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May 6th, 2021

North Dakota Public Service Commission
600 E Boulevard Ave, Dept 408
Bismarck, ND 58505-0480

Dear Commissioners Christmann and Kroshus,

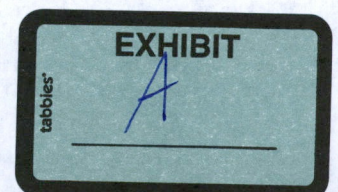
I am an owner of Basin Electric Cooperative through Mountrail Williams REC, my power provider. My annual power consumption exceeds \$20,000 and I fully understand the need for more transmission lines. Just a few weeks ago, I was a panelist for the Midwest Governor's Association's MID GRID 2035 Workshop discussing transmission lines. I have granted dozens of easements to energy, power, utility, telecommunication, and water entities across land I own. In fact, I signed a rural water easement last week for two miles of new water line.

I own property in Section 8 of Township 155-93 that will be impacted by three quarters of a mile of the proposed Basin Electric Power Cooperative transmission line. I object to the proposed location of this line as the landowner and agricultural operator of the property impacted by this proposed transmission line.

I first learned of this line about two years ago when the landman for Basin Electric approached me with a map of the line. I didn't own land near the route shown to me at that time. Later, I was approached with another map showing the line crossing one quarter of a mile from the west end of Section 8. At that time, I suggested that the line should follow a road, section line, or an existing transmission line. In October of 2020, I received a call from Basin requesting my township's approval for road crossings and was emailed a map identified as a preliminary route. This was the first time that I saw the current planned location for this line on my property. When I followed up with Basin Electric to tell them it

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Exhibit A - Public Testimony

Charlie Sorenson



appeared the transmission line was proposed to cross my property in section 8 one quarter of a mile from the east edge of the property, they acknowledged this change and asked if I would sign an easement that they had not yet sent me. I told them I was not interested in signing an easement for the placement of the transmission line to be installed at the currently proposed location, but they proceeded to go forward with a permit application anyway. In each contact I had with Basin Electric about this line, the route proposed was presented as preliminary. Attached is an email from Shauna Laber dated October 1, 2020, identifying the map being sent to me as "preliminary."

I was given no opportunity to voice my concerns about this line during the planning of its location. This contradicts the direct testimony pre-submitted by representatives of Basin Electric. In his testimony, Mr. Solie stated, "Landowners' preferences for the proposed route location strongly influenced the selection of the Project route." (Page 5 starting at Line 3). Ms. Laber's testimony is: "Where feasible, many reroutes took place along this line to minimize landowner concerns." (Page 5 starting at Line 26). It appears to me Basin Electric modified the route to accommodate my neighbors and refused to work with me because they had to link the accommodations made for my neighbors. This results in the proposed placement of the transmission line in a location that severely impacts my ability to farm my land in Section 8.

I object to this line location for multiple reasons. This proposed line is entirely a green field line on my property. It cuts through a 440 acre tract perpendicular to the direction of most field operations. My equipment is large, with widths of up to 132 feet, and would have difficulty navigating around poles in the middle of my field. Avoiding poles in the middle of my field will require unnecessary, and environmentally damaging, overapplications of fertilizers, pesticides, and other inputs. I have a history of applying fungicides to small grains and pulse crops on this field with an airplane. Having a transmission line in the middle of the field will result in a large swath of my field where aerial application will not be possible. The lack of fungicide application in a large swath of the field will result in an annual loss of yield to the entire field of up to 25%. The poles in the middle of my fields will create islands of non-crop which become islands for noxious weed production and harmful insect habitat. The islands that cannot be sprayed due to potential equipment contact with the pole risk becoming the start of chemically resistant weed species. Such islands of non-crop will have a negative impact on the crop growing in the rest of the field. These problems could be minimized if Basin Electric is willing to work with me on the placement of the proposed transmission line.

This field has provided valuable information for on farm fertilizer, variety, and insect mitigation trials for 15 years but would not be able to with a transmission line cutting across it. Eliminating this option has a negative impact on my entire farming operation. This runs contrary to the placement criteria stated by Mr. Nasset in his direct testimony where he claimed placement was determined in such a manner as to accommodate existing land uses and minimize disturbances to cultivated areas. I have two employees that have their private pilots license and we have discussed installing a grass runway along the edge of this field. Basin Electric's proposed line placement does not account for this future proposed use, despite Mr. Nasset's testimony that such uses were considered in designing the proposed route.

Much of my farm labor begins as unskilled workers. Adding any obstacles, such as poles, to my fields creates unnecessary risks and liabilities for the workers, myself, and for the poles themselves. In the last 20 years I've spent hundreds of thousands of dollars and a great deal of time removing hundreds of obstacles like rockpiles and various debris from fields to make my farming operation more efficient,

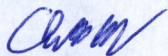
environmentally safe, and profitable. I have even paid my local electrical provider to reroute existing distribution power lines out and around my fields in a never-ending quest to keep my farm profitable, efficient and safe. I have negotiated dozens of easements on my land with energy and utility companies in a manner that minimizes impacts on me and my farming operation while still allowing the installation of the lines, a process Basin has failed to even begin with me and my property. Basin Electric's proposed route completely takes away from my previous efforts to eliminate obstacles.

As the easement is currently proposed, federal FIFRA laws and the North Dakota Pesticide Act would prevent my lawful application of any crop protection products to the field near and around the poles due to Basin Electric's employees or contractors being allowed to enter the property with no warning to inspect or maintain the transmission line. If Basin Electric decides to inspect the poles during the growing season, which they have every right to do under the proposed easement, I could be charged with a felony, face jail time, and be fined thousands of dollars for violating the reentry restrictions found on the label of the herbicides and pesticides I routinely use in my field.

There are multiple better options for crossing my property with a transmission line. This line could be placed underground, thus eliminating all of my concerns. It could also be placed along any pre established corridor, like roads or section lines. It could be placed on my property along the west of 93rd Ave, the east of 95th Ave, or on either side of 94th Ave. All of these options would nearly eliminate numerous environmental concerns and would provide a much more manageable route for my farming operation while meeting Basin's need to cross my land.

Please wait to approve this transmission line until a proper route can be established, my landowner concerns are addressed, and all easements are signed.

Sincerely,



Charlie Sorenson

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