

**STEPHEN L. WILKINS FOR**

**BLUE GRASS ENERGY BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Thousands of good, local jobs could be created throughout Kentucky if Blue Grass Energy and the other Kentucky co-ops made wise choices like others around the country.



But, it means doing things differently. It means thinking outside the box.

My goal is to help them open the box.

### **Affordable energy**

Blue Grass Energy can be doing more to make sure people can afford their bills with weatherization and energy-saving programs.

### **More energy choices**

I'll work to ensure we have more options for where we get our electricity, not just from expensive, distant power plants.

### **Good, local jobs**

I want Blue Grass Energy to make it a priority goal to create good, local jobs by providing energy-saving and renewable energy programs to its customers.

### **Transparent Co-op Governance**

Electric co-ops are supposed to allow members to actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. I'll press Blue Grass Energy to open it's business meetings to its members and allow us to join in

Stephen L. Wilkins, 200 Dale Lane, Paint Lick, KY 40461  
859-986-9506 or [steve.wilkins@eku.edu](mailto:steve.wilkins@eku.edu)

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My name is Steve Wilkins. My wife Rose and I have lived in a piece of country between Berea and Paint Lick for the last 18 years. I grew up in West Virginia, served my country as a Viet Nam era veteran, travelled the country and worked all sorts of jobs from auto mechanic, to production lines, to managing personnel and projects worth hundreds of thousands of dollars in a youth conservation corps.

Until my recent retirement, I worked at Eastern Kentucky University helping students become more successful in college and in their lives beyond college. Having struggled as an older student to work my own way through college, my particular focus was on students who had limited finances, or who were coming into college after having been “out in the world” for a time. I wanted to be of service to the coming generation and those beyond.

While I recycled, and did other small things to care for our Creation, for years I gave very little thought to my electricity aside from turning down the thermostat and switching to twisty fluorescent bulbs. While I sometimes attended an annual meeting, enjoyed the BBQ and hoped they’d call my number for that washing machine or chain saw, I sat idly by and let my directors make decisions about my electricity. But, other very knowledgeable people were looking into the decisions and choices that Blue Grass Energy and the other co-ops in Kentucky were making in order to provide our reliable and affordable electricity. The more I read and talked to these wise folks, the more I wondered at the choices that were being made. It seemed that Blue Grass Energy, along with the rest, wanted to do things pretty much the way they always had even though the world around them had changed dramatically. Now, I regret my unquestioning belief in my directors.

- Other co-ops and other utilities around the country are canceling plans for coal-fired power plants while Blue Grass Energy supports construction of yet another new plant.
- The federal government won’t lend money for new coal-fired plants because they consider it too risky. Yet, EKPC, the co-op that makes electricity for Blue Grass Energy wants to take out high priced loans to pay for a new plant even though it may be financially risky to do so.
- Other co-ops around the country have found ways for customers to get low-cost loans to upgrade weatherization, get energy efficient appliances and install solar hot water or electricity panels. Customers pay lower bills and the energy savings pay off the debt. You’ll hear it called “on-bill financing.” Those co-ops have made these choices their highest priority.
- Other co-ops around the country have opened their meetings and decision-making processes to their members; the way they were originally intended to operate.

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