innovation, make our lives easier, provide the tools for us to conduct commerce, and protect us from the environment.



**WE CANNOT HOPE TO  
TURN THE CURRENT TIDE  
OF FAVORABILITY BACK  
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UNLESS WE FIRST HAVE  
PRIDE IN OUR WORK.”**

On the mundane side, polymers, plastics, and synthetic rubber cover cups to tires, shoes to hair clips, and everything in between. Phones, computers, gaming systems, and smart TVs are all largely made from petroleum products. Synthetic fibers like nylon, spandex, polyester, etc., give us moisture-wicking clothes for the heat and thermal protection for the cold. The vast majority of clothing produced today includes synthetic fibers made from petroleum. Toys, adventure gear, food containers, and sterilized individual packaging are all made from petroleum.

Walk into any emergency room and take note of the top 13 machines used in the room on a regular basis. All are primarily composed of parts made from petroleum products. Syringes, scrubs, masks, thermometers, and even stethoscopes are made from petroleum

products. Over 85% of medications are made utilizing products from petroleum.

A couple of years ago, my youngest granddaughter had a heart transplant shortly after her birth. They had to transplant her heart and rebuild part of the aortic system. As we went through the almost yearlong process, I was amazed by the medical advances. I was fascinated. The tools, equipment, monitors, and virtually everything they used to help my granddaughter was made at least in part from petroleum.

I could write on and on about how petroleum products have improved technology, gaming, construction, space exploration, cosmetics, and more. I could talk about how the majority of parts in an electric vehicle are made from petroleum or how solar panels and the blades on wind turbines are dependent on petroleum.

Every aspect of our life is improved by the products that come from petroleum. Often when I am standing in a classroom of students talking about the industry, I will challenge them to find something in the room that is not made from petroleum products. Every group has a very difficult time finding something. Most never find anything. It is that pervasive in our lives.



Oil is good! It improves our lives and our society. It protects us from the environment. Climate-related deaths are at historic lows as a result. It increases GDP. It provides energy and products—energy that can be transported anywhere in the world without diminishing and products that protect us, shape our world, and save lives.

That is something to be proud of, and those within the industry should be proud!

However, all of that is meaningless unless people know it. Marketing and advertising can introduce the conversation to our communities. Changing perceptions is going to take a movement and require every person working in the industry to become an advocate for the industry.

I'm not suggesting that everyone should become a public speaker like me, but we

do need to increase our efforts to educate our own teams. Every team member needs to know how beneficial the industry is to society and understand how petroleum positively impacts our daily lives through energy and products—and be able to communicate those facts in our own homes, communities, clubs, and elsewhere. So, when an ad campaign effectively hits the mark and raises questions, those within our industry need to be willing and equipped to continue the conversation.

Our industry remains in a precarious position. There are those who would love nothing more than to legislate us out of business. The tide rising against oil and gas is strong and backed by much of the media, political groups, activist investors, and educational curricula, resulting in waves of misinformation among the general public.

No ad campaign alone is going to change it. Yet our greatest asset can. You can.

It starts with one person choosing to learn about the industry and stand as an energy advocate. However, we often fall into the trap of thinking “someone else” will do it, and then ultimately, no one does.

This is a time for all-hands-on-deck. During the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776, Benjamin Franklin famously said, “We must, indeed, all hang together or, most assuredly, we shall all hang separately.”

There has never been a more important time in our industry for us to “hang together.” Even though we are a competitive industry, we are all on the same side when it comes to our energy future. And if we remain silent now, we may find that no one is left to speak for us, and we “hang” alone. *K*

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# We are Kansas Strong

BY WARREN MARTIN  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
KANSAS STRONG

“  
**WE SEEK TO CREATE A  
NEW FRAMEWORK FOR  
CONVERSATION THAT  
CONSIDERS THE BENEFITS  
OF THE INDUSTRY  
EQUALLY ALONGSIDE THE  
CHALLENGING ISSUES.”**

## “That’s a wrap!”

**W**ith those words we concluded filming a couple weeks ago for an upcoming PBS episode on *Viewpoint with Dennis Quaid* to be released later this spring. The show features mini-documentaries on people, organizations, and companies bringing innovative ideas to the public. What was the innovation that prompted them to reach out to Kansas Strong? Changing the conversation about oil and natural gas.

Kansas Strong (Kansas Oil and Gas Resources Fund, Inc.) is a voluntarily funded nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting the quality of life created by the Kansas oil and natural gas industry. Our mission is to educate the public about the industry’s role in advancing the state’s economy and standard of living through the development of energy.

People often ask why we don’t run typical marketing campaigns. I hope to answer that question. Rather than giving you a listing of all the things we do, I hope to shed some light on why we do what we do the way we do it.

Over the years, the conversation about energy has become framed in a limited scope, which rarely allows for a fair, balanced, and full conversation. Our primary challenge has been to move beyond the soundbite culture and change the conversation. We seek to create a new framework for conversation that considers the benefits of the industry equally alongside the challenging issues.

The world we live in didn’t just happen. It was created predominantly through the utilization of oil and natural gas for energy and products to create the lifestyle we enjoy today. The challenge Kansas Strong faces is to have a public conversation that establishes a founda-



tion of how our society was built before we tackle the issues involved in creating our energy future. Without that strong foundation, we risk making misinformed decisions about our energy future that could risk our quality of life.

### **WHO DO YOU CONVERSE WITH?**

Establishing a meaningful conversation requires two or more parties who are invested in the topic. It is much more than a soundbite, ad, commercial, or lecture. One of our primary goals as a first step is to challenge people to ask meaningful questions. This requires that we meet them where they are, in their bubble of the world, and relate to them in their terms.

Based on our own internal data from surveys and focus groups, approximately 23% of Kansans strongly approve of the oil and gas industry. On the other end of the spectrum, our data shows approximately 11% of Kansans strongly disapprove. Surprisingly, in the very middle is the largest group of respondents (approximately 37%) who state that they do not have enough information to say whether they approve or disapprove of the industry. This is what

we call the “messy middle.” Average Kansans who honestly want more information before making a decision. Those are the primary people with whom we want to have a conversation.

### **YOU HAVE TO MEET PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE.**

Kansas Strong has attempted to reach those people in a variety of ways, through traditional advertising, social media, sponsorships, presentations, educational programming, and even free phone charging stations around the state. We have sought to meet the public where they are in their own backyard. Yet, no slick ad is going to win the day. Branding doesn’t work to change people’s minds. Branding is an effort to put a name on what people already know. Messaging is key.

Messaging has to begin with the audience and meet their concerns and needs. To this end, Kansas Strong runs numerous campaigns simultaneously. Each is catered to address the concerns of the target audience by region, demographic, etc. Each is meant to be a starting point of conversation that can be developed over time. Thus, our

campaigns are often built around challenging audiences to “get the facts,” “do your own research,” or consider what “life without oil and natural gas” would look like. Each is a call to action to encourage the public to ask questions and explore the issue in a new way.

These campaigns run year-round in various parts of the state on traditional media and social media. However, these campaigns cannot stand on their own. We live in a society that is desensitized to marketing. The campaigns we run must be coupled with meaningful tie-ins, locations, and programming.

### **MEANINGFUL TIE-INS**

Meaningful tie-ins can come in a variety of different forms: sports teams, arts, rodeo, theater, concerts, and festivals, and that is just a short list of some of the places we have been. The key is finding things the messy middle already loves and being present in those situations to have a conversation. The primary goal is to build another touchpoint for people who have seen our messaging and give them a chance to ask questions or accept the challenge to learn more.

We garner these tie-ins predominantly through sponsorships. From all the major universities in Kansas to local sports, from major concerts to local festivals, from theatrical productions to local plays, we sponsor these events to meet the public in their sphere and provide a meaningful tie-in to our message.

On that note, we never just put our logo or branding on an event. We have to have a messaging opportunity to participate. Whether that is speaking from the stage, running a booth, or producing videos and messaging signs to display during the event, we must have a messaging opportunity to participate.

## LOCATIONS

Frequency of messaging is key. To this end, we have made a significant effort to begin establishing a presence at numerous locations around the state that host multiple events. Locations like Park City Arena, museums, Homefield KC, and football and basketball stadiums, to name a few, are great for keeping our messaging in front of the public.

We use a variety of means to communicate through locations: free phone charging stations (many with commercials running), wall murals and signage, scoreboard messaging, interactive kiosks, games, displays, etc. Each shares facts and information about the industry and challenges again further inquiry from the public.

## PROGRAMMING

Everything listed thus far is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to how we reach the public. Where we see the most impact with people gaining an understanding of our industry and how it impacts their lives is in our programming. Last year, we communicated in person to over 100,000 people in Kansas. Sometimes in large audiences and others in small groups of five or six people. Our programming is divided into two parts: educational programming and public programming.

Educational programming takes place in public and private schools in third through 12<sup>th</sup> grade and in colleges. This is primarily either through our Petro Pro program (where industry experts present to students in class) or through our Mobile Energy Education Experience (which is an interactive gaming experience in a classroom or at events). These educational programs cover all aspects of the industry and are custom-

ized from class to class to meet state requirements, grade level, and subject area, and complement what the students are currently learning.

We present in an average of 45–55 schools per year. The best evidence of the impact of these programs is the number of schools that have us back year after year, and the number of teachers who respond with something along the lines of “I didn’t realize how much I would learn from this.”

Public programming is longer-format messaging to the general public. It can be in the form of a lecture, radio show, podcast interview, documentary, social club presentation, etc. The primary driver of these presentations tends to be the news cycle. They are customized to the topic and group but always come back home to Kansas. They are the best opportunity to influence and challenge minds. The vast majority of them are coupled with Q&A and provide an unfiltered opportunity to speak directly with the messy middle.

Public programming also includes educating our industry on how to talk to the public. As such, we are actively involved

in industry clubs, societies, events, conferences, and trade shows, all in an effort to provide resources and information to assist in developing our industry’s communication ability. Simply wearing a T-shirt with “oil is good” on it can start a conversation. Our hope is to help our industry improve the quality of that conversation.

## CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION

I have been honored to work with Kansas Strong for eight years. I can say with confidence that we have seen the needle move. Today, more people want to have conversations about our industry, jobs, energy, and the environment. They want to learn more. Yet, we must continue challenging people to ask questions, provide information, and be deliberate in continuing the conversation.

As the sphere of conversation grows, we must encourage everyone in the industry to become advocates for the industry. Ultimately, that is the key to changing the conversation about oil and natural gas. Kansas Strong is more than an organization. All of us in the industry—WE are Kansas Strong. ❧

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# 2025 KANSAS OIL & GAS DAY, A RESOUNDING SUCCESS!

BY EDITORS JUSTIN YARDLEY & DANA WREATH

**K**ansas Oil & Gas Day is an essential event in the state's energy sector, and one of its most anticipated moments is the Annual Legislative Breakfast. Hosted by the Kansas Independent Oil & Gas Association (KIOGA) and the Eastern Kansas Oil & Gas Association (EKOGA), this gathering brings together industry professionals, policymakers, and legislators to discuss key issues and initiatives affecting the oil and gas industry.

The Legislative Breakfast is a platform for meaningful dialogue between Kansas' oil and gas producers and state lawmakers. As one of the state's most vital industries, oil and gas plays a significant role in Kansas' economy, providing jobs, supporting local communities, and contributing to state revenue. The breakfast allows industry stakeholders to engage directly with legislators, share concerns, and advocate for policies that support the continued growth and sustainability of the sector.

Each year, this event features discussions on pertinent issues related to the oil and gas industry. Topics often include regulatory challenges, tax policies, energy development, and environmental concerns. The gathering encourages an open and constructive dialogue between those who shape the laws of the state and those directly affected by those laws, helping industry professionals stay informed about legislative developments while empowering them to be active participants in the legislative process.

In addition to the breakfast, KIOGA leadership and our lobbyist representatives, Jason Watkins and Jessica Lucas, met with key legislative leaders, Senate President Ty Masterson, and Speaker of the House Dan Hawkins. These meetings were productive and increased KIOGA's visibility in the Capitol.



After those meetings, KIOGA leadership and our lobbyist representatives, Jason Watkins and Jessica Lucas, met with Governor Laura Kelley. This event was a valuable meeting and offered an opportunity to discuss critical issues with the governor, including the potentially devastating impact federal

methane rules could pose to both the Kansas oil and gas industry and the state government.

As part of Kansas Oil & Gas Day, Chair of the Board Dana Wreath presented to both the House and Senate Utilities Committees on the current state of the oil and gas industry in Kansas and key issues we see coming up in the coming year. These presentations were well received and created more opportunities for KIOGA to discuss key issues with legislators.

As the energy landscape evolves, the Annual Kansas Oil & Gas Day is still an important tradition for Kansas' oil and gas community. We wish to express our appreciation for the hard work of office managers, event coordinators, sponsors, catering staff, lobbyists, lawmakers, and the members of KIOGA and EKOGE for their efforts in this unique opportunity to forge stronger connections with the lawmakers who shape the policies that impact their businesses. ✍



# KIOGA's New **Lobbying Team**



**W**atkins Public Strategies, a full-service lobbying and association management firm, has been retained to handle government relations on behalf of KIOGA. The firm came highly recommended by industry partners and leaders in the Kansas Legislature.

Founded in 2014, Watkins Public Strategies has grown into one of Kansas' top lobbying firms, both in size and results. With locations in Topeka and Wichita, they employ a year-round approach to meeting and communicating with legislators from all parts of the state. Advocacy and education require a 365-day effort, according to firm Founder and President Jason Watkins. "The real blocking and tackling of lobbying is done out of session in one-on-one meetings with policymakers when they have the time to truly engage in conversations and develop an understanding of complex issues," Watkins said.

The firm's key leadership team includes Watkins, Executive Vice President Jessica Lucas, Director of Operations Ange Marichal, and Manager of Government Relations Nathaniel Blank. Additionally, the firm employs six additional staff members during the legislative session. These team

members allow Watkins Public Strategies to cover multiple committees and review every piece of introduced legislation, scoring each for its current or potential impact on KIOGA. As those who closely follow the legislative process know, a seemingly benign bill today can become a real threat tomorrow.

Relationships are critically important in the political environment, and Watkins Public Strategies works diligently to cultivate strong relationships with all 165 members of the Legislature, the governor and her staff, as well as key leaders of important state agencies. Honesty and integrity are essential to maintaining these relationships.

"It's important that we are not just seen as advocates but also as a trusted and reliable resource for policymakers in the decision-making process," said firm Vice President Jessica Lucas. "Earning and maintaining that trust is a key ingredient to our lobbying success."

Maintaining close contact and constant communication with legislative leadership is vital to successful advocacy. To that end, the firm arranged meetings for KIOGA leadership with Governor Laura Kelly, Senate President Ty Masterson, and House Speaker Dan Hawkins on KIOGA's recent Advocacy Day in Topeka.



“Leadership knowing your issues and your members can have a huge impact on heading off troublesome policy proposals. Plenty of bad ideas are born in Topeka, and informed, supportive leadership is key to stopping them before they grow into real threats,” said Watkins.

The team at Watkins Public Strategies is excited to represent KIOGA. Firm President Jason Watkins comes from a family with ties to the oil and gas industry, having had an uncle who was a drill-

er in Kansas and grandparents who owned pump and supply stores in western Kansas and eastern Colorado. “I was proud of my family’s involvement in oil and gas, but it also gives me a true appreciation and understanding of the challenges and risks faced by those in the industry. Every day presents a make-or-break proposition. My job—and the job of everyone in my firm—is to ensure government doesn’t weigh the scales toward the break side of the equation,” said Watkins. *κ*

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**FORM AND FULL PAYMENT MUST BE RECEIVED BY FEBRUARY 10, 2025, TO BE INCLUDED IN THE MIDYEAR BROCHURE!**

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### WILDCATTER SPONSORSHIP:

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### BLACK GOLD SPONSORSHIP:

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# MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COMMITMENT TO KIOGA.

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**800 SW Jackson Street, Suite #1400, Topeka, KS 66612-1216.**

You may also join online at [www.kioga.org](http://www.kioga.org).

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# KIOGA CALENDAR

Event Name	Date	Location
KIOGA Midyear Meeting & Trade Show	April 23–25	Kansas Star Casino Mulvane, KS
▶ Registration is open at <a href="http://www.kioga.org">www.kioga.org</a> under Upcoming Events.		
KIOGA Annual Convention & Trade Show	August 24–26	Hyatt Regency & Century II Event Center Wichita, KS

## OFFICERS & EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- Dana Wreath, Chair
- Jennifer Mull, Chair-Elect
- Raul Brito, Northwest Vice Chair
- Charles Wilson, Southwest Vice Chair
- Tim Hellman, South Central Vice Chair
- Chris McGown, East Vice Chair
- Jeff Bloomer, Treasurer
- Dan Schippers, Secretary
- Andrea Krauss, Immediate Past Chair
- Will Murfin, At-Large Member
- Will Darrah, At-Large Member
- Edward Cross, Ex-Officio Member

## STAFF

Justin Yardley,  
Office Manager &  
Events Coordinator

## KIOGA New Members

We welcome the following members to the KIOGA family. Thank you for your continued support!

**Aaron Parrott**  
Security 1<sup>st</sup> Resources

**Heath & Alyssa Landwehr**  
H3 Oil & Gas

**Harold Robinson**  
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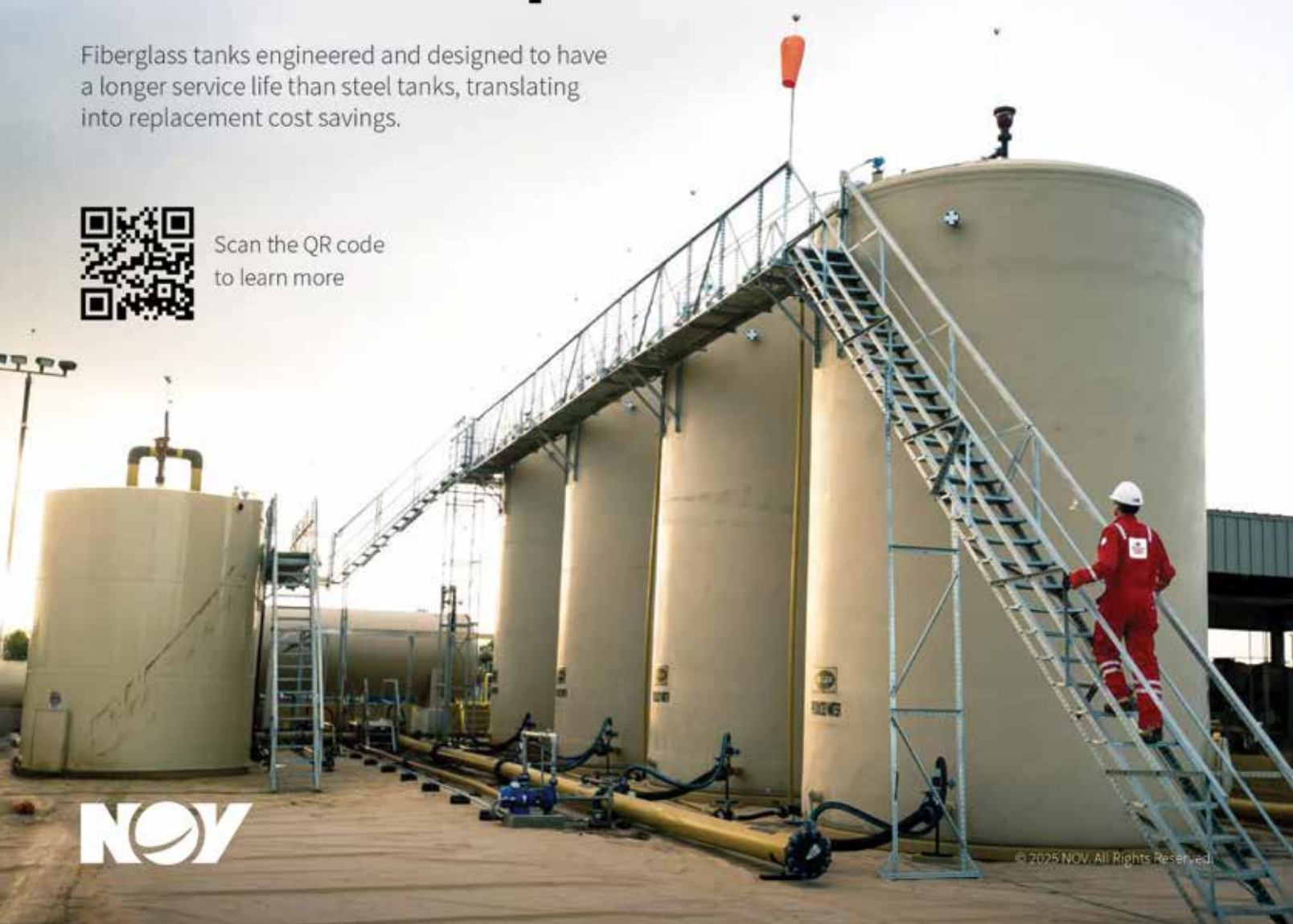
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