

March 27, 2020

Public Service Commission  
State Capitol  
600 East Boulevard Ave., Suite 408  
Bismarck, North Dakota 58505

Re: Northern Divide Wind Project

Dear Public Service Commissioners:

You will soon consider approving the Northern Divide wind project, that was approved by our County Commission and our Planning and Zoning Commission. I hope you will approve it.

I've lived my whole life in Burke County, have worked here for many years, and now have the privilege to serve as the Burke County Auditor. I do want to make it clear that I am writing to you NOT as the County Auditor, but as a concerned citizen of the County and using my own personal resources. I've attended every hearing on this project at the county level and your hearing last year in Bowbells, when it was first considered. Burke County has changed a lot in my life-time. At one time we had about 5-6,000 people. Today we have about 2,000. Farms get bigger and small towns get smaller unless there is something to keep people there (like an oil-boom). Burke County doesn't have much oil activity from the Bakken. (Rarely do we have a drilling rig up here). Rural communities will continue to shrink in population—making rural life less attractive unless we have some economic activity. Without economic activity grocery stores close, clothing stores move, and the hardware store gives up to Menards.

The windfarm won't stop this trend by itself. It's been going on for years in our state. But the windfarm will help. We should try every economic opportunity we can to help rural North Dakota thrive. Northern Divide will bring a few hundred jobs for most of a year to build it, and will have 8-10 permanent, good paying jobs when it's done. These jobs will be filled by young people who will come back to or move into our area.

I know the windfarm has been revised for the concerns that were expressed last year. It sounds like Nextera has gone the extra mile to make this work for everyone and addressed most of the wildlife concerns. I hope you will approve it. It will be good for this region and for our county.

Sincerely,

*Jeannie Jensen*  
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Post-hearing Comments  
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