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UNITED ASSOCIATION

of Journeymen and Apprentices of the
Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry of
the United States and Canada

DAVID BARNETT
Special Representative
1300 N. Derek St.
Haskell, OK 74436
Phone: (918) 482-3847
Fax: (918) 482-3857
Cell: (918) 625-7145
e-mail: daveb@uanet.org

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April 28, 2015

Mr. Daniel P. Wolf
Executive Secretary
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
121 7th Place East, Suite 350
St. Paul, MN 55101-2147

**Re: In the Matter of the Application of North Dakota Pipeline Company LLC for a
Certificate of Need for the Sandpiper Pipeline Project in Minnesota
MPUC Docket No. PL-6668/CN-13-473
OAH Docket No. 8-2500-31260**

To the Members of the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission:

On behalf of the United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry of the United States and Canada, AFL-CIO (“United Association”), I write to endorse the thoughtful and thorough Findings of Fact, Summary of Public Testimony, Conclusions of Law, and Recommendation (“Report”) issued by Administrative Law Judge Eric Lipman in the Sandpiper Pipeline Project Certificate of Need proceeding, without exception. Judge Lipman’s application of the Certificate of Need criteria required by Minnesota Administrative Rule 7853.0130 is well-reasoned and articulated and includes an impressive review of the entire record, including the evidence presented by the parties and public comments and feedback submitted by both supporters and opponents of the Project.

On November 19, 2014, I submitted direct testimony in support of the Project on behalf of the United Association – a party to the Certificate of Need proceeding – highlighting the economic benefits of the Project and the jobs that it would create not only for the skilled members of the United Association, but also for many other Minnesotans.¹ In my direct testimony, I also discussed the experience and expertise that United Association members would bring to the construction of the Project, ensuring that it is built according to the highest standards with minimal chance of harmful effects.² United Association members also submitted hundreds of public comments and delivered remarks at public hearings in support of the Project moving forward expeditiously.

¹ See Ex. 220, at 5:30 - 7:7.

² See Ex. 220, at 3:19 - 4:34, 10:12 - 11:29.

William P. Hite
General President

Mark McManus
General Secretary-Treasurer

Michael A. Pleasant
Assistant General President



Judge Lipman's Findings of Fact recognize both of these points – noting the host of socioeconomic benefits that the Project would provide, including job creation,³ and finding that North Dakota Pipeline Company (“NDPC”) is “capable of constructing the proposed Project in a safe, efficient, and reliable manner.”⁴ The Report also catalogs the thousands of public comments on the record and the specific points raised therein, including the economic benefits of the Project through job creation and new tax revenue.⁵ It is these economic benefits that the United Association – including its nearly 8,000 members who reside in Minnesota – are eager to see come to fruition as soon as possible.

Judge Lipman's Conclusions of Law specifically find that “demand exists for both crude oil from the Bakken region and transportation services from North Dakota...”⁶ and that “no party or person demonstrated by the preponderance of the evidence that there is a more reasonable and prudent alternative to the Project.”⁷ Judge Lipman's Conclusions of Law further observe that “[a]ll of the proposed [System] Alternatives would have later in-service dates than the proposed project,”⁸ presumably contributing to his finding that none of the System Alternatives are more reasonable or prudent or worthy of further consideration.⁹ These Conclusions are all well-supported by the evidence on the record.

In short, the United Association agrees with Judge Lipman's Report that the Project is needed and more prudent than any suggested System Alternative. As such, the Certificate of Need should be granted and the Commission should not allow further consideration of any System Alternative.

For the reasons described above, the United Association supports Judge Lipman's Report without exception and urges the Commission to adopt its Findings and Conclusions.

Sincerely,



David L. Barnett
Special Representative
Pipeline and Gas Distribution
United Association of Journeymen and
Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe
Fitting Industry of the United States and
Canada, AFL-CIO

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³ ALJ Report at 44, Finding of Fact ¶¶ 280-89.

⁴ ALJ Report at 40, Finding of Fact ¶ 253.

⁵ ALJ Report at 94, Finding of Fact ¶¶ 618-25.

⁶ ALJ Report p. 98, Conclusion of Law ¶ 1(a).

⁷ ALJ Report p. 98, Conclusion of Law ¶ 2.

⁸ ALJ Report, p. 99, Conclusion of Law ¶ 6.

⁹ ALJ Report, p. 99, Conclusion of Law ¶¶ 5, 8.

First Name	Last Name	Email	Company Name	Address	Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
Julia	Anderson	Julia.Anderson@ag.state.mn.us	Office of the Attorney General-DOC	1800 BRM Tower 445 Minnesota St St. Paul, MN 551012134	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC
David	Barnett	daveb@uanet.org	United Association of Journeymen & Apprentices	1300 Derek Street Haskell, OK 74436	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC
Frank	Bibeau	frankbibeau@gmail.com	Honor the Earth	51124 County Road 118 Deer River, Minnesota 56636	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC
Ellen	Boardman	eboardman@odonoghuelaw.com	O'Donoghue & O'Donoghue LLP	4748 Wisconsin Ave NW Washington, DC 20016	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC
Christina	Brusven	cbrusven@fredlaw.com	Fredrikson Byron	200 S 6th St Ste 4000 Minneapolis, MN 554021425	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC
Leigh	Currie	lcurrie@mncenter.org	Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy	26 E. Exchange St., Suite 206 St. Paul, Minnesota 55101	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC
John E.	Drawz	jdrawz@fredlaw.com	Fredrikson & Byron, P.A.	Suite 4000 200 South Sixth Street Minneapolis, MN 554021425	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC
Peter	Erlinder	proferlinder@gmail.com	International Humanitarian Law Institute	325 Cedar St. Suite 308 St. Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC
Sharon	Ferguson	sharon.ferguson@state.mn.us	Department of Commerce	85 7th Place E Ste 500 Saint Paul, MN 551012198	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC
John R.	Gasele	kgasele@fryberger.com	Fryberger Buchanan Smith & Frederick PA	700 Lonsdale Building 302 West Superior Street Duluth, MN 55802	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC

First Name	Last Name	Email	Company Name	Address	Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
Benjamin	Gerber	bgerber@mnchamber.com	Minnesota Chamber of Commerce	400 Robert Street North Suite 1500 St. Paul, Minnesota 55101	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC
Andrew	Gibbons	andrew.gibbons@stinsonleonard.com	Stinson Leonard Street	150 S Fifth St Ste 2300 Minneapolis, MN 54002	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC
Jon	Godfread	Jon@ndchamber.com	Greater North Dakota Chamber	2000 Schafer Street Bismarck, ND 58501	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC
Helene	Herauf	Laney@ndchamber.com	Greater North Dakota Chamber	PO Box 2639 Bismarck, ND 58502	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC
Kathryn	Hoffman	khoffman@mncenter.org	Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy	26 E. Exchange St Ste 206 St. Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC
Linda	Jensen	linda.s.jensen@ag.state.mn.us	Office of the Attorney General-DOC	1800 BRM Tower 445 Minnesota Street St. Paul, MN 551012134	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC
Eric	Lipman	eric.lipman@state.mn.us	Office of Administrative Hearings	PO Box 64620 St. Paul, MN 551640620	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC
Peter	Madsen	peter.madsen@ag.state.mn.us	Office of the Attorney General-DOC	Bremer Tower, Suite 1800 445 Minnesota Street St. Paul, Minnesota 55101	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC
Patrick	Mahlberg	pmahlberg@fredlaw.com	Fredrikson & Byron, P.A.	200 S 6th St Ste 4000 Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC
Brian	Meloy	brian.meloy@stinsonleonard.com	Stinson, Leonard, Street LLP	150 S 5th St Ste 2300 Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC

First Name	Last Name	Email	Company Name	Address	Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
Joseph	Plumer	joep@whiteearth.com	White Earth Band of Ojibwe	P.O. Box 418 White Earth, Minnesota 56591	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC
Kevin	Pranis	kpranis@liunagroc.com	Laborers' District Council of MN and ND	81 E Little Canada Road St. Paul, Minnesota 55117	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC
Neil	Roesler	nroesler@vogellaw.com	Vogel Law Firm	218 NP Avenue PO Box 1389 Fargo, ND 58107	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC
Janet	Shaddix Elling	jshaddix@janetshaddix.com	Shaddix And Associates	Ste 122 9100 W Bloomington Frwy Bloomington, MN 55431	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC
Eileen	Shore	eileenshore@outlook.com	Eileen Shore	3137 42nd Ave So Minneapolis, MN 55406	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC
Richard	Smith	grizrs615@gmail.com	Friends of the Headwaters	P.O. Box 583 Park Rapids, MN 56470	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC
Byron E.	Starns	byron.starns@leonard.com	Leonard Street and Deinard	150 South 5th Street Suite 2300 Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC
Randy V.	Thompson	rthompson@nmtlaw.com	Nolan, Thompson & Leighton	5001 American Blvd W Ste 595 Bloomington, MN 55437	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC
Gerald	Von Korff	jvonkorff@rinkenoonan.com	Rinke Noonan	PO Box 1497 St. Cloud, MN 56302	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC
Kevin	Walli	kwalli@fryberger.com	Fryberger, Buchanan, Smith & Frederick	380 St. Peter St Ste 710 St. Paul, MN 55102	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC

First Name	Last Name	Email	Company Name	Address	Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
James	Watts	james.watts@enbridge.com	Enbridge Pipelines (North Dakota) LLC	26 E Superior St Ste 309 Duluth, MN 55802	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC
Daniel P	Wolf	dan.wolf@state.mn.us	Public Utilities Commission	121 7th Place East Suite 350 St. Paul, MN 551012147	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_13-473_Official Service List - CC