

March 8, 2026

In the matter of certificate of need Docket 25-117.

Despite an increasing population and more things running on electricity we are using less electricity now than we were 20 years ago. The need for new transmission infrastructure is being driven by the inefficiencies of wind and solar energy. There are many evolving technologies including battery storage and HVDC that could help mitigate the problems created by this need. New policies like data centers making their own power will also lend to a reduced need. Maybe someday they will figure out fusion energy? I remember driving thru Altamont pass in California about 20 years ago where the wind blows hard all the time and seeing many dozens of broken-down and abandoned wind turbines. Who is going to pay the cost to decommission all this stuff when something better comes along? Much of it is not recyclable. I believe that climate change is real, but I also believe the cost of destroying the rural landscape outweighs the benefit of insignificant carbon reductions. Are we really helping the world or just paying a dollar to save a dime? Maybe the idea of a noble pursuit is just an excuse for some to profit at the expense of others?

Most rural land owners have worked hard their whole lives to earn and make their home in the country. We buy insurance to protect us from loss and we count on our investments to support our retirements and leave a legacy. Many of us are farmers but come from all professions. Most are not lawyers or government officials. Its not surprising that many just choose to ignore projects that threaten their property. People are busy just trying to make a living and raising families and don't have the time to educate themselves in such complex processes, go to meetings, and collaborate with neighbors. Besides, what difference can we make other than making ourselves sick with worry and disgust. I don't think many people recognize the scope of these towering monstrosities being proposed because at this time they are quite rare. Do not mistake this lack of involvement for approval. Nobody wants this.

I've lived in the county for the last 25 years. I sold my last country property and moved due to the threat of windfarm development and a sea of blinking red lights at night. Now I'm being threatened by transmission lines. I will probably lose \$100K in property value if a 765kV line is constructed. That \$100k would have been subject to capital gains so the government loses too. Access to the "buy the farm" option should be expanded and there should be an equitable way to compensate every rural property owner that suffers market value loss to their property. I'm too old to start over again and will probably not buy another country property. At least not in MN. Please give all options due consideration before granting this certificate of need.

Sincerely,

Trevor Scrobeck