

1 PUBLIC HEARING - 23-423, 24-283 & 23-425

2 SAUK RAPIDS GOVERNMENT CENTER

3 AUGUST 27, 2025 - 6:00 P.M.

4 BEFORE THE COURT OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS

5 FOR THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

6
7 In the Matter of the Application of Benton Solar, LLC,
8 for a Site Permit for the 100 MW Solar Energy Generating
9 System for the Benton Solar Project in Benton County,
10 Minnesota.

11 In the Matter of the Application of Benton Solar, LLC,
12 for a Site Permit for the 100 MW Battery Energy Storage
13 System for the Benton Solar Project in Benton County,
14 Minnesota.

15 In the Matter of the Application of Benton Solar, LLC,
16 for a Route Permit for a 0.5-mile 115 kV High-Voltage
17 Transmission Line Associated with the Benton Solar
18 Project in Benton County, Minnesota.

19 MPUC DOCKET NOS: IP7115/GS-23-423
20 IP7115/ESS-24-283
21 IP7115/TL-23-425
22 CAH DOCKET NO: 25-2500-40508

23 Hearing held at Sauk Rapids Government Center

24 250 Summit Avenue North

25 Sauk Rapids, Minnesota

August 27, 2025

BEFORE: Judge Megan McKenzie

STENOGRAPHIC COURT REPORTER: Ruth E. Holdvogt, RPR

1 APPEARANCES:

2 CLAIRES WILLIAMS, Attorney at Law,
3 Stinson, LLP, appeared on behalf of Benton Solar,
4 LLC.

5 JUNIOR GEISLINGER, appeared on behalf of
6 International Union of Operating Engineers-Local 49.

7 PUC STAFF:

8 Cezar Panait

9 PUC EIP STAFF:

10 Logan Hicks
11
12

13 WHEREUPON, the following proceedings were
14 duly had and entered of record, to wit:
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I N D E X

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1 JUDGE MCKENZIE: Okay. Good evening. We
2 are now going to convene this public hearing and
3 call it In the Matters of the Application of Benton
4 Solar, LLC, for site permits for the 100-megawatt
5 Solar Energy Generating System and 100-megawatt
6 Battery Energy Storage System, and a route permit
7 for the 115-kilovolt High-Voltage Transmission Line
8 Associated with the Benton Solar Project. This is
9 MPUC Docket Numbers GS-23-423, TL-23-425, and
10 ESS-24-283. This is Court of Administrative
11 Hearings Docket Number 25-2500-40508.

12 Good evening. I am Judge McKenzie. I am
13 a judge with the Court of Administrative Hearings.
14 The Court of Administrative Hearings is an
15 independent entity of state government that is not
16 affiliated with the Public Utilities Commission, any
17 of the applicants, the Attorney General's office, or
18 any other entity of state government. And I have
19 been asked by the Public Utilities Commission to
20 preside over these public hearings and an
21 evidentiary hearing in this matter.

22 Even though we are not in a courtroom,
23 this is a formal proceeding. We do have a court
24 reporter who is sitting there at the end of the
25 desk, and she will be recording the minutes of what

1 we say here today. And so in that regard, it's very
2 important that only one person speaks at a time.
3 It's very hard for our court reporter if people
4 speak over one another because -- obviously, it's
5 just hard. She only can type as fast as -- although
6 she's very good, she can only type as fast as she
7 can. So I'd ask that everyone just wait your turn.
8 I'm hear to listen to all of you, and everyone will
9 get their chance, if you have a comment or a
10 question, to make it.

11 What, sort of, the -- the outline of what
12 we will do here today, I am going to, after the --
13 sort of the introductory remarks, we will have some
14 presentations by the Public Utilities Commission and
15 the applicants. And then we will move to the public
16 comment and question portion of the hearing.

17 I do have a list of those individuals --
18 it looks like there are a couple of individuals who
19 have indicated that they would like to speak. I
20 will call individuals from the list first, and then
21 open it up, if there's anyone who did not put their
22 name on the list but, in the course of the
23 presentation, changed their mind.

24 As I mentioned, this is a public hearing.
25 This is part of the fact-gathering process. It is

1 an important part of the process. The views of the
2 public and affected individuals are important to me,
3 they're important to the Commission, and so I do
4 thank you all for taking the time to participate
5 today. And I do encourage you, if you would like,
6 to make a comment or ask a question when the time
7 comes to do so.

8 Your views are considered; they are
9 considered by me. Ultimately, after the evidentiary
10 hearing, I will make a report that includes Findings
11 of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and a recommendation.
12 And that goes to the Public Utilities Commission,
13 who then makes the final decision. And they also
14 consider the public comment and what happens in
15 these hearings. So thank you very much for being
16 here today.

17 And so, with that, I'd like, I guess, the
18 panelists -- I'll have everyone introduce themselves
19 as we go through the presentations, but I think that
20 perhaps, for the court reporter, it would be helpful
21 if we all go through and have you state and spell
22 your names now. So I will pass the microphone down
23 to Mr. Hicks to start that process.

24 MR. LOGAN HICKS. Yes. Thank you, Judge.

25 My name is Logan Hicks. I'm the

1 environmental review manager for the Public
2 Utilities Commission.

3 MR. CEZAR PANAIT: Good evening,
4 everyone. My name is Cezar Panait. I'm an engineer
5 working with the Public Utilities Commission, and
6 I'm the analyst assigned to work on this
7 application.

8 MR. ADAM GRACIA: Good evening, everyone.
9 My name is Adam Gracia. I'm a project director with
10 NextEra Energy Resources, and the project developer
11 for the Benton Solar project.

12 MS. CLAIRE WILLIAMS: Hello. My name is
13 Claire Williams, C-l-a-i-r-e W-i-l-l-i-a-m-s. I am
14 with Stinson, LLP, outside legal counsel for Benton
15 Solar.

16 JUDGE MCKENZIE: Thank you very much.
17 And now we will start with some
18 presentations. And we will start with the staff
19 with the Public Utilities Commission.

20 MR. CEZAR PANAIT: Thank you, Your Honor.
21 I want to thank everyone for taking the
22 time to come out here tonight. Again, I'm Cezar
23 Panait, Minnesota Public Utilities Commission staff.
24 I'm not a Commissioner. I'm just a staffer, an
25 engineer. And I was assigned to work on the

1 application for the Benton Solar project -- I'm one
2 of the people who work on this project -- and I
3 would like to draw your attention to this overview
4 of the timeline.

5 When an application is submitted to the
6 Commission, it goes through various phases. And I
7 will not read every one of these, but these are the
8 milestones of the applications. And we are talking
9 about two applications here. There's a joint site
10 permit application for the solar project, the
11 battery storage project together, a joint
12 application; and then we have a route permit
13 application that was submitted all at the same time.

14 And you can see, from the table here, the
15 applications were accepted -- deemed complete by the
16 Commission back in December, and then we had a
17 series of two public information meetings in
18 January; one of them in this room, one of them
19 virtual.

20 My colleague here from the former ERA,
21 they completed an environmental review for the
22 project. There is the date when the document was
23 submitted. And then the bold milestones are in the
24 future. We had a public meeting, virtual, last
25 night; we are meeting here tonight.

1 And then the comment period will be
2 closed -- will be closing on September the 12th.
3 And then the judge will be writing the report, and
4 that's the date for the report to be issued. And
5 then, finally, the Commission will meet one more
6 time in an open meeting to deliberate and decide on
7 what to do with the permit applications.

8 These are some of the summary of the
9 considerations by statute and rule. The Commission,
10 as a body, and the individual Commissioners, they
11 are all looking to see if the application meets the
12 requirements as -- as prescribed in -- in the law.
13 And these are some of the factors that the
14 Commissioners look at when determining or deciding
15 if this permit should be granted, the -- the permit.
16 And so the -- some of the considerations listed here
17 address the -- whether the project, as a whole, will
18 affect the resources and what kind of environmental
19 impacts does it have, and how can -- those impacts
20 can be avoided or mitigated.

21 Human settlement is also at the forefront
22 of the Commissioners when they decide whether this
23 project should be approved. And -- and down the
24 list, whether the project is cost-effective to meet
25 the power supply for the state and for the region.

1 So some of the factors listed here are
2 specifically to the site permit, but they still
3 happen to be very similar, if not the same, for the
4 route permit, the transmission line associated with
5 the project. So the same information is found in
6 both the route and site in terms of considerations.

7 I mentioned about the comment period.
8 And September 12th seems to be like a very soon
9 date, but every time we issue a notice for the
10 public hearing, such as the notice that I'm assuming
11 most people received in the mail, the comment period
12 actually starts from the day the notice is issued,
13 which was back on August 4th. So that comment
14 period goes until September 12th.

15 And we list here the three options that
16 people can use to provide comments. And one would
17 be accessing via online, providing a public comment
18 using the Commission's website, which is set out for
19 that -- for that purpose. We also take e-mailed
20 comments. And, also, written -- handwritten or
21 typed comments can be sent via U.S. mail.

22 And so just some -- some topics of
23 interest. When providing comments for -- for this
24 project, please keep in mind that some of the
25 overarching questions that the Commission is looking

1 to get answers on are listed in the notice and they
2 are listed on this slide here, and -- mainly whether
3 the Commission should issue a site permit for the
4 proposed project, for the battery storage portion of
5 the project, whether the Commission should issue a
6 route permit. And if granted -- if the Commission
7 decides to go ahead and issue permits, under these
8 additional conditions or requirements that can be
9 included in the -- in the permits to address
10 specific concerns.

11 And then we have some additional
12 information available for anybody who would like to
13 access that, either by reading the Commission -- by
14 accessing the Commission's eDocket system, which is
15 an electronic filing system. And once you are on
16 the -- on the landing page, you can narrow your
17 search by specific -- by docket numbers. And we
18 have three docket numbers; the judge read them. The
19 first one pertains to the solar part of the project,
20 the second one pertains to the battery storage, and
21 the third one pertains to the transmission line.

22 If you would like to receive further
23 notifications and information about when -- when
24 various documents are being filed, you can subscribe
25 to any or all of these dockets, and every time there

1 is a document filed by anybody -- it doesn't have to
2 be by you -- you will get a notification. And then
3 you click on that, and then it opens it up so you
4 can see what the new document that was filed is
5 about.

6 With that, I am going to pass it to my
7 colleague, Logan.

8 MR. LOGAN HICKS: Thank you, Cezar.

9 Yeah. So as I said earlier, my name is
10 Logan Hicks. I'm the environmental review manager.
11 And my main task on this project was to create
12 this -- this binder here, the environmental
13 assessment. I have this one, and there's another
14 copy upfront for anybody to peruse.

15 So the environmental assessment is a
16 document that puts together a list of possible
17 impacts and mitigations, both in terms of human and
18 environmental impacts, that the project may cause if
19 it were to be permitted and built.

20 So it's an extensive view into all the
21 different factors of -- which we collected from you
22 folks back in January, when we had our scoping
23 meeting. We came out here -- and I recognize some
24 of you. We learned, you know, the things that were
25 important to you, the things to kind of focus on,

1 and we touched on all those inside the environmental
2 assessment.

3 It's available for you guys to read.
4 There's a few different places that it is available.
5 Mainly, there's a couple websites that you can go to
6 that Cezar --

7 The next one real quick. Thank you.

8 So there's these couple websites here.
9 And if you go to there, it's available digitally.
10 If you are more of a hard copy person, you can
11 actually go to the Great River Regional Library in
12 St. Cloud, and there is a hard copy there. As I --
13 and if you are absolutely -- you can't make it out
14 to the library and, you know, you want a hard copy,
15 anyway, shoot me an e-mail right there,
16 logan.m.hicks@state.mn.us. Shoot that to me, and I
17 can try to get you guys a hard copy.

18 If you have any comments on the EA
19 itself, you know, you can send that to me or Cezar,
20 or you can use any of the methods that he talked
21 about earlier in that open comment period slide.
22 Just make sure you get them to us by September 12th.
23 So if you read through it and you notice that we
24 didn't catch something or something wasn't correct,
25 anything like that, feel free to let us know, and we

1 will definitely look into that.

2 MR. CEZAR PANAIT: And our information is
3 listed on this page here. So I am Cezar and Logan
4 is down here, so please use any of these means to
5 contact us if you have questions about the process.
6 And Logan -- process and also environmental
7 document. Thank you.

8 MR. ADAM GRACIA: Thanks, Cezar.

9 Again, my name is Adam Gracia. I'm a
10 project director of NextEra Energy Resources and the
11 project developer for Benton Solar.

12 Next slide, please.

13 This is an overview of what we're going
14 to cover tonight in our presentation. Again, I'm
15 going to give you an introduction to who we are as
16 the applicant, as well as an overall project
17 overview -- looking at the timeline, the benefits to
18 the project. We'll have a map of the preliminary
19 site plan for the solar project, the storage
20 project, and transmission line, as well as a few
21 more specific slides on each aspect of the project.
22 Lastly, we'll cover stakeholder outreach to date, as
23 well as a brief overview of the construction
24 timeline.

25 So Benton Solar, LLC, is a wholly-owned,

1 indirect subsidiary of NextEra Energy Resources,
2 LLC. NextEra Energy Resources, or NEER, is the
3 world's largest generator of renewable energy from
4 the wind and the sun, and the industry leader in
5 battery storage.

6 The Benton Solar project will be owned
7 and operated by NEER, so for the life of the
8 project, we'll have two to three full-time NextEra
9 Energy Resources employees operating the project.

10 The next slide, please.

11 So the Benton Solar project is located in
12 Benton County, Minnesota -- specifically, entirely
13 within Minden Township -- and is comprised of three
14 main components. First is the solar project. The
15 solar project will generate 100 megawatts of clean,
16 renewable energy using photovoltaic panels. The
17 battery project is a 100-megawatt, four-hour energy
18 storage system, which will store 400 megawatts of
19 renewable energy generated by the solar project, as
20 well as being able to charge and discharge to the
21 grid.

22 The solar and the battery project will
23 share a one-half mile, 115-kilovolt transmission
24 line, which will connect to these projects through
25 the grid at the Great River Energy Benton County

1 substation. This transmission line is located
2 entirely on private easements, so in the area
3 directly north of that Elk River brand-new
4 substation is where our transmission line will go.
5 And, again, we'll show that on our map.

6 Here's an indication of the overall very
7 high-level project timeline. So we submitted our
8 application last September. It was deemed complete
9 in December of last year. Our next major milestone
10 is to complete procuring our major equipment, which
11 we expect to be done by the end of this year. And
12 then we'll receive a decision from the Public
13 Utilities Commission on our permit application in
14 December of this year. Pending a favorable
15 decision, we intend to start construction in the
16 spring of 2026, with an in-service date at the end
17 of the year of 2027.

18 So this project will bring a wide range
19 of benefits to Benton County. So it represents
20 approximately a \$300 million investment in the
21 county for the construction of these projects.
22 During construction, we expect it to be 150 to 300
23 temporary construction jobs, and that's from 2026
24 through 2027. And as I mentioned before, once the
25 project is operational, we expect to have two to

1 three full-time operational jobs for operations and
2 maintenance of the facility.

3 During the temporary construction period,
4 we see -- we expect to see increased economic
5 activity for local businesses, hotels, dining,
6 grocery stores, et cetera, during the construction
7 period but also through the life of the project,
8 again, stemming from those full-time jobs that this
9 project will be creating.

10 There's also ongoing compensation for
11 participating landowners. But there are benefits
12 that go beyond that as well; specifically, an annual
13 reduction tax that the Benton Solar project will pay
14 to Benton County and to Minden Township. We
15 anticipate about \$200,000 a year will be paid to
16 Benton County, and \$50,000 per year paid to Minden
17 Township. This is based on the Minnesota Department
18 of Revenue solar production tax, and they dictate
19 that breakdown of 80 percent going to the county and
20 20 percent going to the township.

21 The battery storage also provides grid
22 stability and reliability, so we'll touch on that a
23 little bit more when we cover the battery storage
24 portion of the project. And then last, but not
25 least, this project will continue to make charitable

1 contributions to local organizations and continue to
2 be a part of the community -- something that we
3 pride ourselves in at NextEra Energy Resources --
4 something we intend to do for the entire life of the
5 project.

6 So here's a site overview of the solar
7 project and the storage project on the left and the
8 transmission line route on the right. Those are
9 also blown up on the tripods there in the corner of
10 the room.

11 So the solar project -- the project
12 boundary, in yellow, comes to approximately 950
13 acres, 600 of which will be used for solar panels,
14 access roads, and the collector substation. On the
15 right, this shows our transmission line going from
16 the project's collector substation to Great River
17 Energy Benton County substation. For reference,
18 this substation is just north of the Territory Golf
19 Club.

20 Next slide, please.

21 So for a little more information on the
22 solar project, as I mentioned before, it will
23 generate 100 megawatts of clean, renewable energy,
24 utilizing approximately 600 acres. The solar
25 project will utilize a tracking rack system, meaning

1 that the angle of the solar panels will change
2 throughout the day as the angle of the sun changes
3 to maximize the efficiency of the system.

4 The entire project will be connected via
5 buried 34.5-kilovolt collection lines. These lines
6 will carry power from each individual -- or each
7 part of the array to the project's collector
8 substation. The collector substation will then step
9 up the power from 34.5 kilovolts to 115 kilovolts,
10 to then go through the transmission line.

11 As I said, the transmission line will be
12 a half-mile, 115-kilovolt line, taking power -- the
13 power from the solar and storage project to the grid
14 via Benton County -- via Great River Energy Benton
15 County substation.

16 The project will use single-circuit
17 monopole transmission structures and the structure
18 heights may vary, based on the terrain. However, we
19 anticipate between 55 and 95 feet for the
20 transmission poles.

21 Next slide, please.

22 The battery energy storage system, it
23 will -- it helps optimize the way the power grid
24 delivers electricity to customers, so it provides
25 benefits to the project and to the electrical grid

1 as a whole. So primarily, for the grid, it comes
2 through grid stabilization, smoothing out
3 fluctuations in frequency and voltage, reducing
4 energy losses and waste.

5 And then, for the solar project, it
6 extends the hours that a renewable energy project
7 can put energy on to the grid. So when the sun
8 isn't shining, energy that was stored by the battery
9 storage project can be discharged on to the grid.

10 The safety of our employees, neighbors,
11 and the public is our highest priority when we are
12 designing, constructing, and operating these
13 systems, and this begins with preparation from day
14 one. So it starts with our rigorous industry
15 testing and -- and safety system design prior to
16 even procuring the equipment and installing it. And
17 then, throughout the life of the project, ongoing
18 temperature management, detection, and monitoring,
19 24/7, from our remote operations control center. So
20 we have constant indications of the battery energy
21 storage system and the solar project to ensure it is
22 operating correctly and safely.

23 And last, but not least, engaging first
24 responders. So Benton Solar is committed to working
25 with first responders through Benton County,

1 specifically, the emergency management department,
2 to develop an emergency action plan to clearly
3 delineate responsibilities for the safe -- the
4 continued safe operations of the facility.

5 This slide is focusing on our stakeholder
6 outreach. So our stakeholder outreach has been
7 focused on advising, educating, and consulting with
8 landowners and the community. This is a list of
9 some of the agencies and organizations that we have
10 worked with throughout the course of developing this
11 project. A lot of them are Benton County
12 organizations, state organizations, as well as a
13 community open house prior to submitting our
14 application last year.

15 If the project is approved by the
16 Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, as I
17 mentioned before, we anticipate starting
18 construction in the spring of 2026. So this will
19 start with our civil and site preparation, so
20 essentially grading work throughout the site. This
21 will be followed by our foundation installation, so
22 concrete for the substation and transmission line
23 structures, followed by structural and equipment
24 installation, so our solar panels, inverters, and
25 battery energy storage containers. And then cable

1 and electrical installation, being the buried
2 34.5-kilovolt collection lines that I mentioned
3 earlier.

4 Lastly, we'll go through our testing and
5 commissioning activities -- this will be in the
6 second half of 2027 -- to test and commission the
7 project, and be fully operational by the end of the
8 year 2027. All disturbed areas during construction
9 will be restored and reclaimed, as well as any
10 roads. All roads will be restored to their
11 preconstruction condition. So we are working with
12 Benton County on a road use agreement that will --
13 it clearly delineates the responsibilities of Benton
14 Solar to repair any roads that are impacted by
15 construction activities.

16 I'd like to introduce our panel of
17 subject matter experts that we have today to help
18 answer any and all questions that you may have. If
19 you all don't mind just standing up as I go down the
20 list.

21 So Cody MacDonald is our expert on all
22 environmental matters. Anthony Bass is our
23 engineering construction project manager. And then
24 Ashley Nunez is our battery safety fire expert.

25 And I want to thank you all for your time

1 tonight. We look forward to continuing to work with
2 you all to develop this project, which again will
3 deliver a suite of benefits to the local community.
4 Again, this is a significant capital investment in
5 Benton County and Minden Township of over \$300
6 million, along with that ongoing solar production
7 tax that we will pay; \$200,000 to Benton County,
8 \$50,000 annually to Minden Township. It also
9 provides environmental benefits of clean energy and
10 helping the state drive towards their carbon-free
11 goals by 2040. And we intend to continue this
12 community engagement and support.

13 So looking forward, again, to continuing
14 to work with you all through the development,
15 construction, and operations of this project. Thank
16 you.

17 JUDGE MCKENZIE: We are now going to move
18 into the public comment and question portion of the
19 hearing. I would encourage anyone who would like to
20 make a comment, to do so. We do have -- and I will
21 have them put up before we leave today -- the
22 ability to receive written comments. If that is --
23 if it is more comfortable for you to make a written
24 comment, that's absolutely fine. All comments are
25 given the same weight, regardless of what format

1 they are made in. So if you are -- would like to
2 speak tonight, that's wonderful, and I would
3 encourage you to do that. I know not everyone is
4 comfortable speaking in front of a group, so if you
5 are not, please do, then, make your voice heard via
6 a written comment.

7 It is very important that if you would
8 like to make a comment, that you do so by 4:30 on
9 September the 12th. So if you plan on mailing in a
10 comment, please leave time for it to come in the
11 mail. If you're going to do it via e-mail, do it
12 before 4:30 on the 12th so that they can be
13 considered as part of the record in the case.

14 What I'm going to do, first, is to call
15 individuals up from the list. I'd just ask that you
16 come up to the podium. I'm going to have the
17 microphone up there for you. Just state and spell
18 your name so that the court reporter has it correct
19 in the record. If I butcher your name, I just
20 apologize in advance. I'll do the best I can with
21 the handwriting and my attempts at correct
22 pronunciation. So, again, if I butcher your name,
23 very unintentional.

24 After those individuals who have signed
25 up are given a chance to speak, I will see if

1 there's anyone else who would like to make a comment
2 or ask a question.

3 I do ask that you keep your comments and
4 questions short and succinct, limited to five
5 minutes. If you have something else you would like
6 to say, I will come back to you after everyone has
7 had the opportunity to speak. I just want to make
8 sure that everyone gets a chance. And then if there
9 are additional thoughts, we can come back to you.

10 So with that, I will just ask that the
11 microphone get put on the table, and I will use my
12 best judge voice to call you up.

13 So our first commenter is Junior
14 Geislinger.

15 MR. JUNIOR GEISLINGER: Thank you, Judge
16 McKenzie.

17 My name is Junior Geislinger,
18 J-u-n-i-o-r, Geislinger, G-e-i-s-l-i-n-g-e-r.

19 Good evening. I am a representative with
20 the International Union of Operating Engineers-Local
21 49 in this area. Our office is right down in
22 St. Augusta here. We are composed of over 15,000
23 members across Minnesota, North Dakota, and South
24 Dakota, more than 1,400 of which live within Benton
25 or one of its adjacent counties.

1 Many of our members make their living by
2 building and maintaining Minnesota's energy
3 infrastructure, which include a wide range of
4 generation sources, including coal, natural gas,
5 nuclear, wind farms, and solar projects such as the
6 one we are discussing tonight.

7 As we transition our electric system into
8 more renewable generation assets like wind and
9 solar, it is important that we maintain the high job
10 standards the energy industry has traditionally had
11 for construction workers, both in compensation and
12 the quality of work performed.

13 In Minnesota, we are fortunate to have
14 cultivated an extensive, diverse, and highly skilled
15 energy infrastructure construction workforce over
16 the past few decades. Utilizing these tradesmen and
17 tradeswomen to build a project like this one ensures
18 that the project socioeconomic benefits remain in
19 the community and offers the additional benefit that
20 they are building a project that will provide clean
21 and safe power to their community.

22 We appreciate Benton Solar's commitment
23 to use local labor on this project, which is
24 estimated to create between 150 to 300 construction
25 jobs, like it was mentioned prior. We also

1 appreciate their commitment to use American-made
2 solar products. We ask the Commission to grant the
3 site permits and route permit for the proposed
4 project. We strongly support this project and look
5 forward to continued involvement in this docket.

6 Thank you for the opportunity to speak
7 tonight.

8 JUDGE MCKENZIE: Thank you for your
9 participation.

10 The next commenter I have is Kurt
11 Adelman.

12 MR. KURT ADELMAN: Hi. I'm Kurt Adelman.
13 It's K-u-r-t A-d-e-l-m-a-n. And I'm a landowner
14 that has property that's in this project.

15 Jake Bauerly wasn't able to attend this
16 evening, so he asked me, on his behalf, to read a
17 letter that he has put together. So Jake's name is
18 J-a-k-e, and his last name is Bauerly,
19 B-a-u-e-r-l-y.

20 So the subject is this docket for the
21 solar project, the battery storage, and the
22 transmission lines. It says: Mr. Hicks, I am
23 writing to express my strong support for the Benton
24 Solar Energy Center Project proposed by NextEra
25 Energy Resources. I am a landowner participating in

1 this initiative and I have a vested interest in its
2 success. But this success is certainly not just a
3 personal gain, but for the broader economic
4 well-being of Benton County. As a lifelong
5 resident, business owner, former county
6 commissioner, and board member of the Benton County
7 Partnership, this project is well-aligned with the
8 kind of growth we need in our community.

9 This is more than just a renewable energy
10 project. It's a major economic investment, over 300
11 million, that will directly and indirectly benefit
12 our region through job creation, construction
13 spending, and long-term lease payments to Benton
14 County. And in Benton County, which is ranked the
15 sixth poorest in Minnesota, this kind of investment
16 is not only welcome, it's essential.

17 The benefits don't stop there. The
18 project will bring a significant, sustained boost to
19 our local tax base. The land is currently taxed as
20 agricultural and will be reclassified, shifting more
21 of the property tax burden to the individual -- from
22 the individual residents, expanding the funding for
23 schools, public safety, and infrastructure. In
24 addition, the solar facility will pay a production
25 tax to the county and the townships. This revenues

1 that -- will have additional demand for local
2 services.

3 For landowners like me, it's a chance to
4 keep our farms viable for the next generation. And
5 for the broader community, it's a rare opportunity
6 to partner with a project that strengthens our
7 economy, supports our local energy, and pays real
8 dividends for the decades to come. Thank you for
9 considering my perspective.

10 And just personally on my behalf, I would
11 support what Jake is -- is saying here also. I am
12 also a long-time Benton County resident and I have a
13 couple parcels of -- of land that are in this
14 project also, and it -- it really helps my farming
15 operations. I personally farm several hundred acres
16 in Benton County, and this really helps spread the
17 risk out for my farming operation, so I'd like to
18 express that also. Thanks.

19 JUDGE MCKENZIE: I don't have anyone else
20 on the list, but if there is anyone who did not sign
21 up who would like to speak, please come up to the
22 podium; or if you have a question, please come up to
23 the podium.

24 I'm not seeing anyone. Last call.

25 MR. JEFFREY REED: Hi. My name is

1 Jeffrey Reed, J-e-f-f-r-e-y, Reed, R-e-e-d. I live
2 at 7634 R Mitchel Court Northeast, Sauk Rapids,
3 Minnesota 56379.

4 I'm one of the homeowners in a
5 development adjacent to this property, and there's
6 several of my neighbors here tonight. And I think,
7 given our countless conversations and text messages
8 and correspondence, we do not support this project.
9 This certainly impacts us in -- in our dream of
10 living out in the country. We have many homes
11 adjacent to this project that are millions and
12 millions of dollars of real estate. To us, that's a
13 big deal. This is, I think, where many of us plan
14 to live our entire lives.

15 So we recognize that there is so much
16 significant capital -- or excuse me -- private
17 and -- private and public interest in this project.
18 We recognize that we've -- that it's probably
19 coming. And so what we're -- what I want to just
20 express today is that there -- there are others that
21 are impacted by this project, and I wanted to speak
22 up so that you know that there is some opposition to
23 it and -- and how it impacts us in two ways:
24 Visually in -- in kind of the feel of the country,
25 the beauty of the landscape being essentially ruined

1 or changed. And secondly, we -- we believe, beyond
2 a reasonable doubt, it's affecting all of our
3 property values.

4 If you were to be looking at homes in a
5 rural community and the neighborhood is right across
6 the street from a huge, huge solar project, that
7 would impact your decision to buy that property or
8 not. And I think we can all agree upon that.

9 So what we're hoping for is that, in
10 terms of -- from our government officials, what me
11 and my family want is for there to be some good --
12 good screening in place, which consists of a berm or
13 an installation of a hill, to shield the solar
14 panels from our neighborhood and -- with vegetation
15 planted on top of the hills, whether that's native
16 tall grasses and -- and even trees. So we're really
17 hoping that that is something that our government
18 backs us up on.

19 And I think, if you do a simple Google
20 search of NextEra, they are a \$150 billion company,
21 according to AI, so they can afford it and they
22 can -- they can do that for us. It would make a
23 great deal of difference to us in terms of reducing
24 the damage to our property's value and our
25 satisfaction with where we live. Thank you.

1 MR. ADAM GRACIA: Yeah, I know there
2 really wasn't a question there.

3 Jeffrey, thank you for your comment. I
4 just want to say I'm looking forward to ongoing
5 conversations with you and -- and everyone in that
6 vicinity to make sure we have a visual screening
7 plan in place that addresses your concerns.

8 JUDGE MCKENZIE: Are there any other
9 questions or -- I see a hand. Please come up and
10 state your name for the court reporter.

11 MR. BRENT CRONQUIST: Thank you for this
12 time. My name is Brent Cronquist, B-r-e-n-t
13 C-r-o-n-q-u-i-s-t. I reside at 7135 Duelm Road.

14 I am sharing a lot of sentiments with
15 Mr. Reed. There are several of us neighbors that
16 live in that area for much of the same reasons --
17 it's very quiet, it's peaceful -- and we feel that's
18 going to change.

19 So some of my concerns are safety.
20 Short-term is going to be property. Another one is
21 going to be traffic. I've already had vehicles pull
22 out in front of me, part of this project, so it is a
23 concern. Many of the residents that live in that
24 area have children. It's a quiet area. We've
25 already had semis driving through there. And I know

1 they're related to this project, because I've seen
2 them dropping off equipment and whatnot.

3 Long-term is also going to be, you know,
4 what impacts it's going to have on the environment,
5 any concerns or issues. Also, the property values.
6 And I again share sentiments.

7 Can there be ways to block the view of
8 this? I've seen it done before. You know, I
9 wrote -- I feel that's how it's going to end up,
10 need to be done. I understand that deep pockets
11 usually get their way here, whether it's with your
12 company, which I respect. Also, the landowners, we
13 know that they're making a lot of -- there's going
14 to be a lot of income off of this. Yes, it's going
15 to be a nice benefit to the county. I get that.
16 But there's a few of us that live close that will be
17 affected.

18 So I just wanted to express my opinion
19 and those of other neighbors. Thank you for your
20 time.

21 JUDGE MCKENZIE: Did I see another hand?
22 Please come up.

23 MS. JACLYN LITFIN: Well, good evening.
24 And thank you, Your Honor, for the opportunity to
25 speak and provide public comment. My name is Jaclyn

1 Litfin; Jaclyn, J-a-c-l-y-n, and Litfin,
2 L-i-t-f-i-n.

3 I'm here also as a resident of R Mitchel
4 Court. That is the -- it's a cul de sac directly
5 across from a portion of the project.

6 And I kind of stand before you tonight as
7 someone who has been actively engaged at every
8 opportunity possible. We've provided public input
9 throughout this entire process, from the
10 environmental screening and working with Mr. Hicks.
11 Our neighborhood and surrounding -- down the street,
12 we had over 27 signatures on our opposition to the
13 project within that specific area.

14 We have sent letters. We have attended
15 meetings. We've gone to our planning commission
16 meetings. We've gone to board meetings. We've gone
17 to our township. And we have had support from our
18 county board and from our planning commission
19 locally, and from our local township, in advocating
20 for us as a community as the neighbors of the
21 project.

22 Throughout the process, we've really had
23 a consistent ask, and it's really just been that
24 NextEra come in and be a good neighbor to us in our
25 established community. You know, this is really

1 being established in an area that we've built and
2 nurtured over the years together as a neighborhood.
3 And the character and the quality of life for us is
4 really important.

5 And, you know, we heard somebody speak
6 earlier about a landowner who has got land in the
7 project. And we were sold land from the particular
8 landowner, not being disclosed that this project was
9 coming into the area. And having known that, we
10 probably would have gone a totally different
11 direction, if that would have been disclosed to us.

12 We really have expressed clear
13 opposition, really, just to portions of the project.
14 We understand -- you know, we're not opposed to
15 progress and we're not opposed to, you know,
16 advancements. But at the same time, you know, we've
17 been living in this area, and -- and we want to be
18 respectful, but at the same time advocate for our
19 well-being, too.

20 You know, I just really encourage you,
21 Judge McKenzie, to just kind of consider the local
22 input and our feedback.

23 And I saw one of the questions in here
24 was, you know, should the Commission issue a site
25 permit for the proposed project. And then one of

1 the other ones, if granted, what conditions should
2 be included.

3 I didn't see that before I prepared my
4 notes for tonight, but I would just say, you know,
5 if the project cannot be not put within that 1,000
6 feet of where most of our homes are, could
7 requirements be put in place that require a much
8 stronger screening plan than what we've seen.

9 Local community solar projects, the
10 expectations are even far more higher, and those are
11 just small projects. So for a big company like
12 this, we would just ask for that. And, really, if
13 you all could just seriously weigh, for those of us
14 who live right next door to the project, the burden
15 that that puts on us.

16 At a recent planning commission that we
17 were at, NextEra presented a screening plan that
18 included four-foot trees around the project. You
19 know, as a neighborhood, we responded very clearly
20 that that wasn't sufficient. We shared our concerns
21 regarding the soil conditions, the slow growth rates
22 of the trees that we've even planted ten -- or
23 eight, nine -- I don't know how many years ago --
24 that are maybe now reaching this high, challenging
25 successes with just them maintaining life and -- and

1 being able to make it. It's just a struggle with
2 the soil that we have.

3 Following that, we did have another
4 meeting with NextEra, where a four-foot berm was
5 proposed within the areas across from our home to
6 the project. It's a step in the right direction,
7 and I thank you for that -- for that piece of it.
8 But let's be honest, four feet is not going to cover
9 the mass scale of this agricultural area and the
10 industrial solar fields that are in that ag area
11 that we moved into.

12 So we're really asking for a much higher
13 berm, something that will, very much so, cover the
14 eight-foot chain link fence with the barb wire
15 that's going to be on top of it that is now going to
16 be our view from our -- all of our windows.

17 The other piece of it is, if you haven't
18 already taken a look at the solar project in
19 Sherburne County that was placed behind a berm, I
20 encourage you all to please go take a look at that
21 project and -- just so you can see for yourself how
22 effective the strategy can be when it's done at the
23 appropriate height. So if that could be a
24 requirement in the permit, that they really match
25 the agricultural area, the character of our

1 community.

2 And I'll make it quick, because I know
3 you said about five minutes and I don't know how
4 long I have yet. But the only other piece of it,
5 really, is, is that, you know, we have covenants in
6 our neighborhood. We maintain our properties.
7 We -- you know, certain invasive trees we can't even
8 have. I mean, there are a lot of requirements that
9 we do as a neighborhood. And we just hope NextEra
10 will come in and match that for the property values,
11 as we mentioned.

12 I see this as a win, win, win. It's not
13 going to impact the farmer who is selling their land
14 into the solar company. It's not going to impact
15 the union, you know, by adding a berm. It's only
16 going to help us have less negative impacts at the
17 local level. So please, you know, we're going to
18 live beside this for 30 years or more. And for some
19 of our youngest neighbors, that's going to bring
20 them into their -- into their mid-30s, and that's
21 all they're going to know about the area that they
22 live in. So just please take us -- take in our
23 considerations.

24 And a lasting thought. You know, we
25 haven't just come and complained. We've had many,

1 many interactions -- and I'm sure Adam can vouch for
2 that. We've been engaged. We remain consistent.
3 We've been respectful. We've really just advocated
4 while also bringing forward a lot of solutions. I
5 mean, we've volunteered trees and dirt and, like,
6 neighborhood kids to even water the trees. I mean,
7 there's so many solutions we're hoping that we can
8 work together on, and really asking that -- that
9 this becomes a requirement and not just an ask. I
10 think that's what we're looking for tonight.

11 JUDGE MCKENZIE: Is there a specific
12 height of the berm that you have asked for?

13 MS. JACLYN LITFIN: I would say eight
14 foot. That's what we kind of left with, because the
15 one in Sherburne County -- I don't know how to
16 measure that; I'm not an engineer or whatever -- but
17 if you drive out there and you see that, you
18 wouldn't even know it's there. And -- you know, and
19 that's the part that we're hoping for.

20 And if the chain link fence and the
21 panels that full tilt are at least that -- if we
22 could at least stand at ground level and take
23 pictures in our yard and look out and not see that
24 industrial field in what's now an agricultural area,
25 that would be our preferred ask.

1 Yeah. So eight feet, you know, and --
2 and that would provide year-round screening, and
3 that's what we're hoping for. We know trees are
4 going to take decades to screen that project. And,
5 honestly, for me -- I mean, the rest of my adult
6 life will be looking at that wall of trees grow. It
7 won't be until I'm old that those trees will be high
8 enough and big enough to block the screen.

9 So, yeah, hoping for a berm. We know, in
10 Minnesota, grasses are going to die off, you know,
11 in early fall and not emerge again until late
12 spring, so we might get three months of coverage if
13 we go that route. So at least the berm would be
14 more year-round for us, so that's what we're asking
15 for.

16 So thank you. I'm sorry I ran a little
17 long here, but that's all I have. Thanks.

18 MR. ADAM GRACIA: Thank you for your
19 comment, Jaclyn.

20 Again, like I just mentioned to Jeffrey,
21 I'm looking forward to continuing to work with you.
22 As I mentioned before, a visual screening plan has
23 been in our process to this point. We are
24 evaluating other heights and -- and vegetation that
25 we can put on top of that berm that we talked about

1 earlier this week. So, again, I just want to
2 reiterate, I'm looking forward to continuing to work
3 with you and find a solution that works for all
4 parties.

5 JUDGE MCKENZIE: Is there anyone else who
6 has a question or would like to make a comment?

7 MR. PATRICK HERBST: My name is Patrick
8 Herbst, P-a-t-r-i-c-k H-e-r-b-s-t. I'm a supervisor
9 in St. George Township, which is right next to --
10 where R Mitchel Court is actually in. And we
11 support R Mitchel Court to try to get that berm put
12 in so they don't have to look out the window and see
13 the solar panels or the fence. They're going to
14 have to look at that fence the whole time. So we're
15 trying to -- trying to help them out. But it's up
16 to the Public Utilities Commission to do that. So
17 thank you very much.

18 MS. PAM BENOIT: Pam Benoit, P-a-m
19 B-e-n-o-i-t, Benton County Commissioner.

20 We also sent a letter to Public
21 Utilities, supporting those people in that addition,
22 trying to get them some help, because, at the county
23 level or the township level, this is not something
24 that we have any say over. It went right through
25 the state. So we did send a letter of support, in

1 support of that berm, also, so if that could be put
2 in there.

3 I do have a couple questions. Is this
4 state or federal funded money going towards this --
5 towards this project?

6 And then the other thing is, is what do
7 you currently have in plan for fire prevention out
8 there? Because we've seen several solar fires in
9 the Minden Township area. They are not necessarily
10 NextEra ones, but we've seen several fires that
11 they've had to get a fire department out there.

12 And then the information on the screen
13 that says Call For Emergency is not current, not up
14 to date. They can't get ahold of anybody, or
15 anybody to cut power.

16 MR. ADAM GRACIA: So for the first
17 question on federal or state grants, we are not
18 utilizing federal or state grants to build this
19 project. The tax -- the production tax that I
20 mentioned is what Benton Solar is paying to the
21 county and the township after the project is in
22 operation.

23 As for your question on fire safety, we
24 actually -- we met with the fire chief for the city
25 of Sauk Rapids -- first, last year, and then again

1 earlier this week as well -- to discuss that very
2 issue.

3 And I will let my engineering team talk
4 specifically about the fire prevention that you
5 mentioned. However, I will say, on the contact
6 information, that was one thing that we directly
7 addressed with him as well.

8 I think one key difference between the
9 sites that you're referencing and our site is, we
10 will have a full-time site manager living and
11 working in the community, and that -- their number
12 will be listed there, as well as a 24/7 continuously
13 manned remote operations control center. There will
14 be two numbers listed, and one of them will always
15 be manned and the other one will lead directly to
16 our local supervisors, so -- we spoke at length with
17 the fire chief about that earlier today and
18 explained that.

19 So in terms of your question on specific,
20 you know, fire safety measures, I'll turn that over
21 to -- Tony, can you start?

22 MR. ANTHONY BASS: Sure. Can you guys
23 hear me all right?

24 So, yeah, the fire safety with solar is
25 obviously top of the mind. One of the -- or the

1 primary combustible material within the site is the
2 vegetation, so we strategically choose seed mixes
3 that don't grow very high so that they can be kept
4 away from the electrical cables and things like
5 that, so...

6 In addition to that, we will perform
7 regular mowing so we keep everything nice and low to
8 the ground so that the fire is mitigated that way.
9 And then, additionally, we put in a fire ring around
10 the perimeter of the site so that if there is a fire
11 event, it will be limited to that portion of the
12 array. And then, as Adam mentioned, we have a
13 remote operations center. We can shut the site down
14 remotely if we need to. So communication and
15 contacting our operations team should never be an
16 issue.

17 (Court reporter off-record comment.)

18 MR. ANTHONY BASS: Anthony Bass,
19 A-n-t-h-o-n-y B-a-s-s.

20 MS. ASHLEY NUNEZ: Ashley Nunez. I'm the
21 battery fire safety expert.

22 So as Adam and Tony both said, we engaged
23 with the first responders here locally early on in
24 the project. We've talked to them previously up to
25 this point and today. We will engage with them as

1 the project becomes closer. We work together to
2 build an emergency response plan so the fire
3 fighters, first responders, when they have an
4 emergency, will know what to do.

5 As we talked about, the batteries can be
6 disconnected remotely. We do not want first
7 responders engaging; there's no need for them to
8 approach the battery containers. And we allow the
9 batteries to self-terminate. The first responders
10 will be there to maintain the scene and ensure that
11 the fire doesn't propagate off the property.

12 JUDGE MCKENZIE: Are there any other
13 comments or questions? I see one.

14 MS. JACLYN LITFIN: Me again.

15 So we had received a message from one of
16 the neighbors today, so -- unfortunately, today is,
17 like, ninth-grade open house and elementary school
18 meet-the-teacher night, so there's quite a few
19 neighbors that have messaged.

20 So one of our neighbors had asked if we
21 could ask this question. Do I need to give their
22 name? Would you like that?

23 MR. ADAM GRACIA: Sure.

24 MS. JACLYN LITFIN: It's from Leigh
25 Rusin, L-e-i-g-h R-u-s-i-n. I don't know her exact

1 house number, but lives on -- is it 75th Avenue?

2 Okay. I see some of the other neighbors saying yes.

3 So the question that she had was about
4 the eight-foot fence with the barb wire on the top
5 that -- the question about that was, there was -- I
6 think she was doing some looking into it. And it
7 said, on page 11 for the Minnesota DNR, they don't
8 recommend barb wire because it can injure the
9 animals but, rather, a high tensile -- if I'm saying
10 that right -- smooth wire.

11 And so, has there been research into
12 that? Because I think currently proposed is an
13 eight-foot fence with barb wire, like two feet of
14 barb wire, or whatever is in there.

15 MR. CODY MACDONALD: Cody MacDonald,
16 C-o-d-y M-a-c-d-o-n-a-l-d.

17 So the project is actually designed in
18 exactly -- or consistent with those DNR
19 recommendations and guidelines that you just
20 referenced. The only areas that we're using barb
21 wire are around substations and -- Anthony, you know
22 more -- that's just a safety code reason. But
23 there's no barb wire used along the remainder of the
24 fencing.

25 MS. JACLYN LITFIN: Where's the

1 substation again?

2 MR. CODY MACDONALD: It is west of the --
3 Elk River near the -- near the existing substation.

4 JUDGE MCKENZIE: Do you want to point it
5 out on the map?

6 MR. ADAM GRACIA: If we could also pull
7 up the map on the PowerPoint and show that as well.

8 But our substation is in the southwest
9 portion of the project. So the pink box in the
10 southwest portion of our project is the substation,
11 so just north of Territory Golf Club, north of Great
12 River Energy's existing substation.

13 MS. JACLYN LITFIN: And one more
14 question. I wasn't going to ask this question,
15 but -- I don't know if you want me to take that mic
16 or not, but...

17 I wasn't going to ask the question, but I
18 think I'm going to, because I feel like now is my
19 opportunity. I know that there has not been a lot
20 of research or data, especially on the evolving
21 technology that you're using, the new technology,
22 over 30 years of use, that -- that looks at, kind
23 of, the groundwater. And I think I've asked the
24 question before just about -- I think I asked the
25 question before just about water runoff and any

1 potential for aluminum, lead, heavy metals, trace
2 elements, all those kinds of things, getting into
3 the groundwater, with the neighborhood and the
4 houses being so close to the project.

5 I'm sure you have -- you know, you have
6 information on that, and I -- I hear you, that you
7 say that it's safe, and -- and I want to believe
8 that, too. But just in the case it's not, I'm
9 wondering if there can be some prudence in doing the
10 right thing and just -- you know, we were asking for
11 maybe some baseline well water testing, and then
12 maybe annual testing thereafter, or even every three
13 years. You know, just something that's doing some
14 ongoing screening, because we really don't know.
15 And we really -- while we wait to find out over 30
16 years and hope that there's no harm, we don't know
17 for sure, so just wondering if NextEra could
18 consider that and just be prudent in -- and
19 preventative in protecting the health of those of us
20 that live right next door and with our wells. So
21 that's what I wanted to ask. I know there's no data
22 long-term, so -- either way.

23 MR. CODY MACDONALD: Thank you for the
24 comment.

25 The panels that we procure are

1 nonhazardous and pose no health or safety risks to
2 the public or the environment. They are made out of
3 solid materials that are readily recovered and
4 recycled at the end of their useful life. To
5 provide more assurances -- and I'd have to look at
6 this acronym, but all of the panels that we procure
7 go under a toxicity characteristic leach -- leaching
8 procedure test. This is an EPA test. If you pass
9 that test, again, the panels are deemed
10 nonhazardous. We are not allowed to procure panels
11 and implements that don't pass that test.

12 MS. JACLYN LITFIN: Can I respond to that
13 with another follow-up? Is that okay?

14 JUDGE MCKENZIE: Briefly.

15 MS. JACLYN LITFIN: Okay. The only thing
16 I was going to say is, EPA levels are -- so with EPA
17 levels, there are levels that are a safe exposure
18 amount, which we know at that level are safe for a
19 short time. But what I'm looking at is long-term
20 exposure. So even though they might be lower than
21 what the EPA currently recommends, I'm talking about
22 year after year after year. And we have children
23 and babies in development. That's my concern, is
24 that long-term, repetitive exposure to what might be
25 safe levels at a short exposure rate and short-term

1 exposures, but not long-term.

2 So thank you for your -- I know -- it's
3 okay. You don't have to respond. I'm just -- I'm
4 still asking for the testing.

5 MR. CODY MACDONALD: Can I respond, Your
6 Honor?

7 JUDGE MCKENZIE: You can.

8 MR. CODY MACDONALD: So the Great Plains
9 Institute does have an ongoing study right now, the
10 Minnesota Department of Health specifically looking
11 at solar sheds and water quality. I can provide
12 that resource for you. I also looked; I didn't find
13 a ton of literature on it. But I did stumble across
14 that, so I can point you to that.

15 But they're actually finding improvements
16 to water quality from solar installations,
17 specifically a utility scale where you are
18 transitioning the land out of cropland that's often
19 applied with pesticides and fertilizers on an annual
20 basis and transitioning to -- back to a native plant
21 community that no longer receives those fertilizer
22 and pesticide applications.

23 And I can, again, point you to that
24 resource.

25 JUDGE MCKENZIE: Thank you very much.

1 Are there any other questions, comments?
2 Last call. Okay. I'm not seeing anyone.
3 Could you put up the slide for written
4 comment information, please.

5 I do want to genuinely thank each and
6 every one of you for being here today. I want to
7 thank the individuals who spoke. I do very much
8 appreciate all of your participation, your comments,
9 your concerns, your questions.

10 The information on how to make written
11 comments is up on the slide. Again, the deadline
12 for comments is September the 12th, at 4:30. So I
13 do encourage you, if you go home tonight and you
14 think of something that you wish you would have
15 said, please do submit a written comment, and I will
16 read it.

17 So with that, we are adjourned. I hope
18 everyone has a good evening and a safe trip home.
19 Thank you.

20 (Public hearing adjourned at 7:00 p.m.)

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25

1 STATE OF MINNESOTA)

SS

2 COUNTY OF STEARNS)

3 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

4
5
6
7 I, Ruth E. Holdvogt, do hereby
8 certify that the above and foregoing transcript,
9 consisting of the preceding 52 pages, is a
10 correct transcript of my stenographic notes, and is
11 a full, true and complete transcript of the
12 proceedings to the best of my ability.

13
14 Dated September 8, 2025.

15
16
17
18
19 /s/ Ruth E. Holdvogt
20 RUTH E. HOLDVOGT
21 Registered Professional Reporter
22
23
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