

OTP/MDU 345kV JETx Transmission Line, Case No. PU-25-236

January 12 Formal Hearing ND PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

1 STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA Public Service Commission Otter Tail Power Company/ Montana-Dakota Utilities Co. 345kV JETx Transmission Line Siting Application Case No. PU-25-236 TRANSCRIPT OF PUBLIC HEARING January 12, 2026 Ellendale, North Dakota APPEARANCES Commissioners Randy Christmann, Sheri Haugen-Hoffart, and Jill Kringstad CASEY FUREY and ERIK EDISON, Crowley Fleck, PLLP, on behalf of Applicants Otter Tail Power Company and Montana-Dakota Utilities Co. ZACHARY PELHAM, Special Assistant Attorney General Advisory Counsel to the Public Service Commission	1 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: All right. Good 2 morning. My clock shows it's 10:00 so we are going to 3 get started. 4 Today is January 12, 2026. This is the time, 5 date and -- the time and date set by the Notice of 6 Filing and Notice of Public Hearing issued by the North 7 Dakota Public Service Commission on November 19, 2025, 8 for a hearing in Case No. PU-25-236. This hearing is 9 being held today at the American Legion Post in 10 Ellendale, North Dakota. 11 My name is Hope Hogan and I have been designated 12 as the hearing officer for today's hearing. I will 13 ensure that today's hearing runs in an orderly fashion, 14 but I am not a decisionmaker in this case. 15 As we begin today, I would ask that everybody 16 please check your cell phones to make sure they're 17 either turned off or silent so that we don't have cell 18 phone interruptions throughout our hearing today. 19 There is an attendance sheet on the back table, 20 and I'm not sure if it's been passed around, but the 21 Commission would ask that everybody please sign the 22 attendance sheet so that there's a record of everyone 23 that attended today's hearing. 24 This is the first of three public hearings 25 scheduled regarding the joint applications of Otter Tail PAGE 3
2 C O N T E N T S APPLICANTS' WITNESS JASON WEIERS Direct Examination by MS. FUREY 13 Cross Examination by MR. PELHAM 30 Questions by Commission 30 ----- PUBLIC TESTIMONY DEBRA WALD 40 MYRON MEYERS 60 LEON WESTERHAUSEN 65 RICHARD LONG 70 TIM LEPPERT 84 JASON HILDENBRAND 97 WAYNE WALD 103 SANDRA RUPP 108 -----	1 Power Company and Montana-Dakota Utility Company for a 2 certificate of corridor compatibility and route permit 3 concerning approximately 92 miles of double circuit 4 capable 345kV electric transmission facilities and 5 associated facilities in Dickey, LaMoure, and Stutsman 6 County, North Dakota. 7 This hearing has been scheduled to focus 8 primarily on the portions of the project in Dickey 9 County. We will have additional public hearings on 10 Wednesday, January 14th, in Edgeley and on Friday, 11 January 16th, in Jamestown, North Dakota. 12 The Notice of Filing and Notice of Public 13 Hearing specified the following issues to be considered 14 in this proceeding: 15 Number one. Will construction, operation, and 16 maintenance of the facility at the proposed location 17 produce minimal adverse effects on the environment and 18 on -- and upon the welfare of the citizens in North 19 Dakota? 20 Number two. Is the proposed facility compatible 21 with environmental preservation and the efficient use of 22 resources? 23 And number three. Will construction, 24 operations, and maintenance of the facility at the 25 proposed location minimize adverse human and PAGE 4

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1 environmental impact while ensuring continuing system 2 reliability and integrity and ensuring that energy needs 3 are met and fulfilled in an orderly and timely fashion? 4 The Commission held a technical hearing on this 5 application last week, on January 8th and 9th, at which 6 time the Applicants thoroughly went through the proposed 7 project. We had several exhibits that were admitted 8 into the record, and I would note that those are 9 available on the docket, which is available through the 10 Commission's website. 11 Today we will start our hearing with a short 12 summary of the project and any county-specific 13 information from the Applicants and then we will move to 14 public testimony. 15 I encourage you to take this opportunity to tell 16 the commissioners anything you think the Commission 17 should know about this matter. I assure you that what 18 you have to say is important to the Commission and will 19 be considered by the commissioners. 20 By a show of hands, just so I can get an idea of 21 how many people plan to testify today, if you could 22 raise your hand. 23 All right. Thank you. I appreciate that. 24 The goal today is to have a safe and orderly 25 hearing in which many voices are given the opportunity PAGE 5	1 is Zachary Pelham. I'm a special assistant attorney 2 general on behalf of the Public Service Commission. 3 Here with me at counsel table is the Public Utilities 4 director, Victor Schock. Victor Schock may have 5 questions during today, and we ask that he be permitted 6 to ask them. Thank you. 7 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: All right. Thank you. 8 We'll now take opening comments from the 9 commissioners, and we'll start with Commissioner 10 Kringstad. 11 COMMISSIONER KRINGSTAD: Good morning. Thank 12 you for having us here today. For me personally, I'm 13 really glad to be back here because this is actually 14 where my dad was born and raised and so I have really 15 good memories of Ellendale, coming to visit my 16 grandparents over on First Street near the Hoven Funeral 17 Chapel and, you know, walking to Zion Lutheran Church 18 and hearing -- my grandma was the longtime choir 19 director there so sitting there, listening to the choir 20 sing. And then my grandpa would take us to the pool 21 where I would try to drum up the courage to jump off the 22 high dive. I don't know if -- it's been several years. 23 I don't know if you guys still have the high dive here, 24 but really good memories. So very good to be back. 25 As Judge Hogan explained, if you've been to one PAGE 7
1 to be heard. When we get to the public testimony 2 portion of our hearing, I will have some more 3 information on providing testimony at that time. 4 I'm now going to ask the parties to state their 5 appearance for the record. 6 And I'll start with you, Ms. Furey, if you want 7 to introduce yourself, your co-counsel, and the 8 witnesses you intend to call today. 9 MS. FUREY: Good morning, Your Honor, 10 Commissioners. Casey Furey with Crowley Fleck, local 11 counsel for the joint Applicants today, Otter Tail Power 12 Company and Montana-Dakota Utilities Company. With me 13 at counsel table today is my co-counsel, Erik Edison 14 with Crowley Fleck. 15 This morning we intend to call one witness, 16 Jason Weiers with Otter Tail. And our intent for 17 Jason's testimony for today is to provide really a 18 summation of the information that was provided at the 19 technical hearing last week. So just a general project 20 overview. 21 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: All right. Thank you. 22 Mr. Pelham, would you please state your 23 appearance for the record and introduce Commission staff 24 that's appearing with you today? 25 MR. PELHAM: Thank you. Good morning. My name PAGE 6	1 of our hearings before, today may look a little 2 different but hopefully that is in a good way. Like we 3 said, usually how this process works is we hear from the 4 company first, listen to a lot of testimony, ask a lot 5 of questions, but that can take sometimes most of the 6 day before we move into the public input portion of our 7 hearing. 8 And, as Judge Hogan said, we did hear the 9 technical hearing last week in Bismarck; heard from 10 three different witnesses, asked a lot of questions. We 11 had about a seven-hour hearing last week. And so you 12 guys don't have to sit through that before we hear from 13 you. But if that is something you are interested in, it 14 will be available on our website for you to listen to 15 all of that or part of that if you so desire. If it's 16 not -- it will be up there, if it's not up there 17 already. 18 So today we really are looking to hear from you. 19 That is truly why we're here. I always say that it 20 doesn't matter how many papers -- you know, how big the 21 application is and how many papers we read through or 22 how many questions we ask. There's always something 23 that comes out during these public input sessions that I 24 wouldn't be aware of or the company wouldn't be aware of 25 had it not been brought forward here. So your input PAGE 8

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1 here really does help us make the best decision 2 possible. 3 And I also really want to encourage everybody, 4 if you have questions about this project, look around 5 the room. There's a lot of representatives from the 6 company here that can hopefully answer them for you 7 either during a break or before or after the hearing. 8 So I'm always hopeful that something like this provides 9 the opportunity just to open some really effective 10 dialogue. 11 So thanks again for being here. I look forward 12 to hearing from you. 13 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Thank you. 14 Commissioner Christmann. 15 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: To add to that just a 16 little bit, I guess I didn't look what time we wrapped 17 up on Friday, but Commissioner Kringstad mentioned seven 18 hours. Sounds about right to me. Also, on our website, 19 if you're looking for more information than what you're 20 going to get with this new way of doing this with having 21 that technical hearing in advance so we don't hold you 22 so long before the public comment starts, like those two 23 binders there, all of that information is available on 24 our website too. So there's a lot of information that's 25 out and available to the public. PAGE 9	1 Good morning, everyone. It's good to see so 2 many people here. A lot of things have already been 3 said. I'm not going to repeat it. When Judge Hogan 4 asked how many people were going to testify, there 5 wasn't a lot of hands compared to the number in this 6 room. So please feel free that you can change your mind 7 and get up and testify. Thank you. 8 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Thank you. 9 Ms. Fuery, did you have any other preliminary 10 matters you wanted to address? 11 MS. FUREY: No, Your Honor, just wanted to note 12 for the record that there are several maps in the room. 13 Those are the same maps that were on display during the 14 technical hearings and represent Exhibits 14, 15, 16, 15 and 17. So just wanted to note that they don't contain 16 any new or additional information. 17 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: All right. Thank you. 18 Mr. Pelham, any preliminary matters you want to 19 address? 20 MR. PELHAM: No, Your Honor. Thank you. 21 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: All right. Ms. Furey, 22 you can call your witness then. 23 MS. FUREY: Our first witness today is Jason 24 Weiers. 25 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Morning, Mr. Weiers. PAGE 11
1 One thing I just want to emphasize. It was 2 mentioned about making the best decision possible, which 3 is what we seek to do, but the definition of possible is 4 something that people need to understand. Because these 5 siting decisions for a utility commission like us, it's 6 not just a matter of whether we think something is a 7 good idea or a bad idea in balance. We have specific 8 criteria, those -- the bases for the decision that Judge 9 Hogan read off, that's an abbreviation of pages and 10 pages of law, and we need to make our decision based on 11 the criteria and the guidance that the Legislature has 12 provided. 13 And so I will tell you, in 13 years on the 14 Commission, there have been things that I wanted to 15 happen that just didn't meet the standards of the law so 16 they couldn't happen despite the fact that I wanted them 17 to, and there are things that I've thought really 18 weren't that great of ideas, but they met the 19 requirements of the law so they needed to be approved. 20 And so we don't have just a wide-open parameter 21 of how we base our decision. We base our decision based 22 on the laws of North Dakota. 23 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Thank you. 24 Commissioner Haugen-Hoffart. 25 COMMISSIONER HAUGEN-HOFFART: Thank you. PAGE 10	1 I'll have you start by stating your full name for the 2 record and spelling your last name. 3 JASON WEIERS: My name is Jason Weiers. Last 4 name is spelled W-E-I-E-R-S. 5 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Mr. Weiers, before you 6 testify this morning, I'm required by law to advise you 7 on the penalties for perjury in the state of North 8 Dakota. 9 Perjury is a class C felony punishable by a 10 maximum fine of \$10,000, a maximum five years' 11 imprisonment, or both. 12 Do you understand what perjury is? 13 JASON WEIERS: Yes, I do. 14 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Being advised of the 15 potential penalties for perjury, do you promise to tell 16 the truth in this case today? 17 JASON WEIERS: Yes, I do. 18 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: All right. Thank you. 19 Go ahead, Ms. Fuery. 20 MS. FUREY: Thank you, Your Honor. 21 <u>JASON WEIERS.</u> 22 being first duly sworn, was examined and testified as 23 follows: 24 25 PAGE 12

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1 DIRECT EXAMINATION 2 BY MS. FUREY: 3 Q. Can you please state your name for the record 4 again, by whom you are employed, and your business 5 address? 6 A. My name is Jason Weiers. I am employed by Otter 7 Tail Power Company. My business address is 215 South 8 Cascade Street in Fergus Falls, Minnesota. 9 Q. And what is your position with Otter Tail? 10 A. In November of 2025, I transitioned to the role 11 of manager of Transmission Policy and Contracts. I 12 previously held the position of manager of Transmission 13 Project Development at Otter Tail. 14 Over the past three years, as manager of 15 Transmission Project Development, I was responsible to 16 oversee the permitting of the transmission projects at 17 local, state, and federal levels. In addition, I was, 18 and continue to be, responsible for developing 19 agreements that outline the business arrangements for 20 ownership, development, construction, operations, and 21 maintenance activities related to co-owned transmission 22 projects. 23 Q. Can you please describe your educational and 24 professional experience? 25 A. I graduated from North Dakota State University PAGE 13	1 Exhibit 1 in this proceeding? 2 A. Yes, I am familiar with the application's 3 contents. 4 Q. And does the application accurately describe the 5 project? 6 A. Yes, along with the supplemental and supporting 7 information that has been filed with the Commission and 8 the Applicants' testimony provided to the Commission 9 during the January 8th and 9th technical hearings. 10 Q. Have any changes occurred to the project since 11 the application was filed with the Commission? 12 A. Yes. A proposed route adjustment was made to a 13 segment of the project that crosses the James River to 14 accommodate a landowner request. Documentation 15 reflecting this alignment shift has been filed with the 16 Commission and was discussed at the January 8th 17 technical hearing. 18 Q. What is the purpose of your testimony today? 19 A. The purpose of my testimony today is to provide 20 a high-level overview of the project including its 21 development history, route selection, construction, 22 landowner and agency coordination, and benefits. My 23 oral testimony, along with the oral testimony of the 24 other two Applicants' witnesses, was previously provided 25 to the Commission at the prior technical hearings. PAGE 15
1 with a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering. 2 I've been employed by Otter Tail since 2000, resulting 3 in over 25 years of experience in the electric utility 4 industry, with more than 22 of those years in electric 5 transmission planning. I am also a registered 6 professional engineer in the state of Minnesota. A copy 7 of my resumé was submitted with my prefiled testimony in 8 this proceeding. 9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can you speak up a little 10 bit louder, please? 11 THE WITNESS: Sure. 12 Q. (BY MS. FUREY) What is your role with respect 13 to the Jamestown to Ellendale 345kV transmission line 14 or, as we will be referring to it throughout this 15 proceeding, the project? 16 A. I am responsible for leading the permitting 17 efforts for the project. Prior to my new role in 18 November of 2025, I was involved in coordinating the 19 various efforts related to routing, engineering, 20 procurement, and construction. I will continue to be 21 responsible for leading the permitting efforts for the 22 project as part of my current role transition at Otter 23 Tail. 24 Q. And are you familiar with the contents of the 25 project's siting application which has been marked as PAGE 14	1 Q. What entities will construct, own, and operate 2 the project? 3 A. Otter Tail and Montana-Dakota will jointly 4 construct, own, and operate the project. Otter Tail is 5 leading the development and construction of the project 6 on behalf of the Applicants. 7 Q. And can you please describe the project? 8 A. The project will consist of approximately 92 9 miles of new double circuit 345-kilovolt transmission 10 line from Otter Tail's existing Jamestown 345kV 11 substation in Stutsman County to Montana-Dakota's 12 existing Ellendale 345kV substation in Dickey County. 13 The transmission line will have one optical ground wire, 14 one overhead ground wire, and is planned to initially be 15 constructed with one circuit. 16 As I discussed during the project's technical 17 hearings, there are four discrete areas representing 18 approximately 3 percent of the overall project route 19 that will be double-circuited during initial 20 construction to minimize impacts. 21 Q. What is the purpose of connecting Otter Tail's 22 existing Jamestown substation to Montana-Dakota's 23 existing Ellendale substation with the -- with a new 24 345kV transmission line? 25 A. The connection has shown to be the most PAGE 16

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1 effective to address reliability issues on the heavily 2 constrained 230kV system in eastern North Dakota, 3 eastern South Dakota, and west central Minnesota that 4 plays a key role in transporting energy into, out of, 5 and through a large geographic area. The project 6 creates a 345kV transmission loop by tying two existing 7 345kV systems together to enable more reliable and 8 economic energy delivery throughout North Dakota and the 9 Midwest. 10 Q. Are there any other facility improvements 11 associated with the project? 12 A. Yes. The project includes a substation 13 expansion at Otter Tail's Jamestown 345kV substation, 14 which will be constructed, owned, and operated by Otter 15 Tail. Additionally, the project also includes necessary 16 upgrades within Montana-Dakota's existing Ellendale 17 345kV substation, which will be constructed, owned, and 18 operated by Montana-Dakota. The work at both 19 substations is included within the scope of the project. 20 Q. Where is the project located? 21 A. The project is located in southeast North Dakota 22 from approximately 5.4 miles north of the city of 23 Jamestown to approximately 1.3 miles west of the city of 24 Ellendale in Stutsman, LaMoure, and Dickey Counties. 25 Q. Can you please describe how the project's PAGE 17	1 in Appendix C of the application. 2 Additional information about coordination with 3 state and federal agencies and how environmental and 4 cultural considerations were considered by the 5 Applicants in the development of the project's route and 6 corridor is contained in the application, the prefiled 7 testimony of Kevin Scheidecker, a principal 8 environmental service -- services specialist with Otter 9 Tail, and was also presented to the Commission during 10 the oral testimony of Kevin Scheidecker during the 11 technical hearings held on January 8th and 9th. 12 Q. Can you describe the project's schedule? 13 A. Following the Commission's decision on the 14 application, the Applicants currently plan to start 15 construction of the project in the third quarter of 16 2026. All necessary land rights and easements will be 17 secured for properties within the project corridor prior 18 to construction beginning on them. The Applicants plan 19 to complete construction and energize the line in the 20 fourth quarter of 2028 with final reclamation activities 21 to occur in 2029. 22 Q. Can you please describe the benefits of the 23 project to Otter Tail and Montana-Dakota's customers? 24 A. In addition to regional benefits, the project 25 offers significant reliability benefits to the local PAGE 19
1 location was generally selected? 2 A. The Applicant selected the project's location 3 based on a multifaceted approach that considered 4 federal, state, and local requirements, comments 5 received at public open-house meetings, landowner 6 preferences, and analysis of environmental and cultural 7 resource data from desktop and field surveys. 8 Using this information, in combination with the 9 Commission siting criteria, the Applicants started with 10 a broad initial study area that encompassed both 11 endpoint substations that was first refined into 12 proposed corridors, then proposed routes, and finally 13 the currently proposed project route. 14 Through the route development process, the 15 Applicants hosted two rounds of public open-house 16 meetings in the summer and fall of 2023 to gather input 17 from landowners. Following the public open-house 18 meetings, the Applicants' right-of-way team has 19 continued to coordinate with individual landowners 20 crossed by the route through telephone calls, text 21 messaging, in-person meetings, virtual meetings, email, 22 and mail. 23 Through this exhaustive route development 24 process in collaboration with landowners, the Applicants 25 have considered numerous route alternatives as outlined PAGE 18	1 area by introducing a new 345kV transmission source into 2 the 345kV substations at Jamestown and Ellendale. 3 With respect to Otter Tail's customers, the 4 project will result in a new transmission line to serve 5 the Jamestown area that will offer additional redundancy 6 and increased system capability. 7 Otter Tail experienced an extreme weather event 8 in the form of an ice storm in December 2023 that 9 resulted in the only two 345kV transmission lines 10 serving the Jamestown area both being out of service 11 simultaneously. At that time, the capability of the 12 transmission system was significantly reduced and 13 resulted in large-load customers in the Jamestown area 14 being forced to operate at reduced levels in order to 15 maintain grid reliability. Otter Tail experienced the 16 same exact situation twice during the summer of 2025 due 17 to two separate severe weather events that made it 18 challenging to maintain reliable service to the 19 Jamestown area. 20 So, as I stated previously, the project will 21 provide a new transmission line to serve the Jamestown 22 area that will offer additional redundancy and increased 23 system capability to avoid these types of similar 24 reliability challenges in the future. 25 As Robert Frank, director of Electric PAGE 20

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1 Transmission Engineering at Montana-Dakota, testified to 2 at the Commission's technical hearings, the project 3 benefits Montana-Dakota's electric customers by creating 4 a looped 345kV system. More specifically, the project 5 allows generation facilities from the west of Ellendale 6 to curtail less for contingencies with a second 345kV 7 transmission outlet at Ellendale. Furthermore, power 8 quality, specifically voltage stability, is also 9 improved for the area by interconnecting the two 345kV 10 transmission systems together. 11 Q. Did the Applicants consider whether it would be 12 reasonable or feasible to install the transmission line 13 underground? 14 A. Yes, but the Applicants concluded that 15 underground installation is not feasible for this 16 project. While it is common for lower-voltage 17 distribution lines to be buried, it is rare for 18 high-voltage transmission lines to be constructed 19 underground. Undergrounding high-voltage transmission 20 is generally not used in the industry except in 21 circumstances and locations where physical circumstances 22 allow for no other option. 23 Underground transmission is substantially more 24 costly to construct than overhead transmission. Based 25 on the Applicants' estimates, the initial construction PAGE 21	1 the foundation hole. 2 Structure components will be trucked to 3 structure work pads for assembly and will then be 4 erected using a crane to place them on the concrete 5 foundation where they will be bolted on the embedded 6 anchor bolts. After structures are erected, the 7 conductor will be strung between the structures using 8 bucket trucks or helicopters. 9 Following the completion of construction, 10 disturbed areas will be reclaimed, fertilized, and 11 reseeded employing appropriate erosion control measures. 12 Q. What steps will be taken to reclaim lands within 13 the project's corridor? 14 A. As I just mentioned, following construction, 15 disturbed areas will be reclaimed, fertilized, and 16 reseeded. Reseeding will be done according to Natural 17 Resources Conservation Service, or NRCS, recommendations 18 unless otherwise specified by a specific landowner and 19 approved by the Commission. Post-construction and 20 reclamation activities will also include employing 21 appropriate erosion controls and reseeded or otherwise 22 stabilizing areas disturbed by construction. Unless 23 otherwise agreed to by the landowner, all construction 24 materials and debris will also be removed from the site 25 once construction is complete. PAGE 23
1 cost for undergrounding high-voltage transmission lines 2 are estimated to be between five to 10 times higher than 3 overhead transmission lines. 4 In addition, underground transmission results in 5 greater environmental and land use impacts than overhead 6 transmission during construction due to the need to 7 excavate significantly more earth along the route to 8 install the underground cable, making it more difficult 9 to comply with the Commission siting criteria. 10 Therefore, no portion of the project is proposed 11 to be constructed as underground transmission. 12 Additional information confirming why it is not 13 feasible to construct this project underground can be 14 found in Section 2.3.1 of the application. 15 Q. What construction activities are associated with 16 the project? 17 A. Initial survey work and geotechnical soil 18 investigations will occur prior to construction. 19 Additionally, the corridor will be cleared of vegetation 20 as necessary to safely construct, operate, and maintain 21 the project. 22 Once the survey work and tree clearing is 23 complete, structure foundation holes will be drilled and 24 filled with concrete. Concrete will be delivered to the 25 structure location by ready-mix trucks and poured into PAGE 22	1 Q. Is winter construction anticipated for this 2 project? 3 A. Yes, winter construction will be utilized, which 4 will minimize potential landowner impacts and impacts to 5 wetlands, sensitive soils, and vegetation. The 6 Applicants have provided additional information about 7 procedures that they will be following when performing 8 construction activities during the winter season in a 9 winter construction plan and in the technical hearings 10 that were held on January 8th and 9th. The Applicants 11 will be supplementing their winter construction plan to 12 address questions from the Commission during these 13 technical hearings. 14 Q. What maintenance activities are anticipated 15 after the project is operational? 16 A. Once the project is operational, access to the 17 project's right-of-way is required periodically to 18 perform inspections, conduct maintenance, and, if 19 required, repair damaged equipment. Regular maintenance 20 and inspections will be performed during the life of the 21 project in compliance with applicable reliability 22 standards established by the North American Electric 23 Reliability Corporation, or NERC. If concerns or 24 problems are found during inspections, repairs will be 25 performed. When necessary, relevant landowners and PAGE 24

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1 agencies will be notified prior to repairs being 2 performed. 3 Q. Can you please describe the steps Applicants 4 will take to minimize impacts to roads and to traffic? 5 A. The project is not expected to cause significant 6 or prolonged impacts on traffic in any one area because 7 project construction will be spread out across the 8 approximately 92-mile corridor and construction work 9 will be completed over two years. Temporary impacts due 10 to the presence of project vehicle traffic are expected 11 to be minimal because slow-moving construction vehicles 12 are expected to be similar to the movement of farm 13 equipment during planting and harvest seasons and are 14 not likely to cause significant delays. 15 Temporary impacts to roads are anticipated to be 16 minimal during construction when conductor is being 17 strung over existing roads. Where temporary road 18 closures or rolling roadblocks are required, the 19 disruptions to traffic are anticipated to be short in 20 duration. To the extent that temporary road closures 21 are necessary, the Applicants will coordinate with the 22 applicable road authorities and take steps to minimize 23 disruptions and ensure alternative roads are available 24 and clearly marked. 25 Q. Please describe the steps Applicants will take PAGE 25	1 construction and reclamation activities. 2 Furthermore, members of the Applicants' 3 right-of-way team will continue to communicate with 4 landowners crossed by the route during construction and 5 reclamation activities so that landowners are informed 6 as to when activities are planned on their individual 7 parcels. 8 The Applicants are committed to communicate with 9 landowners crossed by the route for the duration of the 10 project's life. 11 Q. Do the Applicants have a process for handling 12 landowner concerns? 13 A. Yes. The Applicants will include contact 14 information for a project representative and all 15 applicable emergency services in an informational packet 16 that will be sent to all landowners crossed by the route 17 prior to construction. In addition, landowners have 18 contact information for the Applicants' right-of-way 19 team members if questions or concerns arise during the 20 course of the project. 21 Q. Can you please generally describe what 22 environmental and cultural studies and surveys the 23 Applicants have completed for the project? 24 A. As Kevin Scheidecker testified to at the 25 Commission's technical hearings, before the project's PAGE 27
1 to minimize dust during construction. 2 A. The Applicants will implement a dust mitigation 3 plan to minimize impacts during construction. The dust 4 mitigation plan may include enforcing speed limits on 5 gravel roads and/or the use of water or other dust 6 suppression methods. 7 Q. Can you please describe what steps will be taken 8 by the Applicants to minimize the spread of weeds during 9 and after construction? 10 A. The Applicants have developed a vegetation 11 management plan, which is included in Appendix F of the 12 application, to identify and establish procedures to 13 limit the introduction and spread of weeds during 14 construction and ongoing operations of the project. 15 Q. How do the Applicants plan to communicate with 16 landowners crossed by the route during construction and 17 reclamation? 18 A. Following the Commission's decision on the 19 application, the Applicants are planning to send 20 informational packets to all landowners crossed by the 21 route and will include a copy of the relevant 22 information applicable to the project as well as contact 23 information for members of the project team. 24 In addition, the Applicants will create and 25 maintain an online map to communicate the status of PAGE 26	1 route was selected, environmental and land use data was 2 collected from various sources to conduct a desktop 3 analysis to identify exclusion and avoidance areas as 4 well as analyze the Commission's selection and policy 5 considerations. 6 After the initial data collection and 7 evaluation, the Applicants performed field surveys to 8 delineate wetlands, identify biological resources such 9 as eagle stick nests, sharp-tailed grouse lekking areas, 10 and evaluate the presence of threatened and endangered 11 species and their associated habitat. 12 In addition, the Applicants have conducted a 13 literature review, including associated field surveys 14 for cultural resources in coordination with the Sisseton 15 Wahpeton Oyate Tribe. 16 Through this extensive effort, the Applicants 17 have coordinated with numerous agencies such as the U.S. 18 Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 19 North Dakota Game and Fish Department, and the North 20 Dakota State Historic Preservation Office on the 21 Applicants' approach to and the results from 22 environmental and cultural surveys. 23 The information collected from these surveys, in 24 addition to the coordination with federal and state 25 agencies, were used to guide the development and PAGE 28

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1 identification of the project's route. 2 Additional information regarding the 3 environmental and cultural studies and surveys completed 4 for the project and the status of the Applicants' 5 environmental permitting efforts is discussed in detail 6 within the application and the Applicants' supplemental 7 filings and through the Applicants' testimony from the 8 Commission's technical hearings. 9 Q. Will the project's construction, operation, and 10 maintenance minimize adverse human and environmental 11 impacts while ensuring continuing system reliability and 12 integrity and ensuring the energy needs are met and 13 fulfilled in an orderly and timely fashion? 14 A. Yes. As shown in the application, other 15 filings, and through the Applicants' testimony at the 16 Commission's technical hearings, the project will be 17 constructed, operated, and maintained to minimize 18 adverse human and environmental impacts while serving as 19 a critical component in ensuring local and regional 20 electric reliability for the combined benefit of 21 customers and businesses in North Dakota. 22 Q. Does this conclude your direct testimony for 23 today? 24 A. Yes, it does. 25 Q. Thank you. PAGE 29	1 concerns, and we track all of that in, you know, our 2 public comment system. And so in reviewing some of that 3 in preparation for today, I think you covered a lot of 4 the -- you touched on a lot of the concerns that I think 5 we're hearing from people as well as far as the 6 underground -- you know, can these lines be installed 7 underground? What other route alternatives are there? 8 One thing I just want to ask you about a little 9 more is one of the concerns that we seem to be hearing 10 is if there's going to be potential impacts to farming 11 operations. So is that something that you can speak to? 12 Do you foresee there being impacts to farming 13 operations, and if so, what is the company going to do 14 to mitigate those? 15 THE WITNESS: Thank you for your question, 16 Commissioner. 17 The Applicants have worked extensively with 18 landowners to minimize impacts to farming operations. I 19 think it's important to realize, through the acquisition 20 of easements for this project, we are allowing farmers 21 to continue farming operations within the easement area, 22 and those farming operations are minimally impacted by 23 the foundation itself because we're using a single 24 pole -- single monopole foundation that's of a certain 25 diameter. The impacts that are to farming operations PAGE 31
1 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Mr. Pelham, any 2 questions? 3 CROSS EXAMINATION 4 BY MR. PELHAM: 5 Q. Felt like déjà vu all over again from last week. 6 But, Mr. Weiers, any update as far as survey access 7 permission granted since the technical hearings took 8 place last week? 9 A. No, Mr. Pelham. The status is the same as 10 reported at last week's technical hearings. 11 Q. And a little different question but along the 12 same lines. Any update as to easement -- easement 13 acquisition percentages from the last -- testimony from 14 the company last week? 15 A. In visiting with our right-of-way agents 16 yesterday, there has been no update to the status of the 17 land rights discussed at last week's technical meetings. 18 Q. Thank you. I don't have any other questions. 19 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Mr. Schock, any 20 questions? 21 MR. SCHOCK: No questions, Your Honor. 22 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Commissioner Kringstad. 23 COMMISSIONER KRINGSTAD: I think in -- you know, 24 before the technical hearings, we have people reach out 25 to the Commission to provide comment or input or just PAGE 30	1 are very minimal, and landowners are compensated for 2 allowing us an easement on their property. 3 In addition to those conversations underway with 4 landowners, we're also engaging on the desired location 5 of structures and trying to accommodate the location of 6 structures where possible to also help minimize impacts 7 for farmers. 8 COMMISSIONER KRINGSTAD: Okay. Do you foresee 9 any impacts to operations like specifically involving 10 spraying and crop dusting? 11 THE WITNESS: We have coordinated with 12 landowners to the greatest extent possible to minimize 13 impacts on spraying and aerial spraying as well. 14 COMMISSIONER KRINGSTAD: I don't have any 15 further questions. Thank you. 16 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Commissioner Christmann. 17 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: I didn't think I would 18 have any, but over the weekend I did think of a couple 19 more, and then this discussion this morning made me 20 think of something else too. 21 But regarding that -- working with landowners on 22 their farming operations, your response here and then my 23 recollection from Friday, clarify for me, when you say 24 that you're working with the landowners on how they can 25 minimize any adverse impacts to their farming operations PAGE 32

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1 in the last, say, five or six months since you turned in 2 your application, has that work been pretty much 3 exclusively with that 70-some percent where you have 4 easements, or are you continuing to go out and have 5 dialogue with the people from whom you have not yet 6 received an easement to see if there are things that 7 could be done to mitigate their impacts and cause them 8 to possibly sign an easement? 9 THE WITNESS: Commissioner Christmann, for those 10 landowners who are willing to engage with us, those 11 conversations have continued throughout the duration of 12 the project. 13 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: Of those where you 14 lack easements, are you in that kind of discussion, 15 would you say, with most of them or only a few of them? 16 THE WITNESS: It really depends on the status of 17 those conversations. If landowners have asked us to 18 leave them alone, we've not contacted them at their 19 request. For those who are willing to engage with us, 20 we have continued those conversations. 21 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: I'm just trying to 22 envision in my mind, out of -- and, I mean, we had the 23 report, and I don't have it in front of me, it was 24 70-some percent of the easements and so, I'm assuming, 25 70-some percent of the mileage. And so you have over 20 PAGE 33	1 a correct assessment? 2 THE WITNESS: Yes. As I described last week at 3 the technical hearings, about 3 percent of the overall 4 project route will be double circuited initially. 5 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: And here's what I -- 6 this just never occurred to me when reviewing the 7 application or on Friday in the technical hearing. Does 8 your application for this siting cover a potential 9 future double circuiting, that that is just something 10 you have the siting certificate and everything's in 11 place, you just go do that when you want, or would the 12 double circuiting of this be another case? 13 THE WITNESS: The applications for this project 14 have been drafted to encompass both circuits for this 15 project. 16 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: Okay. And then 17 lastly, this morning's discussion causes me to inquire 18 about this. You mentioned -- and you mentioned this 19 Friday too, I believe, but you mentioned two episodes in 20 Jamestown this past summer of reduced service in order 21 to maintain reliability. Approximately how long were 22 each of those episodes? 23 THE WITNESS: Sorry, Commissioner, I don't have 24 that information readily available. 25 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: I would like if you PAGE 35
1 miles out there of land for which there's no easement. 2 And I'm just trying to imagine, is this three or 3 four or a small handful of people who have said, "No, 4 don't even talk to us"? And if they say that, then I 5 understand why you wouldn't be communicating. Or have 6 most of them said, "No, just leave us alone." That's 7 what I can't gauge out of those 20-some miles. 8 THE WITNESS: Sorry, Commissioner Christmann, 9 was there a question there then for me? 10 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: If you want to give me 11 more clarity on how much of that group of landowners you 12 are in discussions with as opposed to how many have 13 said, "No, don't talk to us," you may. You don't have 14 to tell me that, but you can clarify if you like. 15 THE WITNESS: I'm not comfortable speculating on 16 that amount of landowners at this time without further 17 consulting with my project team. 18 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: Okay. Then the other 19 thing that I thought of kind of last week after we 20 wrapped up, I've understood, from when I first started 21 going through those binders, it's going to be a single 22 circuit line but with double circuit capable structures, 23 and then you would go ahead and run the double circuit 24 wiring over a handful of places such as a river 25 crossing, the interstate, and a couple others. Is that PAGE 34	1 would provide that along the way. And I want to know 2 two things about it: How long was each one and how far 3 were they apart? 4 I view this different. If, you know, in one 5 month there was a two-day situation like that and then a 6 month or two later there was several more days of it, as 7 opposed to there was a 10-minute episode and then it got 8 better and then 15 minutes later it was another hour, I 9 would view those two scenarios differently. So how long 10 were each, how far apart? 11 I have no other questions, Your Honor. 12 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Commissioner 13 Haugen-Hoffart. 14 COMMISSIONER HAUGEN-HOFFART: I want to follow 15 up with the dust mitigation. You indicated that you're 16 going to submit a dust mitigation plan and monitor the 17 dust during construction. But in your testimony you say 18 "and coordinate with local agencies, if applicable." 19 So the first part of my question is, during 20 construction, will you have water trucks on site to help 21 with dust mitigation? 22 THE WITNESS: Commissioner Haugen-Hoffart, we 23 will use a variety of methods to keep dust within 24 acceptable limits. Water trucks is an effective way 25 that we have used in the past. PAGE 36

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1 COMMISSIONER HAUGEN-HOFFART: So they will be on 2 site? 3 THE WITNESS: Based on my experience with past 4 projects, yes, we will have water trucks on site. 5 COMMISSIONER HAUGEN-HOFFART: Okay. Because I 6 don't -- I think this is the first -- and it could be 7 another application about the coordination with local 8 agencies, so I just wanted to know, in the zone, how 9 many local agencies are applicable to be reached out if, 10 you know, we're experiencing dry conditions and keeping 11 that dust down. 12 THE WITNESS: That is something the Applicants 13 are still looking into. But we are committed to 14 coordinate with the applicable road authorities. 15 COMMISSIONER HAUGEN-HOFFART: Okay. Thank you. 16 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Ms. Furey, any redirect? 17 MS. FUREY: No, Your Honor. 18 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Mr. Pelham, any other 19 questions? 20 Mr. Schock? 21 Any other commissioner questions? 22 All right. Well, thank you, Mr. Weiers. 23 We will now move to the public testimony portion 24 of our hearing. Even if you didn't sign the attendance 25 sheet or note that you wanted to testify, you can still PAGE 37	1 everybody up here. 2 So, with that, do we have somebody that's 3 willing to go first? 4 Yep, please come forward. 5 DEBRA WALD: Good morning. 6 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Good morning. Thank you 7 for going first. You can have a seat. I'll have you 8 state your name for the record and spell your last name. 9 DEBRA WALD: Debra Wald. 10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Pull the mic up. 11 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Yep, pull that mic close 12 there. 13 And, Ms. Wald, were you in the room when I went 14 through the penalties for perjury? 15 DEBRA WALD: Yes, I was. 16 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: And do you understand 17 what perjury is? 18 DEBRA WALD: I do. 19 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: And being advised of the 20 potential penalties for perjury, do you promise to tell 21 the truth in this case today? 22 DEBRA WALD: I will. 23 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: All right. Thank you. 24 Go ahead. 25 PAGE 39
1 come up and testify this morning. I'll have you come up 2 one at a time and sit in our witness chair. And just 3 like Mr. Weiers, I'll have you state your name for the 4 record, I will swear you in, and then after you've given 5 your testimony, we will go around the room for questions 6 for you as well. 7 I would just like to note that this is your 8 opportunity to provide testimony in an evidentiary 9 hearing to the commissioners. It's not the time to ask 10 the commissioners or the Applicants questions. If you 11 do have questions for the Applicants' representatives, 12 those will need to happen outside of our hearing this 13 morning. This is really your time to provide 14 information to the commissioners. 15 Testimony should be factual and to the point. 16 And, with that said, if you have similar concerns to 17 somebody else that has previously testified, I'd ask 18 that you just note that you have similar concerns. 19 There's no need to repeat those concerns as well. 20 If you are representing a group or an entity, 21 I'd ask that you please note that as well, or if you are 22 a landowner in the project area, please note that for 23 the commissioners as well. 24 If you do have documents or handouts, you can 25 hand them to me, and I will make sure they get to PAGE 38	1 <u>DEBRA WALD,</u> 2 being first duly sworn, testified as follows: 3 DEBRA WALD: As I said, I'm Debbie Wald. I am a 4 landowner involved in several projects. Our land is a 5 little east and north of Edgeley, North Dakota, Wano 6 Township. 7 And I don't have anything prepared. I just 8 wanted to give you a little personal view of what's 9 going on and someone that is not signed up for anything. 10 We share in everything that goes on with the people that 11 sign the easements, and they're getting paid money for 12 it and we are not and we're affected by everything they 13 do. 14 I have -- I'm a widow and my husband passed away 15 a few years ago. He left that land to me, entrusted me 16 with it. I have six children and 19 grandchildren, and 17 I take it personally responsible to make sure that his 18 legacy is fulfilled. 19 And I am one of the farms that is a little more 20 pivotal. Not only does the JETx line run from north, 21 south, south to north, but shortly after they started 22 talking with me, NextEnergy came forward. And Otter 23 Tail Power had said that JETx was the only thing that 24 was going through. We weren't really adverse to that. 25 But a couple weeks later the rep from NextEnergy came PAGE 40

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1 and they wanted to put a turbine line hooked into JETx. 2 And after that there were several others, Strategy, WBI, 3 and then -- I can't think of them all now. But I think 4 I received my last contract maybe in August, September 5 of '25. 6 And I was totally -- I think they were just 7 after me. Calls. I've got a log of calls and messages. 8 And finally I got so frustrated and wasn't sleeping, 9 wasn't feeling good, just wondering what was going to 10 happen. Anytime that you would look out a window or 11 door of my home, that's what you'd see. 12 And, of course, I'm a senior and retired. And 13 aside from wanting to just protect our family land -- 14 and most of the farms around there have been in families 15 from almost 100 years or 100 years. I promised -- we 16 talked not too long before he died, and whether he went 17 first or I did, we would carry out what we had always 18 done on our farm. We have a son that built a home right 19 down the road and he's -- we're trying to transition 20 now. 21 And we feel that -- when they just will not 22 leave you alone and they don't know what "no" means. 23 And I think that they're trying to push through no 24 matter what. No matter what we say, no matter what we 25 do, they always have a way. And, actually, what PAGE 41	1 south of my home from an absentee owner. And what they 2 did is they talked to him right away, they sent them all 3 the information and left the decision up to him and then 4 sold it. 5 But what I am looking at is the JETx line 6 through four quarters on the east side of our land and 7 then three quarters going to the west. And can you 8 imagine, if you've got a 700-foot tall wind turbine, it 9 can be probably five miles away and you'll still be 10 affected by it. 11 But I just want to reiterate that it's not any 12 of you that worked all those years and had your little 13 kids, five of them at first, dragging -- you know, 14 dressing them up, taking them out for winter chores. 15 And we had some pretty bad times, we got through them, 16 and now this, when it's time for me to just relax and do 17 the things I want to do on the farm, not the things I 18 have to do on the farm. 19 I just am pro family farm. And I just can't 20 imagine going out for a walk, and even though it's just 21 so far from your house, well, there's buildings and we 22 are outside all the time in the spring and summer and 23 most of the fall. And I don't want to hear all that. I 24 don't want to see that. I don't want to learn later 25 that one of us got sick because of it or animals are PAGE 43
1 happened here in Ellendale went so quickly. It's like 2 one day I was just home and I decided to go to Aberdeen 3 and there it was and -- 4 But my main intent is that I don't want that. I 5 didn't sign up for it. They knew that early on, and yet 6 they're always pushing, pushing, pushing. 7 So I finally asked my son -- his name is Lucas, 8 he'll be testifying at Edgeley -- "Will you handle 9 this?" We had representatives waiting in the yard, in 10 the driveway, like, "Oh, there's a vehicle here, she's 11 got to be home." So waiting to -- waiting for me to 12 either come out or come home. And I got to the point 13 where I just couldn't take it anymore. 14 And my son said, "Yeah," he said, "just give 15 them my number." And they were better with him, but 16 with me -- and I will prove at some time with documents 17 that it's just unusual how many calls and how many 18 visits and how many messages, how many contracts were 19 sent to me, how many easements were sent to me. And I 20 just stood firm. And finally the -- one of the final 21 comments was, "Well, are you going to sign it or aren't 22 you? You know, all of your neighbors have signed up." 23 Well, that wasn't true. But I think that they kind of 24 picked more on widow people, absentee owners. 25 My son actually just bought the quarter just PAGE 42	1 dying because of it, birds all over. I just want my 2 farm the way it is right now and send it along to the 3 generations. 4 Thank you. 5 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: All right, thank you. 6 Ms. Furey, any questions? 7 Hang on. I'm going to see if there's any 8 questions for you. 9 DEBRA WALD: Okay. 10 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Ms. Furey, any 11 questions? 12 MS. FUREY: Just one follow-up question for 13 Ms. Wald. 14 You had mentioned in your comments that several 15 companies have reached out to you regarding different 16 projects; correct? 17 DEBRA WALD: Yes. Yes. 18 MS. FUREY: Okay. So when you indicated that 19 you've received several contracts and several easements 20 and that you've received a number of additional 21 communications, that's including those additional 22 projects beyond JETx; correct? 23 DEBRA WALD: JETx and NextEra, I would say, have 24 been the most aggressive. 25 MS. FUREY: Okay. So your comments aren't just PAGE 44

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1 specific to this project, they include some other 2 projects; correct? 3 DEBRA WALD: I would have to say that that's not 4 totally correct. I would say that it leans mostly 5 towards JETx and NextEra, because without JETx, none of 6 these other projects would be going through. 7 And I don't like the idea that they have an 8 easement and they say, "Yeah, it's a power line," and 9 then you get notified by, of course, the wind people, 10 the solar people. There are some store -- or battery 11 banks. They have the easement and the option to do 12 anything with that. They can lease it to others, they 13 can sell it, their -- you know, their stake in it. And 14 for these 99-year contracts, of course I'll be long gone 15 and maybe five generations will follow. And I think 16 it's going to get to the point where nobody knows what's 17 going on. They can sell it and the great grandkids will 18 say, "Well, who owns that now and how many projects are 19 going through there?" 20 And I think, to date, it's seven or eight 21 different entities that want to go through my piece of 22 the world. And I just want to protect it. I don't want 23 it. I -- I shouldn't have to have it after working all 24 those years and raising all my children there. And the 25 grandkids love the farm. And I want to protect that, PAGE 45	1 correct? 2 DEBRA WALD: Yes. 3 MR. PELHAM: Okay. And do you know 4 approximately how many feet, what distance the line is 5 they're wanting to put through your property? 6 DEBRA WALD: Well, it's four quarters. 7 MR. PELHAM: I see. 8 DEBRA WALD: So it'd probably be one, two, 9 three -- or four miles one way and maybe three towards 10 the west. 11 MR. PELHAM: And I'm just wondering, because 12 sometimes when they send you those easements that you 13 mentioned, a lot of times they'll have the distance in 14 there because that's how they calculate how much would 15 be paid. Because, presumably, they're offering to pay 16 you some money; correct? 17 DEBRA WALD: Yes. Well, after the first 18 easement, I didn't pay much attention to the second and 19 the third and then the contracts with copies and -- but 20 we have them documented now. But, like I said, I didn't 21 write anything up. But I'll be more prepared in Edgeley 22 and Jamestown. 23 MR. PELHAM: Yeah. And that's okay. That's not 24 a fault of yours at all. I mean you're -- you're trying 25 to do the best that you can with a lot of information. PAGE 47
1 not just for myself but for anybody else who is not 2 interested in this and told them so. 3 MS. FUREY: No further questions. Thank you. 4 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Mr. Pelham, any 5 questions? 6 MR. PELHAM: Thank you. 7 Thanks for being here today, Ms. Wald. And I 8 believe I saw you in Bismarck as well -- 9 DEBRA WALD: You did. 10 MR. PELHAM: -- so making double duty here 11 today. I just have some questions for you, and if you 12 know, you know. If you don't know, that's okay. 13 DEBRA WALD: Okay. 14 MR. PELHAM: As far as the legal description of 15 your property in Wano Township, do you happen to know 16 what the legal description of your property is? 17 DEBRA WALD: I think we -- well, section 20 and 18 21 and then section 33, 28. I think it's 134-63. 19 MR. PELHAM: Okay. And I think I know the 20 answer to the question, but I'm going to ask it anyways 21 because I'm slow sometimes and it's Monday morning. 22 DEBRA WALD: I'll do my best. 23 MR. PELHAM: The proposed line, the JETx line 24 that's proposed, or the hearing today about it, is 25 proposed to go through portions of your property; PAGE 46	1 I'm just wondering, you were here -- or you were 2 in Bismarck at the technical hearings and you heard some 3 testimony about public open houses. 4 DEBRA WALD: Yes. 5 MR. PELHAM: Do you remember that? 6 DEBRA WALD: Yes. 7 MR. PELHAM: Did you -- I'm just wondering if 8 you happened to attend any of those open houses. 9 DEBRA WALD: I was not aware of the first JETx. 10 I think that I got involved a little later. I don't get 11 the paper, I didn't get anything in the mail, and I 12 found out about that after it was over from my 13 neighbors. 14 MR. PELHAM: I see. 15 DEBRA WALD: But as, you know, a few of us try 16 to hit almost every meeting we can. I'm not as informed 17 as some of them, but if I don't know, they'll tell me. 18 MR. PELHAM: Fair enough. 19 And you mentioned, I think you said NextEnergy. 20 Are you taking talking about, like, is it NextEra, the 21 wind turbine company? 22 DEBRA WALD: Yes. I might have misstated. 23 MR. PELHAM: And that's okay. I thought I knew 24 what you were talking about. 25 So NextEra has been in contact with you as far PAGE 48

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1 as potential for seeking easement for placement of 2 turbines on your property? 3 DEBRA WALD: I would say excessively. And they 4 even offered me one or two of them on my property so... 5 MR. PELHAM: I see. Okay. And I think you 6 mentioned WBI; is that right? 7 DEBRA WALD: Pardon? 8 MR. PELHAM: WBI? 9 DEBRA WALD: Yes. 10 MR. PELHAM: That's a pipeline company? 11 DEBRA WALD: Yes. 12 MR. PELHAM: Are they wanting to put a pipeline 13 through your property? 14 DEBRA WALD: I -- I would assume so. 15 MR. PELHAM: Okay. And I think you said there's 16 seven or eight others -- 17 DEBRA WALD: Yes. 18 MR. PELHAM: -- that are also, around the same 19 time? I mean, is it all condensed in a period of time 20 that -- in the last couple years? 21 DEBRA WALD: I think everybody's waiting to see 22 if this JETx line will go through. I don't think they 23 want to put any more input to it than just getting the 24 easements on the land. But all of these projects will 25 be probably in that -- I think they -- maybe they've got PAGE 49	1 mean to pry here, but I'm an attorney and we like to ask 2 questions so I'm going to ask you some questions. 3 DEBRA WALD: I'll answer them for you. 4 MR. PELHAM: As far as specific reasons -- and I 5 know you said and you testified you don't want it, and 6 you've told Otter Tail and MDU you don't want it. Are 7 there specific things specifically that -- that you do 8 not want as a result? Like, for example, is the route 9 that's proposed to be across your property, are there 10 problems with it that impact your operations? Are there 11 specific things that you've maybe asked them to try to 12 change and they've not changed them? Are there things 13 like that? 14 DEBRA WALD: I don't appreciate at all being, I 15 call it "invaded." There are no real factual studies on 16 anything to do with how that will affect your health, 17 your children's health, grandchildren, your livestock. 18 Is your land going to be devalued? We have expensive 19 land right now, and what will that do to it? Can we get 20 insurance once those are there? They are also trying to 21 make us responsible for the liability of it. We might 22 not be able to get insurance one day. There's so many 23 factors in it. 24 And like I said, we are not trying to be 25 unreasonable. We just want our lives to stay the same. PAGE 51
1 150-foot easement and they are free to do that. 2 MR. PELHAM: I'll put you on the spot here, and 3 I'm just asking again if you're comfortable with it. I 4 don't mean to press you too much, but you're here and we 5 want to talk to you. Is there -- can you tell the 6 Commission as far as anything that the Otter Tail or MDU 7 folks that have been in contact with you about the JETx 8 line -- and I know that you feel and you provided 9 testimony that they're calling and calling. Is there 10 anything that you believe that they've done that would 11 be not appropriate or out of bounds, in your opinion? 12 DEBRA WALD: I would call it direct harassment, 13 intimidation. I think that they tried to take advantage 14 of a woman that was alone and still in the grieving 15 process for my husband. And, truthfully, I would say 16 that I couldn't handle it anymore. I don't sleep well. 17 I don't sleep well today. And it's very tiring to try 18 to understand everything when you've got several 19 different corporations. 20 And I went along with my friends to meetings 21 because I truly wanted to understand and not be 22 unreasonable. It's just that I don't want it. I mean, 23 it's no reflection on anybody. It's just I know now 24 what that's going to look like. 25 MR. PELHAM: And I appreciate that. And I don't PAGE 50	1 Because we feel that energy is all going someplace else. 2 I haven't seen anything offered to Edgeley, the City of 3 Edgeley, myself. Are they going to help us with our 4 electricity or -- and I think one of the guys figured 5 out, and you'll hear that probably in Jamestown, just 6 what we -- we probably will end up paying to have this 7 project go through. 8 As a North Dakota taxpayer, if I could see some 9 true benefit to our state, it wouldn't be such a 10 problem. But I feel if they are able to push that 11 through, I'm going to have to move. I don't want to 12 hear it. There's so many environmental issues, too. I 13 -- I think that everybody needs to take a really hard 14 look at what this is doing for our people, our 15 communities, our schools, and our state. 16 I think we're just a thoroughfare that is going 17 to end up that we are going to be responsible for taking 18 care of all of these projects. When the wind towers 19 don't work anymore and they move on, what are we going 20 to do with that? They're just not recyclable. 21 I guess I would like to see a lot more 22 documentation about what are we -- what are we really 23 looking forward to? Are we going to get sick? All 24 these things I mentioned to you cost us. Those are my 25 concerns. PAGE 52

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1 MR. PELHAM: Thank you so much for sharing your 2 concerns here, Ms. Wald. 3 As to the safety -- and I assume you're talking 4 about like an EMF or electromagnetic field. Are you 5 familiar with that term? 6 DEBRA WALD: Just anything and everything that 7 could affect our health, that we don't have any 8 guarantees or no studies or nothing to fall back onto to 9 tell us what -- we don't know the future, none of us do, 10 but we think it's going to be really bad for us. 11 MR. PELHAM: And in fairness, just because I've 12 reviewed these two binders, the company did provide an 13 EMF study that is in the application and is available 14 online. So you could take a look at that if you wanted 15 to. So they have done an EMF study. 16 DEBRA WALD: I will look at it, but it probably 17 won't change my mind. 18 MR. PELHAM: I can completely appreciate that, 19 but I just thought I would -- 20 DEBRA WALD: I will look at it. 21 MR. PELHAM: Yeah. I thank you for your time 22 here and taking the time to come. 23 DEBRA WALD: Thank you. 24 MR. PELHAM: I don't have any other questions 25 for you. PAGE 53	1 DEBRA WALD: I do know. On 21 it would be 2 the -- let's see. There's a full section we have across 3 the road. I get them mixed up, but I think it's 20. 20 4 maybe. Yeah. Okay. We have the whole section of, I 5 think, 20. 6 MR. SCHOCK: Okay. 7 DEBRA WALD: And then in 21 we have the half, 8 the -- 9 MR. SCHOCK: The north half? 10 DEBRA WALD: -- the north and south half of 20. 11 That's where my home sits. 12 MR. SCHOCK: So you have -- okay. 13 DEBRA WALD: Seven quarters total. 14 MR. SCHOCK: Sure. But in 20 -- so 20, you said 15 you have the whole thing. 21, you have the north -- 16 DEBRA WALD: The west half. 17 MR. SCHOCK: Okay. The west half. 18 DEBRA WALD: There will be two quarters there. 19 And then when you go down to 28, it is the -- let's see. 20 The -- also the northwest quarter. 21 MR. SCHOCK: Northwest quarter. 22 DEBRA WALD: Yep. And then you cross the road 23 down to 33 and we have the -- it would be the -- also 24 the northwest quarter. 25 MR. SCHOCK: Northwest quarter of 33? PAGE 55
1 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Mr. Schock, any 2 questions? 3 MR. SCHOCK: Yes. I just have to clarify. So 4 you -- you mentioned sections 20, 21, 33, and 28 of 5 township 134-63? 6 DEBRA WALD: Yes. 7 MR. SCHOCK: And I do see those within the 8 project maps. Are those the only parcels that -- and 9 also you referenced -- it's maybe -- those are the 10 sections. Do you have quarter sections within those 11 that you own or do you own the entirety of those 12 sections. 13 DEBRA WALD: Coming from south to north, we have 14 a quarter. Then you cross the road, someone else has 15 the next quarter. And then we have three quarters in a 16 row. And then if they would get that substation in, 17 then the wind project would go right behind my home. So 18 it would be beside and behind. And then you cross the 19 road and there are two more. 20 MR. SCHOCK: Okay. Do you know which quarter 21 sections of -- within each of those sections are yours? 22 And if you don't know today, I think you referenced your 23 son is probably coming Wednesday or Friday. 24 DEBRA WALD: I know. 25 MR. SCHOCK: Oh, you do know. Okay. PAGE 54	1 DEBRA WALD: Yes. 2 MR. SCHOCK: Okay. Are those the only parcels 3 within the project area? 4 DEBRA WALD: All of our land is in there. 5 MR. SCHOCK: Okay. I don't have any other 6 questions for now. Thank you. 7 DEBRA WALD: Thank you. 8 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Commissioner Kringstad. 9 COMMISSIONER KRINGSTAD: I don't have any other 10 questions. Thank you, Debbie, for being here and 11 also -- yes, I know we've already kind of peppered you 12 with questions for about 20 minutes so I won't ask 13 anymore, but I did see you in Bismarck. So thank you 14 for coming to Bismarck and sitting through all of the 15 technical hearing and being here today and going first. 16 I know it's always kind of scary to go first, but thank 17 you. And thank you for sharing your story with us. 18 DEBRA WALD: Thank you. 19 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Hang on. 20 Commissioner Christmann. 21 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: Debbie, I'm going to 22 make the question peppering worse, but I want to 23 understand perspective. And so part of me is in a déjà 24 vu moment because -- I'm from Hazen. When I was a boy, 25 what you just said reminds me so much of what I was PAGE 56

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1 hearing from my dad as they were building the plants. 2 He just wanted to be left alone so we can raise our 3 cows. "Don't bother us. We're not getting any 4 electricity from this. It's going somewhere else. 5 Maybe to Edgeley." 6 DEBRA WALD: I doubt it. 7 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: "Don't bother us." 8 There's a reason that big substation was here at 9 Ellendale, why they built the data center here. 10 And he ultimately ended up with power lines. 11 We've had pipeline, various things. I still wish the 12 land was pristine like it was when grandpa homesteaded 13 it. It hasn't -- I'm not saying it's really caused any 14 problems. The cattle keep breeding. Nothing's been 15 electrocuted from a fence. 16 But I'm curious. Is your objection really to 17 the transmission line or is it to the transmission line 18 because it's going to lead to the wind farm and all the 19 700-foot turbines? 20 DEBRA WALD: I can give you two different 21 perspectives on that. And one is, you know, these ice 22 storms they've been talking about, they aren't 23 consistent; they've not happened, you know, 24 consistently, it's here and there. 25 And my thought is -- from talking to people, is PAGE 57	1 wealthy person, but I get by and I don't -- I don't want 2 their money. I'm comfortable and I don't need any more 3 than that. 4 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: Well, thank you for 5 coming up and explaining your thoughts on this. 6 Appreciate it. 7 DEBRA WALD: You're welcome. 8 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Commissioner 9 Haugen-Hoffart. 10 COMMISSIONER HAUGEN-HOFFART: Hi, Debra. 11 DEBRA WALD: Hi. 12 COMMISSIONER HAUGEN-HOFFART: Thank you for your 13 testimony. I have no further questions. 14 DEBRA WALD: Yes. 15 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: All right. That's it. 16 Thanks, Ms. Wald. 17 DEBRA WALD: Am I free to go? 18 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Yes. 19 All right. Who would like to go next? Come on 20 up. 21 MYRON MEYERS: Good morning. 22 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Good morning. Can I 23 have you state your name and spell your last name for 24 the record? 25 MYRON MEYERS: Myron Meyers. Last name, PAGE 59
1 that that grid would not be necessary if this did not 2 come in. We're a small, small populated state. And, 3 yeah, we've been through a couple, but, you know, 4 sometimes it's maybe -- I don't know how -- I was going 5 to check into that too. How many of those ice storms 6 have we had? And it has not been many. It's not like 7 they're portraying it to be. We're tough up here. We 8 might have a couple days. We get through it. And if 9 not for the infrastructure, we wouldn't need it. Our 10 state would not need that. That is carrying power other 11 places. And that is my objection, that we are getting 12 so little. 13 And then, on the other hand, no, I don't want my 14 land covered with that stuff. 15 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: With the wind 16 turbines? Or is even the transmission line -- 17 DEBRA WALD: Actually anything. Because we know 18 now -- we were told that that was all that was going 19 through. Well, that wasn't true. And within a few 20 weeks after I was contacted by JETx, I was contacted by 21 NextEra. And it doesn't take a really intelligent 22 person to put two and two together when they want to put 23 a substation right in the corner, right where the others 24 are going through so -- and then to offer me a turbine. 25 I don't care about that. You know, I'm not a PAGE 58	1 M-E-Y-E-R-S. 2 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Mr. Meyers, were you in 3 the room this morning when I went through the penalties 4 for perjury? 5 MYRON MEYERS: Yes, ma'am. 6 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Do you understand what 7 perjury is? 8 MYRON MEYERS: Yes. 9 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: And being advised of the 10 potential penalties for perjury, do you promise to tell 11 the truth in this case today? 12 MYRON MEYERS: Yes. 13 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: All right, thank you. 14 Go ahead. 15 <u>MYRON MEYERS,</u> 16 being first duly sworn, testified as follows: 17 MYRON MEYERS: I'm a resident of Dickey County. 18 I live in the city of Monango. And my synopsis today, 19 the power line is coming right near our town of Monango, 20 according to the drawings back there, in the back of the 21 room. My question is, if we're all for power 22 reliability and so forth for the customers, all the 23 towns that this line is passing, and I see they're 24 within just a few miles according to the map, is this 25 line going to power those towns also or is this line PAGE 60

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1 just going to pass us by and power the guys that have 2 the most money out west of town here? 3 I got -- I mean, if we're going to power our 4 towns and give our -- give the residents of the state 5 here reliable power, which I'm for 100 percent, are they 6 going to pass all these towns by without hooking us up? 7 That's my question. 8 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Well, and again, it's 9 not really time to ask us or the Commission or the 10 Applicant questions. It's more time for you to provide 11 your thoughts to the Commission. 12 MYRON MEYERS: Sure. Well, that's my thought. 13 And if the power line is going to pass us by, 14 what's the use? I'm just making a comment. That's all 15 I'm doing. I'm not here to offend anybody. I'm not -- 16 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: I didn't know if you 17 were expecting an answer so -- 18 MYRON MEYERS: No, no, no, no. 19 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: And some comments are 20 questions so that's fine. 21 MYRON MEYERS: Sure, sure. 22 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Yep. 23 MYRON MEYERS: And -- but I'm all for progress, 24 I'm all for power for everybody, but if this line 25 doesn't do these towns that it's passing by within, it PAGE 61	1 MR. PELHAM: Do you own any property that's 2 impacted directly by the line? 3 MYRON MEYERS: I do not, sir. No. 4 MR. PELHAM: Yeah. Okay. All right. Thanks 5 for being here and providing your testimony to us. 6 Thank you. 7 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Mr. Schock, any 8 questions? 9 MR. SCHOCK: No questions, Your Honor. Thank 10 you. 11 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Commissioner Kringstad. 12 COMMISSIONER KRINGSTAD: No questions. 13 Thank you for being here. 14 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Commissioner Christmann. 15 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: I don't either, but 16 thank you. 17 MYRON MEYERS: Thank you. 18 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Commissioner 19 Haugen-Hoffart. 20 COMMISSIONER HAUGEN-HOFFART: Thank you, but no 21 questions. 22 MYRON MEYERS: Okay. 23 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: You were a lot quicker 24 than Ms. Wald. 25 MYRON MEYERS: Absolutely. PAGE 63
1 looks like, just a mile or two, what's the use? 2 But as far as -- we're right now on MDU. We 3 have good power. Once in a while it goes out, goes on a 4 blink every now and then. We haven't been without power 5 for quite a while. The guys that -- you know, the 6 linemen and stuff, hey, they're stellar, they're 7 excellent, they're good. No problems, no complaints. 8 They're good. I like it. 9 But if we got this line that the so-called 10 taxpayers are going to pay for, we should be hooking up 11 these towns, if it's about reliability. We're going to 12 be crossing people's property, taking property from 13 them, for what use? Whom does this really benefit? 14 It's just a comment. 15 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: All right. Thank you. 16 Ms. Furey, any questions? 17 MS. FUREY: No questions. Thank you. 18 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Mr. Pelham. 19 MR. PELHAM: You don't have to worry about 20 offending anyone, I'll tell you that right now. We want 21 to hear what you have to say and appreciate your 22 comments today, Mr. Meyers. 23 I'm wondering -- and I know you said you live in 24 Monango. 25 MYRON MEYERS: Yes. PAGE 62	1 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: All right. Who would 2 like to go next? 3 Come on up, sir. 4 All right. If you could state your name for the 5 record and spell your last name. 6 LEON WESTERHAUSEN: Leon Westerhausen, 7 W-E-S-T-E-R-H-A-U-S-E-N. 8 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Mr. Westerhauser [sic], 9 did you hear me go through the penalties for perjury 10 earlier? 11 LEON WESTERHAUSEN: Yes, I did. But it's 12 Westerhausen. 13 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Sorry. I apologize. 14 LEON WESTERHAUSEN: Thank you. 15 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: And do you understand 16 what perjury is? 17 LEON WESTERHAUSEN: Yes, I do. 18 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: And being advised of the 19 potential penalties for perjury, do you promise to tell 20 the truth in this case today? 21 LEON WESTERHAUSEN: Yes, I do. 22 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: All right. Thank you. 23 Go ahead. 24 25 PAGE 64

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1 <u>LEON WESTERHAUSEN.</u> 2 being first duly sworn, testified as follows: 3 LEON WESTERHAUSEN: I just have a short concern 4 here, and I will address more when it comes to 5 Jamestown. But I hear over and over, in all of these 6 meetings, reliability. I went to the first meeting in 7 the fall of '23. I did not know about the one in June. 8 If reliability is just for Jamestown because of the 9 power outage in December '23, I would have to ask them 10 to pick a lottery number for me because they started 11 this before the outage. 12 I've lived in the Jamestown area since 1978. I 13 live just outside of Jamestown for the last 28 years. 14 We've never had big power outages. And if you talk 15 reliability, you certainly wouldn't talk about power 16 lines above the ground subject to bad weather. Running 17 a line north and south from two connecting east-west 18 possibly could add a reliability, but storms don't 19 usually move straight east and west or straight north 20 and south. So the chance of taking out a power line 21 going east and west and a power line going north and 22 south are very possible. 23 These new power poles they're talking about are 24 supposedly able to withstand an F1 tornado. Now, I 25 don't know how many people followed the storms of '25, PAGE 65	1 LEON WESTERHAUSEN: The initial line was 500 2 feet from our house, on the neighbor's land. No 3 compensation. Nobody contacting us about it. After all 4 the meetings, they have moved it approximately 1,700 5 feet to the west of our house. It goes east and west 6 one-half mile north of us on the quarter line, then 7 turns south and runs past, along the road, about 1,700 8 feet from our house. 9 MR. PELHAM: Has anyone at Otter Tail or MDU or 10 any other contract agents ever reached out to you during 11 the process of their siting the proposed line? 12 LEON WESTERHAUSEN: There was only one time that 13 they actually reached out other than meetings that I've 14 attended, and I've attended quite a few, and that was to 15 get a variance of the 2,640-foot zoning that Corwin 16 Township has. And I told them I would not give them 17 that variance. And that was at the time they were 18 asking Corwin Township for a conditional use permit. 19 That is the one and only time. 20 MR. PELHAM: I appreciate your testimony, sir, 21 about reliability, and I think I understand that. Aside 22 from reliability, are there any other factors that you 23 have issues with as far as the proposed line? 24 LEON WESTERHAUSEN: Not today. I will have more 25 at the Jamestown meeting. I just wanted to mention the PAGE 67
1 but there was tornadoes of F4. Would their power line 2 stay up and provide the reliability they say, or would 3 it be best served, if you want a reliable line, to go 4 underground? The first comments they gave us, they 5 couldn't do it. Now they're saying it's not feasible; 6 it's going to cost more. Is it going to cost more up 7 front, or is it going to cost more to repair these lines 8 as they go down? And, again, reliability. They said 9 the reason the line went down east-west was because it 10 was an old line and deteriorating. Maybe, to provide 11 reliability, they should have started at the origin and 12 started putting their wires underground. And then maybe 13 we'd have reliability. 14 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: All right. Thank you. 15 Ms. Furey, any questions? 16 MS. FUREY: No questions. 17 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Mr. Pelham? 18 MR. PELHAM: Thanks for being here today, 19 Mr. Westerhausen. I'm just wondering if -- and I know 20 you said you live outside of Jamestown. Is the proposed 21 line, the JETx line, directly impacting any of the 22 property that you own in Jamestown? 23 LEON WESTERHAUSEN: Well, I'd have to clarify 24 "direct." 25 MR. PELHAM: Sure. PAGE 66	1 -- the project started in '23 and it was for reliability 2 to Jamestown. And as of that time, Jamestown had not -- 3 had not had the outage. Because it was September that I 4 went to. The outage was December. So they predicted 5 this outage, apparently. 6 MR. PELHAM: Sir, I understand your point on 7 that. Thank you, sir. I don't have any other questions 8 for you. 9 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Mr. Schock, any 10 questions? 11 MR. SCHOCK: Would you be willing to identify 12 within the maps where your home is? If you're not 13 comfortable with that, that's okay too, but it -- 14 LEON WESTERHAUSEN: I can address that. It's 15 section 26 of Corwin Township. I reside in the 16 northeast quarter of it. 17 We have 20 acres there. We have a small 16-head 18 cattle operation. And previously I was employed at 19 Cavendish Farms and my wife is currently employed at the 20 library in Jamestown. I have retired since January 10th 21 of last year. 22 MR. SCHOCK: Okay. I just want to see if I can 23 find it on a map here. 24 LEON WESTERHAUSEN: Excuse me. I said northeast 25 quarter. It's the northwest quarter, section 26. PAGE 68

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1 MR. SCHOCK: 26. 26. Okay. Let me see. Do 2 you know if that's because -- no. This is Homer 3 Township I'm in. 4 LEON WESTERHAUSEN: Corwin's south. 5 MR. SCHOCK: Okay. I'll just look it up on a -- 6 on a different map. It's possible you may not be on 7 here. 8 But I don't have any other questions. Thank you 9 for being here. 10 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Commissioner Kringstad. 11 COMMISSIONER KRINGSTAD: No questions. Thank 12 you for being here. I know you sat through both days of 13 our hearings in Bismarck, so thank you. 14 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Commissioner Christmann. 15 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: No, no other 16 questions. 17 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Commissioner 18 Haugen-Hoffart. 19 COMMISSIONER HAUGEN-HOFFART: Good to see you 20 again. No questions. 21 LEON WESTERHAUSEN: Okay. Thank you. 22 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Thank you. 23 Who would like to go next? 24 Good morning. I'll have you start by stating 25 your full name for the record and spelling your last PAGE 69	1 us, it looked like -- it looks like a project built 2 primarily for corporate gain, not public benefit. 3 At the legislative council meeting in Ellendale 4 last August, we listened to testimony from Basin 5 Electric stating that, with all the large loads coming 6 online, they cannot build generation fast enough and 7 cannot even obtain materials due to tariffs. During 8 that meeting, Representative Mike Brandenburg asked 9 Jason Weiers when MISO contacted them about building the 10 JETx line. It was determined that it was a year prior 11 to Applied Digital coming on-scene. That was proof that 12 Applied Digital had nothing to do with JETx. Mike knew 13 that wasn't the full story. 14 Looking at it from the outside, it sure seems 15 funny that a year or so before that, MDU just happened 16 to add on to their substation. They even moved it 17 across the road. They took their line down going west 18 to Ellendale and put up a bigger one. Now, lo and 19 behold, Applied Digital comes to town and sets up shop 20 right next door like nobody knew anything beforehand. 21 The same thing is happening with this JETx line. 22 We were told it was to strengthen the grid. No ons, no 23 offs. If that was true, why have people along the JETx 24 route been offered money to buy land for substations to 25 interconnect with the line? This line starts at one PAGE 71
1 name. 2 RICHARD LONG: Richard Long, L-O-N-G. 3 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Mr. Long, did you hear 4 me go through the penalties for perjury earlier? 5 RICHARD LONG: I did. 6 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: And do you understand 7 what perjury is? 8 RICHARD LONG: I do. 9 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: And being advised of the 10 potential penalties for perjury, do you promise to tell 11 the truth in this case today? 12 RICHARD LONG: I do. 13 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: All right. Thank you. 14 Go ahead. 15 <u>RICHARD LONG,</u> 16 being first duly sworn, testified as follows: 17 RICHARD LONG: I have some stuff that's doubled 18 up already with what's said, and I don't know if I can 19 strike it as I'm going, but I'll see what I can do. 20 I'm here today because I oppose the JETx 21 transmission line. If you're seeking the perspective of 22 people who live out here, what we see is not a project 23 designed to serve our neighbors or strengthen rural 24 reliability. What we see is a line that starts at one 25 data center and ends at another data center. To many of PAGE 70	1 data center and ends at another. But JETx has nothing 2 to do with it. 3 Jason Weiers from Otter Tail testified in favor 4 of House Bill 1258, a bill introduced by Representative 5 Brandenburg specifically for the JETx line. This bill 6 could take away the rights of townships. Based on what 7 we have seen, this is not someone we trust to have our 8 best interests at heart. Government should exist to 9 serve the people. The people should matter most. Yet 10 townships along the proposed route have denied 11 conditional use permits, and those decisions are under 12 the threat of being disregarded. We believe the best 13 form of government is local government, townships and 14 counties, because those are the people who actually live 15 with the consequences. 16 We have also seen a troubling pattern with 17 easements. Absentee landowners are often the first to 18 sign. I personally know people who have signed up for 19 the JETx line and now wish they never had, but they 20 cannot speak out because of how the contracts are 21 written. That should concern everyone in this room. 22 Thank you. 23 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Ms. Furey, any 24 questions? 25 MS. FUREY: No questions. PAGE 72

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1 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Mr. Pelham. 2 MR. PELHAM: Thank you for being here, Mr. Long. 3 As to your last comment about the easements 4 containing -- are you saying they're containing 5 confidentiality provisions that don't allow people to 6 speak as to what the terms are? Is that what you're 7 saying? 8 RICHARD LONG: The way I understand it or the 9 way I read it, and I'm not a lawyer, it says if you sign 10 up, you cannot say anything or do anything against JETx, 11 MDU, Otter Tail. That's the way I read it. 12 MR. PELHAM: I see, I see. 13 RICHARD LONG: That's what I'm talking about. 14 MR. PELHAM: And forgive me if you said it 15 already, I don't think you did, but do you own any 16 property that where the line is proposed to go through 17 property you own? 18 RICHARD LONG: Yes. 19 MR. PELHAM: Where is -- what's the legal 20 description of that, if you know. 21 RICHARD LONG: Wano Township, southeast quarter, 22 section 33. 23 MR. PELHAM: Approximately how many feet is the 24 line proposed to go through your property, if you know? 25 RICHARD LONG: Half a mile. PAGE 73	1 them. Some landmen came out to my place twice, I would 2 say. 3 I don't know. How long do you want me to go on 4 about -- 5 MR. PELHAM: Whatever you're comfortable with, 6 sir. 7 I have a couple follow-up questions. And I'm 8 just wondering. I heard your testimony. Are there 9 specific concerns as to the specific locations of the 10 proposed line through your property that you have that 11 you've tried to get them to adjust, to move it over to 12 avoid a building or avoid a plan, further improvement on 13 your property, or is it simply for the reasons that 14 you've provided the Commission as to your opposition? 15 RICHARD LONG: It was not that we just wanted 16 them to move here or there. They have, in my opinion, 17 lost our trust with things -- I don't know, you call 18 them lies of omission or, you know, if they just 19 aren't -- if they aren't being upfront with you. So if 20 I'm going to go into business with somebody, I'm not 21 going to go into business with somebody that I don't 22 trust. I mean, I just don't want anything to do with 23 it. 24 We could about say that this is the artery that 25 all of this other stuff is hooking onto. So if I give PAGE 75
1 MR. PELHAM: Fair enough. 2 Could you describe for the Commission what your 3 communications with the company has been as far as their 4 attempts to gain an easement with you? 5 RICHARD LONG: There is more. 6 MR. PELHAM: Oh, sorry. I didn't mean to cut 7 you off. I apologize. 8 RICHARD LONG: North half of section 4 in 9 Willowbank. And the way it looks, they're going to -- 10 they've moved it off of the southwest of 4. So I don't 11 think they're going to go across mine there, their plan 12 anyway. 13 MR. PELHAM: Okay. Appreciate that. Sorry, I 14 didn't mean to cut you off there. 15 So in terms of attempts to contact you to 16 negotiate access to your property, can you describe what 17 that process has been like? 18 RICHARD LONG: Well, I guess it started with 19 their meetings that they had. I think it's a tactic, 20 when you come into their meetings and they surround you 21 with five different people and take you over here or 22 take you over there, and then they want to convince you 23 that this is the best deal. So it started with them 24 meetings. Jason Weiers, Chris Koch, number of people 25 were at the township meetings where we've discussed with PAGE 74	1 them permission for this artery, I'm complicit in what 2 else is going on, what else is to come, and I don't want 3 that. 4 MR. PELHAM: You mentioned in your testimony, 5 sir, substations along the line. I'm wondering if you 6 can elaborate more on that. I mean, how are you aware 7 of others being offered to purchase property for 8 substations? 9 RICHARD LONG: We -- I mean, when they first 10 came and talked to us, it was the same old song and 11 dance. "You better sign up because all your neighbors 12 have." Then we started talking to our neighbors, and 13 Deb was the one who I talked to. They're -- they're 14 right next to us. I mean, that -- that's how we all 15 kind of started saying, "Hey, do you want this? Don't 16 you?" And we found out there was a lot of us, once we 17 started talking to each other, which was a good thing 18 that neighbors should do. But Deb is the one that I 19 know of and I -- I don't know that I can confirm another 20 one. I think I can. But that Deb Wald that was up here 21 testifying was one that I know of. 22 MR. PELHAM: Thank you, sir. I think that's all 23 the questions I have for you today. 24 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Mr. Schock, any 25 questions? PAGE 76

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1 MR. SCHOCK: No questions, Your Honor. 2 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Commissioner Kringstad. 3 COMMISSIONER KRINGSTAD: Just one. 4 I just want to clarify to make sure I 5 understand. I thought you mentioned -- so you mentioned 6 that this is supposed to cross your land at -- at Wano 7 Township and Willowbank. 8 RICHARD LONG: Correct. 9 COMMISSIONER KRINGSTAD: Did you say that it 10 was -- that there was kind of a third section it was 11 supposed to cross, but it's been moved off of now? Did 12 I understand that correctly? 13 RICHARD LONG: So if you look at the north half 14 of 4, it was going to go right down the -- the center -- 15 COMMISSIONER KRINGSTAD: Okay. 16 RICHARD LONG: -- of the north half of 4. And I 17 think their first proposed line, it just kept going 18 straight down there. But we have a neighbor that lives 19 in the corner, the southeast corner of the southwest 20 quarter. So this line would be going right -- right 21 past his place. So they moved it 500 feet out onto the 22 southeast quarter of 4. 23 COMMISSIONER KRINGSTAD: Okay. And do you know, 24 like was moving -- was moving that section off of your 25 land from -- from having a conversation with them or PAGE 77	1 spring? 2 RICHARD LONG: Monitoring it during the 3 legislative session. 4 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: Okay. And you said 5 you're from Wano, but you also have property in 6 Willowbank; correct? 7 RICHARD LONG: I'm from Henrietta. I've got 8 land in Wano and Willowbank. 9 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: So that bill has our 10 decisions on siting just based on specific criteria 11 superseding those ordinances. Can you refresh me? I 12 know it's in here somewhere. After Mrs. Wald testified, 13 I was trying to find it. Is Wano one of the ones that 14 has a half-mile setback? 15 RICHARD LONG: Yes. 16 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: Or a moratorium. And 17 then -- 18 RICHARD LONG: Wano has a moratorium and 19 Willowbank does also. 20 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: Okay. 21 RICHARD LONG: I think Willowbank has a half a 22 mile. I -- I'm not 100 percent sure. 23 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: They either -- they 24 both either have one or the other. 25 RICHARD LONG: Correct. PAGE 79
1 that just happened kind of outside of any dialogue you 2 had with the company? And if you don't know, that's 3 okay. 4 RICHARD LONG: Well, I don't know. 5 COMMISSIONER KRINGSTAD: You don't. Okay. 6 RICHARD LONG: I just better say I don't know. 7 COMMISSIONER KRINGSTAD: Okay. That's all the 8 questions I had. Thank you for coming. And thank you 9 for coming to Bismarck as well. 10 RICHARD LONG: Yes. 11 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Commissioner Christmann. 12 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: I'm curious. You 13 mentioned that you also don't want what else is to come. 14 RICHARD LONG: Correct. 15 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: Is what else is to 16 come, are you referring to the wind farms that Mrs. Wald 17 was talking about? 18 RICHARD LONG: Wind, solar, battery, all of the 19 things that are going to disrupt what we have now. 20 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: I get it. 21 So you also mentioned House Bill 1258. 22 RICHARD LONG: Correct. 23 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: Is that something 24 you've become familiar with subsequently, or were you 25 monitoring that during the legislative session last PAGE 78	1 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: Okay. So have they 2 done similar ordinances for generation facilities like 3 wind farms and solar farms, or have they just focused on 4 the transmission line? 5 RICHARD LONG: They've done it for -- the 6 moratoriums we have done for solar, wind, high-voltage 7 transmission lines, nuclear waste. I think there was 8 five of them. And things are moving so fast, we want to 9 try and protect ourselves from what is coming so... 10 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: Okay. I was trying to 11 figure out whether you and, presumably, a lot of other 12 people here are aware that that bill didn't have to do 13 with the generation facilities. 14 RICHARD LONG: Yes. 15 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: Thank you. 16 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Commissioner 17 Haugen-Hoffart. 18 COMMISSIONER HAUGEN-HOFFART: I have a couple of 19 questions just pertaining to the JETx. You indicated 20 that you had a first meeting -- you went to a public 21 meeting; correct? 22 RICHARD LONG: Yep. 23 COMMISSIONER HAUGEN-HOFFART: There was no form 24 of communication to you directly, be it a telephone call 25 or a letter or anything because you were impacted? PAGE 80

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1 RICHARD LONG: We did get mail. 2 COMMISSIONER HAUGEN-HOFFART: Okay. 3 RICHARD LONG: We got mail before that meeting. 4 But that -- I guess that was the first time we talked to 5 a person -- somebody in person, I guess. 6 COMMISSIONER HAUGEN-HOFFART: Okay. And was 7 that -- in that letter, did it say that you were 8 identified as a participating landowner and about the 9 meetings? Or can you -- do you recall what that first 10 letter stated? 11 RICHARD LONG: I think, if I remember correctly, 12 that it stated they had three corridors and they gave a 13 rough map of the corridors and we were in the corridor. 14 COMMISSIONER HAUGEN-HOFFART: Okay. 15 RICHARD LONG: One of the corridors. 16 COMMISSIONER HAUGEN-HOFFART: Okay. Thank you. 17 I just have one other question. You made a 18 statement about loss of trust and lies working with 19 this. Give me an example of a lie that they have told 20 you. 21 RICHARD LONG: At our township meetings, they 22 explained what they were doing. And we said, "Are you 23 telling us that there are no ons, no offs to this line? 24 Jamestown to Ellendale, one -- one line?" "Yep. Zero." 25 That's an example. PAGE 81	1 their way back to their chairs, we're going to get 2 started again. 3 All right. We will continue with public 4 testimony. Who would like to go next? 5 All right. Thank you, sir. 6 All right. I'm right on the borderline so I 7 don't know if I should say good morning or good 8 afternoon. So you get both, I guess. 9 I'll have you state your full name for the 10 record and spell your last name. 11 TIM LEPPERT: Tim Leppert. And it's spelled 12 L-E-P-P-E-R-T. 13 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: And, Mr. Leppert, did 14 you hear me go through the penalties for perjury this 15 morning? 16 TIM LEPPERT: Yes, I did. 17 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: And do you understand 18 what perjury is? 19 TIM LEPPERT: Yes. 20 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: And being advised of the 21 potential penalties for perjury, do you promise to tell 22 the truth in this case today? 23 TIM LEPPERT: Yes, I do. 24 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: All right. Thank you. 25 Go ahead. PAGE 83
1 COMMISSIONER HAUGEN-HOFFART: Okay. 2 RICHARD LONG: And living where we do, we have 3 had some experience with -- whether it's rural water, 4 electric, what I personally have found is the way these 5 projects usually work, just say a water line, they come 6 and get easements, they contract out to somebody who's 7 going to put this in and they contract out to somebody 8 and they contract us out to somebody, and then there's a 9 problem and you try and get ahold of who has the 10 easement and they give you the contact of the 11 contractor, and half the time, by the time you realize 12 the problem, the contractor has gone several states 13 away. Nothing is ever done. 14 And now we're starting this project and -- and 15 we got mistrust starting out from the people who want 16 the easement? Doesn't look good. 17 COMMISSIONER HAUGEN-HOFFART: Okay. I have -- 18 thank you. I have no further questions. 19 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: All right. Thank you, 20 Mr. Long. 21 We're going to take a short break. Let's 22 reconvene at 12:00. 23 (Recess) 24 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: All right. My watch 25 shows 12:00. So if everybody wants to start making PAGE 82	1 <u>TIM LEPPERT,</u> 2 being first duly sworn, testified as follows: 3 TIM LEPPERT: Good morning, Chairman Christmann, 4 Madam Commissioners. My name is Tim Leppert. My family 5 and I lease a considerable amount of pastureland here in 6 Dickey County and are concerned about what is happening 7 in this beautiful part of our state. 8 This is not part of what I've given you, but I 9 want to lay out the history of how this JETx power line 10 was developed. And this is actually information that I 11 have gleaned from corporations' websites over the last 12 year. So I'll continue. Thank you. 13 On June 12, 2021, the Clean Grid Alliance 14 launched a two-year project funded by the McNight 15 Foundation and the Energy Foundation to develop 16 renewable energy resources in the Upper Midwest, a 17 partnership of business community, local leaders, clean 18 energy advocates, and wind energy experts. 19 The original steering committee board members 20 were Chairman Bill Grant, Izaak Walton League; Bob 21 Markey, Energy Unlimited Incorporated; Scott Kelsh, 22 North Dakota Sustainable Energy for Economic 23 Development; Michael Noble, Minnesota for an Energy 24 Efficient Economy; Paul White, Project Resources Corp. 25 and EnXco, now PRC Wind & Solar; Ben Larsen, North PAGE 84

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1 Dakota SEED; Howard Learner, Environmental Law and 2 Policy Center; Ron Lehr, National Association of 3 Regulatory Utility Commissioners; Brian Parsons, 4 National Renewable Energy Lab; Ben Paulos, Energy 5 Foundation; David Benson, Nobles County commissioner, 6 Minnesota; Terry Black, Sustainable FERC Project; R.T. 7 Hap Boyd, Enron Wind Corporation; Beth Soholt, Izaak 8 Walton League; Matt Schuerger, tech consultant. 9 The original goals and objectives for the Clean 10 Grid Alliance were: remove bottlenecks in the 11 transmission system for wind, identify high priority 12 upgrades, work with utility, state and federal 13 regulators, and local communities to complete the 14 upgrades; provide wind energy with equal access to 15 transmission lines and fair rates for transmission 16 service, identify decision-makers at local, state, and 17 federal levels and enlist their support for transmission 18 improvements, educate key decision-makers on the 19 benefits of wind power for the region. 20 This meeting -- excuse me, missing a page here. 21 I'll go on. 22 This meeting links him to the Clean Grid 23 Alliance. Michael Brandenburg and his immediate family 24 members have signed easements for wind towers, solar 25 panels, and options to sell battery storage. The PAGE 85	1 and Blackstone, EDF Renewables, French government and 2 Israeli government-owned. This corporation demands 3 landowners who sign easements with them warrant their 4 mineral rights. 5 Most of the land is owned by absentee 6 landowners. They target areas where new transmission 7 lines are being built or force government agencies to do 8 so. Then they send in their landmen to prey upon 9 landowners and try to coerce them into signing land 10 easements. 11 The MISO 6 Tranche plan is part of the Clean 12 Grid Alliance agenda and scheme to get government 13 agencies to force utilities to build-out transmission 14 lines and other infrastructure such as substations and 15 get the consumers to pay for them so the big renewable 16 energy corporations can move their green energy to the 17 high-population green-energy-mandate states where they 18 can sell it for a premium price. 19 The proof of this is nine renewable energy 20 corporations are represented on the Clean Grid Alliance 21 board of directors. They have figured out the perfect 22 scam to collect on both ends of the Green New Deal; 23 front-end tax credits, back-end consumers pay for 24 transmission infrastructure. And they have coopted the 25 environmental groups into helping them; i.e., Izaak PAGE 87
1 current 2025 Clean Grid Alliance Board of Directors 2 consists of Adam Sokolski, chairman, EDF Renewable; 3 Sarah Johnson Phillips, secretary/treasurer, Stoel 4 Rivers LLP; Julie Voeck, chair emeritus, NextEra Energy; 5 Moshe Bonder, National Grid Ventures; Lauren Burm, 6 Vestas; Rachael Estes, Pattern Energy; Erika Kowall, 7 American Clean Power Association; Chris Kunkle, Apex 8 Clean Energy; Kevin Lambert, RWE; Nicole Luckey, 9 Invenergy; David Mindham, EDP Renewables; John Moore, 10 Sustainable FERC Project; Jordan Oster, Iowa 11 Environmental Council; Beth Soholt, Izaak Walton League. 12 This board of directors represents some of the 13 largest wind developers in the world, financed by the 14 largest corporations and countries in the world, such as 15 EDP Renewables, China Three Gorges, headquarters 16 Portugal, owned by the Chinese Government, NextEra 17 Energy, Vanguard, BlackRock, National Grid Ventures, 18 Vanguard, BlackRock, Norway, Dhabi pension funds, 19 Vestas, BlackRock, Vanguard, Schroeder Investments, 20 British, Nordea -- Nordea Investments, Finland, Pattern 21 Energy, Dutch, Australian, and Canadian Pension Funds, 22 Apex Clean Energy, Vanguard, BlackRock, Sumitomo Mitsui 23 Financial Group, Wellington and Capital World Investors, 24 RWE, a German energy company owned by Qatar Holdings 25 LLC, BlackRock, Invenergy, Canadian Pension Fund, CDPQ, PAGE 86	1 Walton League of America, Environmental Law and Policy 2 Center, and the sustainable FERC project. These are 3 groups that brought you the MISO 6 Tranche plan. They 4 have bought off government agencies, government 5 employees, legislators, county and township officials; 6 i.e., note a Minnesota County commissioner was on the 7 clean -- original Clean Grid Alliance steering 8 committee. 9 This agenda has been carefully planned and 10 crafted for at least 25 years. And the general public 11 has been kept in the dark about it. Multinational 12 renewable energy corporations and hostile foreign 13 government parasites are sucking the American people dry 14 of their wealth. 15 And now they are going after the last things of 16 value the American citizen property owners have: their 17 land, their minerals, and their water. When the 18 corporations own or control these assets through the -- 19 through the easements they force the people to sign by 20 creating economic hardships and artificially 21 manipulating markets, the people will become mere serfs 22 and tenants on the land they no longer control. All 23 they will have left is the liability for what happens on 24 that property and the tax bill they are forced to pay. 25 Thank you. And I would stand for questions. PAGE 88

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1 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: All right. Thank you. 2 Ms. Furey, any questions? 3 MS. FUREY: No questions. 4 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Mr. Pelham, any 5 questions? 6 MR. PELHAM: Good afternoon. Thanks for being 7 here, Mr. Leppert. As far as the proposed JETx 8 transmission line, is it proposed to go across any of 9 the property that you lease or you own in Dickey County? 10 TIM LEPPERT: Not in Dickey County, but in 11 LaMoure County, yes. 12 MR. PELHAM: In LaMoure County. I see. And do 13 you have the legal descriptions of that? 14 TIM LEPPERT: I don't have it with me today, but 15 I will provide that in my follow-up when I testify 16 again. 17 MR. PELHAM: Okay. In terms of contact with MDU 18 or Otter Tail or their agents -- well, I shouldn't 19 assume anything ever, but I assume that you've not 20 entered into any type of agreement with Montana-Dakota 21 or Otter Tail; correct? 22 TIM LEPPERT: No. My family and I have not. 23 MR. PELHAM: Okay. And as far as the specific 24 reasons, I mean, aside from what you've provided us here 25 today, the clean -- Clean Grid Alliance testimony, are PAGE 89	1 furnish you that at first -- further testimony. 2 MR. PELHAM: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Leppert. I 3 don't have any other questions for you. 4 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Any questions, 5 Mr. Schock? 6 MR. SCHOCK: So you reference your family does 7 rent some pastureland, it sounds like, in Dickey County? 8 TIM LEPPERT: Yes, we do. 9 MR. SCHOCK: Are you able -- willing and able to 10 identify the parcels for that? 11 TIM LEPPERT: I wish I would have known you were 12 going to ask me that. I can't. I could have and I can 13 at further -- 14 MR. SCHOCK: Okay. And that's fine. You can 15 provide that at a later date. That's perfectly fine. 16 Do you know if -- 17 TIM LEPPERT: It's in the northwest corner of 18 the county. 19 MR. SCHOCK: Okay. Do you know if the actual 20 landowner for those parcels has signed easements? 21 TIM LEPPERT: They have signed easements with 22 and have wind towers on other property but not on the 23 property that we lease from them. And they have told us 24 they will not sign easements on that property. 25 MR. SCHOCK: Okay. So including for the PAGE 91
1 there other reasons that your family or you are opposed 2 to the project? 3 TIM LEPPERT: Yes, and I will testify to that at 4 a later hearing here. Yeah. 5 MR. PELHAM: All right. 6 TIM LEPPERT: There are many concerns. Our 7 family has been -- well, it's -- I will testify to that, 8 but we have been directly affected by this and I will 9 furnish evidence of that in a further hearing. 10 MR. PELHAM: Okay. And as far as the Clean Grid 11 Alliance specifically, and I appreciate all the 12 information you provided, are you aware of anything in 13 your research that you've done that would connect the 14 Clean Grid Alliance to either Montana-Dakota Utilities 15 or Otter Tail Power? 16 TIM LEPPERT: I did not find directly them 17 connected to the Clean Grid alliance, but they have been 18 influenced. I found a lot that they -- they have had 19 communications with multiple utilities, corporations. 20 MR. PELHAM: And when you say "communications," 21 are you aware of any specifics? And I understand -- you 22 know, if you're not, you are -- if you know, you know. 23 You don't know, that's okay. But can you be more 24 specific on that? 25 TIM LEPPERT: I can't be specific, but I could PAGE 90	1 transmission line. 2 TIM LEPPERT: They won't sign for that either. 3 MR. SCHOCK: So as far as you're aware, they 4 have not? 5 TIM LEPPERT: Yes. 6 MR. SCHOCK: Okay. 7 TIM LEPPERT: That I know of. 8 MR. SCHOCK: Yeah. If you -- Wednesday, Friday, 9 whatever, if you'd be willing to provide that -- 10 TIM LEPPERT: Sure, I can do that. 11 MR. SCHOCK: -- that legal, that would be 12 helpful. I don't think I have anything else at this 13 time, but thank you. 14 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Commissioner Kringstad. 15 COMMISSIONER KRINGSTAD: Just a couple points of 16 clarification for my own understanding. So the land 17 that you rent in Dickey County and also you're renting 18 land in LaMoure County; correct? 19 TIM LEPPERT: The land that is in Dickey County 20 we lease -- 21 COMMISSIONER KRINGSTAD: Or lease. Okay. 22 TIM LEPPERT: -- from the Heim Brothers. 23 COMMISSIONER KRINGSTAD: Okay. 24 TIM LEPPERT: The land in LaMoure County we own. 25 COMMISSIONER KRINGSTAD: Okay. Thank you. PAGE 92

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1 That's what I wanted to verify. 2 And this project crosses or is directly impacted 3 by both parcels of land in Dickey and LaMoure? 4 TIM LEPPERT: Not in Dickey. In LaMoure. 5 COMMISSIONER KRINGSTAD: Not in Dickey. In 6 LaMoure. Okay. That's what I needed. Thank you very 7 much. 8 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Commissioner Christmann. 9 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: The testimony you 10 handed out laid out the original makeup of the Clean 11 Energy Alliance, their goals, and then it jumped to the 12 current makeup. And you said there was a page missing. 13 TIM LEPPERT: Yeah. 14 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: In that kind of half 15 paragraph in between, it said this links someone -- 16 TIM LEPPERT: Yes. 17 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: -- to who? 18 TIM LEPPERT: Yes. 19 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: Who? Who? 20 TIM LEPPERT: I could testify to that page of 21 what it actually said. 22 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: Can you just tell me 23 who "he" is or "him"? 24 TIM LEPPERT: Michael Brandenburg is -- 25 represents District 28 in the state of North Dakota. PAGE 93	1 not in effect yet? 2 TIM LEPPERT: We are in the process of updating 3 and we have moratorium those things -- 4 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: Oh, you have the 5 moratorium. 6 TIM LEPPERT: -- to give us time. We put 7 two-year moratoriums on these projects to give the 8 townships time. We're all volunteer. We serve on the 9 boards voluntarily. We get no pay. We do this as 10 service to our constituents, our township residents. 11 And I would like to enter this into the record. 12 Not one Russell Township resident landowner has signed 13 an easement with the JETx power line. 14 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: I don't think I have 15 any other questions, but thank you for being here, Tim. 16 TIM LEPPERT: Thank you. 17 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Commissioner 18 Haugen-Hoffart. 19 COMMISSIONER HAUGEN-HOFFART: I know you -- hi, 20 Tim. I know you were in Bismarck. I thank you; and for 21 here. 22 Is there a reason -- I'm just curious why you 23 don't do your complete testimony here or are you waiting 24 to -- for the -- 25 TIM LEPPERT: Well, I have to represent the PAGE 95
1 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: Okay. And then your 2 land that you own in LaMoure County, is that involved 3 with this project or is it -- 4 TIM LEPPERT: Yes, it is. 5 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: And so -- and you have 6 clearly not signed easements? 7 TIM LEPPERT: No, we have not. 8 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: And do I recall right? 9 It's easier for me to ask than to go scrambling through 10 the pages, but your name seems very familiar. Are you 11 on the township board of one of the townships in LaMoure 12 County? 13 TIM LEPPERT: I serve as the zoning 14 administrator in Russell Township. 15 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: Russell. 16 TIM LEPPERT: Yes. 17 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: And can you refresh me 18 on what Russell has for an ordinance regarding this? 19 TIM LEPPERT: Russell Township is in the process 20 now of updating its ordinances concerning high-voltage 21 transmission lines, wind towers, solar panels, battery 22 storage, carbon capture facilities, carbon capture 23 pipelines, nuclear waste disposable, and battery 24 storage. 25 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: But for now they're PAGE 94	1 township on Wednesday. 2 COMMISSIONER HAUGEN-HOFFART: Okay. 3 TIM LEPPERT: I have to read into some -- into 4 the record some township documents that we wish to 5 establish in the record. And then I have a personal 6 testimony that I -- that that -- of events that have 7 happened in the past three, four years concerning the 8 JETx power line. And I wish probably to do that at 9 Jamestown. 10 COMMISSIONER HAUGEN-HOFFART: Okay. 11 Understandable. I have no further questions. Thank 12 you. 13 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: All right. Thank you. 14 Who would like to go next? Do we have others 15 that want to provide testimony? Is there anyone else 16 that wants to provide testimony? 17 Hi. Come on up. Perfect. 18 JASON HILDENBRAND: I believe there's two 19 documents. 20 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: I'll have you state your 21 name for the record and spell your last name. 22 JASON HILDENBRAND: Jason Hildenbrand, 23 H-I-L-D-E-N-B-R-A-N-D. 24 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Mr. Hildenbrand, did you 25 hear me go through the penalties for perjury this PAGE 96

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1 morning? 2 JASON HILDENBRAND: Yes. 3 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: And do you understand 4 what perjury is? 5 JASON HILDENBRAND: Yes. 6 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Being advised of the 7 potential penalties for perjury, do you promise to tell 8 the truth in this case today? 9 JASON HILDENBRAND: Yes. 10 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Thank you. Go ahead. 11 <u>JASON HILDENBRAND.</u> 12 being first duly sworn, testified as follows: 13 JASON HILDENBRAND: I'm here on behalf of Valley 14 Township. I entered in two documents in writing. Would 15 you guys like me to read them also? 16 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: No, I don't think you 17 need to read them. 18 JASON HILDENBRAND: Okay. All right. Thank 19 you. 20 Good afternoon, Commissioner, sirs and madams. 21 My name is Jason Hildenbrand on behalf of Valley 22 Township. I submitted two written filings in this 23 docket, including a limited objection on need and 24 questions for the record. 25 The Commission previously issued a CPCN for the PAGE 97	1 will reduce local impacts here, including impacts to 2 residents, farming operations, drainage, access, and 3 restoration? 4 Thank you. 5 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: All right. Thank you. 6 Ms. Furey, any questions? 7 MS. FUREY: No questions, Your Honor. I guess 8 we would just note for the record that matters 9 considered by the Commission in the CPCN proceeding are 10 separate from this proceeding, and the issue of need is 11 outside the scope of the factors to be considered by the 12 Commission per North Dakota Supreme Court precedent. 13 Thank you. 14 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Thank you. 15 Mr. Pelham, any questions? 16 MR. PELHAM: I don't. Thank you. 17 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Mr. Schock. 18 MR. SCHOCK: So you're here representing Valley 19 Township -- 20 JASON HILDENBRAND: Correct. 21 MR. SCHOCK: -- in Dickey County? 22 JASON HILDENBRAND: Correct. 23 MR. SCHOCK: It's my understanding that there's 24 no conditional use permit requirement within Valley 25 Township. PAGE 99
1 same project in Docket PU-24-91 under Chapter 49-03. 2 That CPCN was noticed by publication and Valley Township 3 did not receive direct notice. The Commission's June 4 18, 2025, order leaving that CPCN in place is now under 5 review in the Burleigh County District Court, Case No. 6 08-2025-CV-02068. 7 Valley Township's request today is 8 straightforward. In this chapter of 49-22 siting 9 docket, the Commission should not treat the prior CPCN 10 as conclusive proof of need. The Commission should 11 require any need-related showing in this record and 12 issue in a final decision with findings and reasons 13 based on the evidence presented here. 14 I would like to highlight three questions out of 15 the 12 I submitted. 16 First one is where in the PU-25-236 application 17 is the Chapter 49-22 statement of need, and will the 18 Commission make findings with reasons on need in this 19 docket? 20 Second, what updated studies account for changes 21 affecting the Ellendale area, including new load, and 22 what reliability of transmission constraints does this 23 line solve today versus projects -- projected future 24 conditions? 25 Third, what alternatives or permit conditions PAGE 98	1 JASON HILDENBRAND: That is correct. 2 MR. SCHOCK: And I guess, off the top of my 3 head, I'm trying to figure out -- has there been any 4 significant feedback from landowners within Valley 5 Township? I guess I'm -- outside of what you've 6 submitted here, I'm not familiar with any like -- 7 JASON HILDENBRAND: I would say the biggest 8 concern we've noticed is how the leases were obtained. 9 You know, there's several out-of-state landowners even, 10 that they were told "Everybody else has signed up, you 11 know, you're the last one to sign up," tactics like 12 that. 13 MR. SCHOCK: Sure. 14 JASON HILDENBRAND: You know, I can think of 15 three offhand. One's actually from California. Didn't 16 sign, you know. Another one, same thing was used. He 17 asked why this route and this path of least resistance, 18 you know. And after talking to landlords -- landowners 19 after that, not the case, they're not even signed up to 20 this date. So, you know, things like that, the approach 21 they took to obtain leases to get to their 77 percent 22 that they have today. 23 MR. SCHOCK: Sure. 24 JASON HILDENBRAND: As a township supervisor. 25 MR. SCHOCK: Sure. Do you have any other PAGE 100

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1 concerns about the project you'd like to make us aware 2 of? 3 JASON HILDENBRAND: Safety for the residents. 4 You know, fires, you know, EMF, you know, things along 5 that line. How it impacts farming operations is a huge 6 one. The technology we have nowadays, GPSes, you know, 7 how it's going to affect that. I've heard of instances 8 where it can really maybe even destroy your equipment. 9 You know, might be isolated, but it's a possibility. 10 You know, we're spending tens of thousands of dollars on 11 this equipment. You know, how is that going to affect 12 that equipment? 13 MR. SCHOCK: Okay. 14 JASON HILDENBRAND: Those are some of the big 15 ones. Safety. You know, at the setback of 500 feet, if 16 there were to be a fire and the farmstead is right 17 there, you know, are local fire departments even trained 18 at this point to handle something like that? 19 MR. SCHOCK: Okay. 20 JASON HILDENBRAND: You get some of these dry 21 falls, got a quarter of corn catches on fire, you know, 22 the safety of the residents is huge. 23 MR. SCHOCK: Okay. I have no other questions. 24 Thank you. 25 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Commissioner Kringstad. PAGE 101	1 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: And being advised of the 2 potential penalties for perjury, do you promise to tell 3 the truth in this case today? 4 WAYNE WALD: Yes, ma'am. 5 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: All right. Thank you. 6 I'm going to have you pull that mic just a 7 little bit closer so we can hear you. 8 WAYNE WALD: Is that better? 9 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Yes. Thank you. Go 10 ahead. 11 <u>WAYNE WALD.</u> 12 being first duly sworn, testified as follows: 13 WAYNE WALD: I just wanted to address a couple 14 things. I attended the technical meeting on January 8th 15 in Bismarck, and I just wanted to reiterate some stuff 16 that I may have found out that may have been missing 17 information. 18 With these easements, and they can -- they 19 stated their percentages of these easements that they 20 have signed. Some of these easements were option 21 easements, and from my understanding, they expired the 22 31st of December. And I have a neighbor that told me 23 that one of her neighbors told her that they did not 24 accept money for the extension of that easement after 25 the 31st. PAGE 103
1 COMMISSIONER KRINGSTAD: No questions. Thank 2 you for being here. 3 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Commissioner Christmann. 4 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: Me neither, but 5 thanks. 6 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Commissioner 7 Haugen-Hoffart. 8 COMMISSIONER HAUGEN-HOFFART: No questions. 9 Thank you. 10 JASON HILDENBRAND: Thank you. 11 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: All right. Thank you. 12 Is there anyone else that would like to provide 13 public testimony? 14 Good afternoon. I'll have you state your full 15 name for the record and spell your last name. 16 WAYNE WALD: Wayne Wald. 17 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Can you spell your last 18 name? 19 WAYNE WALD: W-A-L-D. 20 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Mr. Wald, did you hear 21 me go through the penalties for perjury this morning? 22 WAYNE WALD: Yes, ma'am. 23 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Do you understand what 24 perjury is? 25 WAYNE WALD: Yes. PAGE 102	1 So I would just -- like make sure you guys are 2 aware that those percentages could have went down. I'm 3 not sure when they have -- when they took that 4 information of those percentages that were signed up, 5 that those option easements weren't re-signed, those 6 percentages could potentially have went down. 7 Keep going? 8 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Sure. 9 WAYNE WALD: I have one other thing that was 10 kind of, I don't know, not really troubling, but just 11 kind of raised some concern. At that technical meeting 12 they were talking about the restrictions that some of 13 those townships put on and that other townships may do 14 the same thing, neighboring townships may do the same 15 thing, which was kind of concerning. Because if they're 16 doing everything right and the trust is there, why would 17 they be concerned that other townships will do this 18 also, if they're doing everything right and the process 19 is right? 20 And that's about all I have. 21 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: All right. Thank you. 22 Ms. Furey, any questions? 23 MS. FUREY: No questions. 24 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Mr. Pelham. 25 MR. PELHAM: Mr. Wald, I didn't catch your first PAGE 104

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1 name. Could you repeat it? 2 WAYNE WALD: Oh. Wayne. 3 MR. PELHAM: Wayne. Okay. You were away from 4 the mic. Thank you, sir. 5 As far as in Dickey County or other property, do 6 you own any property where the line is proposed to 7 cross? 8 WAYNE WALD: We rent land that it is supposed to 9 cross. 10 MR. PELHAM: Okay. Do you happen to know where 11 that is; a legal description perhaps? 12 WAYNE WALD: Wano in LaMoure County, section 9. 13 MR. PELHAM: Okay. 14 WAYNE WALD: The northeast quarter. And then to 15 the south of there, I'm not familiar with the section 16 number, but there is a half section running east and 17 west of pasture land that we rent. 18 MR. PELHAM: As far as the communications that 19 you've had with the company, have you had recent 20 communication with the company as far as trying to reach 21 an agreement? 22 WAYNE WALD: No, I have not. I have not. We 23 don't own any land. It's just rented land. 24 And I will have further testimony on Wednesday 25 in Edgeley. PAGE 105	1 I think you have the same last name, are you related to 2 Debbie? 3 WAYNE WALD: I am not. 4 COMMISSIONER KRINGSTAD: Oh, okay. 5 WAYNE WALD: It's probably 10 generations 6 down -- 7 COMMISSIONER KRINGSTAD: Down the line. Okay. 8 Sounds good. I just wanted to see if there was 9 connection between the sections she mentioned too, but 10 that answers that question. So, all right. Thank you. 11 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Commissioner Christmann. 12 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: I don't think I have 13 any other questions. 14 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Commissioner 15 Haugen-Hoffart. 16 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: Got beat to that one. 17 COMMISSIONER HAUGEN-HOFFART: No questions. 18 Thank you for your testimony. 19 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: All right. Thank you, 20 Mr. Wald. 21 Is there anyone else that wants to provide 22 public testimony? 23 All right. 24 SANDRA RUPP: For the record, I am Sandra Rupp, 25 R-U-P-P. And I do understand everything that the PAGE 107
1 MR. PELHAM: And there's some testimony today, 2 and I think there's also testimony from the company as 3 far as they're engaging with people "who are willing to 4 engage with us, and people that have told us 'No, we 5 don't want to engage in further discussions,'" the 6 company has not. 7 Are you someone that has told them, "No, I don't 8 want to engage in further discussions with reaching 9 agreement," or are you still open to discussions with -- 10 WAYNE WALD: I -- I don't have any land that 11 they -- that we own where they will. 12 MR. PELHAM: Oh, I see. 13 WAYNE WALD: I'm just a renter. 14 MR. PELHAM: You're a renter. And as far as the 15 owner of the land, though, have they entered into an 16 easement? I'm sorry, I didn't understand you. 17 WAYNE WALD: No, they have not. 18 MR. PELHAM: They have not. Okay. All right. 19 Thank you, sir. I don't have any other questions. 20 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Mr. Schock, any 21 questions? 22 MR. SCHOCK: No questions, Your Honor. Thank 23 you. 24 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Commissioner Kringstad. 25 COMMISSIONER KRINGSTAD: Just to clarify, since PAGE 106	1 hearing officer said about the oath. But we can go 2 through the formality if it's necessary. 3 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: I have to go through it, 4 unfortunately. 5 SANDRA RUPP: Totally understand. 6 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: But it sounds like you 7 did hear me go through the penalties for perjury? 8 SANDRA RUPP: I did, and I understand that. 9 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: And understand what 10 perjury is? 11 All right. And with that in mind, do you 12 promise to tell the truth in this case today? 13 SANDRA RUPP: I do. 14 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: All right. Thank you. 15 Go ahead. 16 <u>SANDRA RUPP.</u> 17 being first duly sworn, testified as follows: 18 SANDRA RUPP: Well, first of all, I checked on 19 here and I made sure I checked on here "No," I wasn't 20 going to give testimony. So just goes to show that we 21 women can change our minds. 22 Something that I would like to bring to all of 23 you commissioners is the fact that, during testimony, 24 Mr. Weiers, he had actually put into his testimony that 25 the farming impact, this project will allow the farming PAGE 108

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1 to continue. That is very nice that we are allowed to 2 do that. He also stated that he felt that the farming 3 practices would have a minimal impact. 4 I guess, as a farmer, I would like to give you a 5 little bit of background. I spent 20 years as a 6 railroad laborer, engineer. I worked out there on the 7 tracks, building, tearing them apart, putting them 8 together. Now I have the privilege and honor to say 9 that the last 20 years I have been very engaged in 10 farming and ranching back in the day. 11 When you look at the documents that you folks 12 have, the binders, something that I learned in the 13 course of my life and working was everything looks good 14 on paper. But when you put that into real life, that's 15 when we really have the challenges of what happens. 16 And I'm sure this is no strange terminology, but 17 SNFU, everybody knows what that is like. I heard it on 18 the railroad many times. You can tear a railroad apart, 19 but it takes an extra kind of sort of special to put 20 that railroad back together again. Same happens here 21 where I want to address. 22 You know, Commissioner Haugen-Hoffart, you had 23 asked the question earlier about the dust control issue. 24 And specifically at first I thought, well, that was a 25 good answer that Mr. Weiers presented to the group, that PAGE 109	1 one to another to another. And you've got to be sharp 2 about it; you got to be awake, so to speak. Because we 3 all know the accidents are out there. 4 But, you know, in all of it, when I look at the 5 dust impact, they're going to provide water and have 6 that reduced, my question is: Where's the water going 7 to come from? Because in all the acres that we farm -- 8 And we are affected by this JETx power line. My 9 farm operation, along with my family farm operation -- I 10 do take vestment in that, I've worked hard to get that 11 to be our family farm and to continue -- is going to be 12 impacted because we have currently three landlords who 13 are owners of the tracts of where we farm. 14 So how am I safely going to be getting those 15 loads in and out? And in a day's time, I can do up 16 to -- I've done up to 300 miles traveling. Now, 17 granted, not all on gravel, but a lion's share is on 18 gravel roads. That's where we are. We're in North 19 Dakota. We don't have that wide shoulder. So I'm 20 trucking day in/day out. My load is heavy. The 21 township roads are only so wide. They're coming in with 22 all this heavy equipment. And we're supposed to share 23 these roads. 24 Now I can share the roads with other farmers 25 who've been around in our area. And I always say it's PAGE 111
1 they're going to have water available and work through 2 the local -- he stated it, help me out here -- but that 3 they were going to work with the local entities to try 4 to provide that service. 5 So, number one, to give you an idea, I wear a 6 lot of hats. Many, many hats. I've served as directors 7 on boards. I've also been in the engineering and track 8 building department for years. I've been a farmer for 9 years. Most recently, my biggest task is a truck 10 driver. Believe it or not, I am a truck driver. If 11 we've got a big rig and I've got big loads and people 12 are out there, they know who I am in the community, 13 we're hauling loads. 14 To give you an idea, most of the loads we haul 15 are going to be on gravel roads, of which you referenced 16 to, how do they plan to mitigate that dust during this 17 heavy construction time. 18 Also want to note that Mr. Weiers' testimony was 19 that the equipment is going to be relevant -- or 20 somewhat similar to the speeds of farm equipment. And I 21 had to stop and pause about that because I'm a farmer 22 and I'm a truck driver. And so many times when I'm out 23 there on the road, and I can be in the heat of battle 24 with harvest day in/day out, I have driven trucks, not 25 one -- we have multiple trucks on the farm. I jump from PAGE 110	1 kind of like we -- we dance out there, us truck drivers. 2 We kind of know already the rules of the road, so to 3 speak. If I'm bringing a heavy load and I know that 4 that road is -- let's just say it's spring weather and 5 it's wet. I'm not going to take that load to the side 6 of the road for the fact that we're going to have a 7 problem. SNFU. But does the other person who's loaded 8 understand that when they're coming into the community? 9 If anything, when I look at the timeline and I 10 hear that this applicant wants this project to start the 11 fall of this year, I'm a little bit nervous as to how do 12 they plan to work with the farmers. They did state that 13 they already have packets out to the landowners. But in 14 three areas of this proposed power line, which is going 15 to be in Wano Township, Willowbank Township, Badger 16 Township, and also in Dickey County, Valley Township, 17 that's where I'm going to be driving truck in the fall 18 of this year. I have no idea at this time what I'm up 19 against. 20 I can tell you that I have been in a truck 21 accident where I had my tandem full of soybeans, and I 22 was on a highway where another party driving another 23 loaded truck disobeyed a stop sign. Fortunately, my 24 son, who was 12 at the time, was in a seatbelt, as was 25 I. We were recognized for wearing seatbelts. Who does PAGE 112

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1 that in a farm truck? Well, safety has always been a 2 concern. 3 During my course of the 20 years on the 4 railroad, we had rules. Most of those rules that we 5 read through when I was a foreman, to read, to express 6 how important it is to work safe, those rules were 7 written in blood. We had to really look at the whole 8 equation. 9 This project, which is two folders deep, in the 10 real world we have to look at the whole equation. What 11 kind of safety measures have been brought into our 12 townships of which they have stated, the project 13 engineers, the team, where have they brought any public 14 input to those of us who will be directly affected? 15 As I try to even imagine when -- this year was 16 probably an eye-opener for me and I was, thank God, able 17 to drive on highway, taking loads into the elevator of 18 Fullerton, North Dakota, I was able to see the traffic 19 was not normal to what I've trucked in the last 20 20 years. This year was an anomaly. Each load that I 21 would take and the route I would take, I was counting 22 belly dumps or side dumps, and it was one after another. 23 Whoosh, whoosh, whoosh, whoosh. We'd get to the stop 24 sign with our big trucks, and there were people who did 25 not realize that you should stay behind that stop sign PAGE 113	1 Township of where we have farmed for a number of years. 2 Valley Township has their -- their minimal roads now 3 aren't even addressed -- minimal-use roads aren't even 4 addressed with repair. Their township funds, they can 5 only stretch so far. So the roads that we use when we 6 have to work out of Dickey County, Valley View Township, 7 those roads often are -- you know, I wouldn't want to 8 take my truck, my regular truck what I use for personal 9 use on them. I could, but I wouldn't want to. 10 When I have to have a loaded grain truck, I have 11 to keep in mind that those roads are also going to 12 damage my grain truck. It's loaded. We need to get in 13 on that field and out with minimal damage to the trucks. 14 That's part of, again, something that our townships 15 right now don't have the money to keep those roads in 16 good repair or good shape. 17 So I can't give you a date, but I can tell you 18 that within the last five years -- I'm also the 19 bookkeeper for our farm operation. I know the checks 20 that get written out. And we wrote out a substantial 21 check, I want to say that it was probably about \$8,000, 22 of which we hired gravel to be laid in this road. It's 23 not even our road. It belongs to Valley Township. We 24 asked Valley Township supervisors, "We need to get the 25 loads out. Can we go ahead and do this?" Yes, they PAGE 115
1 because those roads aren't wide enough for some of us to 2 turn into. Again, those of us who have been there, we 3 kind of understand the rules of the road and we like to 4 dance safely out there. 5 I have a real hard time understanding now where 6 I'm going to go this fall, and I will be driving the 7 roads that they claim will have dust. 8 They also claim that they're going to supervise 9 or put in some road signs or reduce the speed limits and 10 so on, so forth. If they do do that, have they really 11 done their homework? Who's going to police that? 12 When I'm out there on that road with my truck 13 and we're trying to maintain our agricultural footprint, 14 I'm not real sure it's fair that Mr. Weiers can state 15 under oath that this is going to create a minimal impact 16 for us farmers. If so, then I would like to know why we 17 haven't had open meetings with those of us in some of 18 these townships where we know the roads are not up to 19 par to handle a lot of these loads, meaning if that road 20 is going to have two inches of rain and we know that we 21 have to get something out of that field, we're probably 22 going to opt not to do it because we really don't like 23 pulling trucks out of the fields. We really don't like 24 having to repair roads. 25 And I'll just go into that leg now of Valley PAGE 114	1 gave us the blessing. But they said, "You do realize 2 that that's not going to be your road when you're done. 3 Anybody can drive it." And they do. But it cost our 4 family farm over \$8,000 to repair that road for one 5 season. And that's what we work with. It can get beat 6 up again in just one event of two inches of rain, four 7 inches of rain. 8 So in all of it, I'm really kind of having a 9 hard time understanding what the plan is for what's on 10 paper to address the actual impact more to what is a 11 reality and maybe not just an opinion. 12 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Does that conclude your 13 comments? 14 SANDRA RUPP: Oh, my brain is still trying to 15 spin here. 16 But, you know, I don't know if anybody can 17 really ideally understand what it is like when you are 18 up against all these other facets in life. You wake up 19 in the morning, you say, "I'm going to a hearing. This 20 is how my day is going to go." And you hope that it 21 does go that way. But to be fair for a farmer, to be 22 fair for a rancher, we need those roads. 23 Yeah, I guess I do have one more point. I 24 talked recently to the landowner, of which we have 25 three, and this one most recently signed up. And I PAGE 116

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1 said, "Terri, you understand now where we are of the 2 hardship that we may face now with this JETx power line 3 coming in specifically to a bridge and the only way that 4 we really can get to our land?" And she said, "Yes, 5 Sandy, I know, but we have to make decisions. And we 6 made the decision." 7 But she went on to say that in all of it, she 8 said, "Our language in our contract with JETx already 9 has language that is going to help you." And I said, 10 "Terri, how? How is that going to help me?" She said, 11 "Well, I can't tell you." 12 I can't say for sure, but I assume that their 13 contract has a nondisclosure; otherwise, I think she 14 would have shared. Because I said, "What's the 15 language?" And she wouldn't share. She said, "I can 16 tell you right now that we negotiated that tract, that 17 road that you're talking about, we negotiated that with 18 the land agents from JETx." And I said, "Terri, you do 19 realize that that roadway is the property of Willowbank 20 Township?" She goes, "Yes." 21 She lives in Minnesota. She's an absentee 22 landowner. She recently -- her and her siblings 23 inherited the land from her mother who just recently 24 passed. 25 And I'm wondering, "Do they really understand PAGE 117	1 seen any trucks go 40 miles an hour. Who's going to 2 police that? 3 When Mr. Hildenbrand's family notices the dust, 4 I have observed that they have actually hired somebody 5 to come in with a solution to go across that roadway, a 6 dust control. And does it work? Yes. How long does it 7 work? That's the question. As soon as we get rain, as 8 soon as we have all those trucks like myself going back 9 and forth and forth and back, all of that begins to 10 erode and then we're right back again to dust on the 11 road. 12 When I do my hauling into the little elevator of 13 Fullerton, North Dakota, when I get up closer to the 14 elevator, the elevator managers have already put into 15 play dust control mechanisms of which they have their 16 own on-site water truck. 17 On the days where North Dakota gets dry and 18 dusty, try to imagine, do you think that that watering 19 project, if it starts at 10 in the morning, is going to 20 be carrying over to the end of the day? It does not. I 21 can take in load after load. And throughout the course 22 of the day, I have seen that water truck in and amongst 23 the trucks that I have to work with during my tasks. 24 Sometimes up to three times a day that little area is 25 getting watered down. Where's the water going to come PAGE 119
1 the legal of township roads?" We went to Valley to ask 2 them permission just to lay \$8,000 of gravel. How 3 could -- if this did happen, how could JETx enter into a 4 contract with a landowner to guarantee that they would 5 not use that road? Because that's what she told me. 6 She said, "We entered into this contract, we put 7 language in there that they are not allowed to use that 8 road." 9 Think about that. If that happened, how could 10 JETx take that leap to put into language to guarantee a 11 landowner that that road would not be used? I hope it's 12 true personally. Then I guess that's one leg of road 13 that I don't have to worry about with an accident or 14 dust. 15 Dust is significant. When I truck to Fullerton, 16 I actually drive truck right past a gentleman who 17 testified earlier here today, Jason Hildenbrand. I 18 drive right past his family operation with my trucks. I 19 create dust. I don't like it. I know what it does. It 20 takes away your vision. You can't see other people 21 coming. I'm often flipping my lights on going, "Please, 22 I hope they see me." 23 It's a 40 mile an hour -- mile per hour on some 24 of those gravel roads. It's posted 40 miles per hour 25 for trucks. I don't believe I can ever say that I have PAGE 118	1 from? Who's going to apply the water? 2 Today is -- we're in the year of 2026. This is 3 January. They want to break ground and start working 4 construction the fall of 2026. Who are they contracting 5 to be out there with the trucks, not just here and there 6 when it's needed. We have dust in North Dakota almost 7 every day, folks. Almost every day. I can't say when 8 it doesn't dust, but I can tell you it's after a big 9 rainfall. And when that does happen, my trucks have to 10 stay off the road because I'm just going to tear that 11 road up. 12 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: All right. Thank you. 13 Ms. Furey, any questions? 14 MS. FUREY: No questions. 15 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Mr. Pelham, any 16 questions? 17 MR. PELHAM: Ms. Rupp, you mentioned you have 18 three landlords who own tracts where you farm. Do you 19 know the descriptions of where those are at? 20 SANDRA RUPP: I do. 21 MR. PELHAM: What are they? 22 SANDRA RUPP: You asked me the descriptions. I 23 will tell you -- I will tell you. Badger 30, 24 Willowbank. 25 MR. PELHAM: Okay. PAGE 120

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1 SANDRA RUPP: Vera Howe east, Vera Howe south 2 quarter, Bartles, Dickey County. 3 You didn't ask me for the legal descriptions. 4 You didn't ask me for the legal descriptions, sir. 5 Here's where we are -- 6 MR. PELHAM: I'm not going to argue. I've 7 learned not to argue with people. 8 SANDRA RUPP: With females of my type. I just 9 had to make sure that we all understand. I know you 10 want the legal descriptions. 11 MR. PELHAM: Right. 12 SANDRA RUPP: Legal I cannot help you with. 13 But, yes, I could tell you where every one of those 14 locations is because we always have pet names for 15 everything. 16 MR. PELHAM: Sure. 17 SANDRA RUPP: I can tell you I even pet-name my 18 trucks. I've got the Big K, I've got the Ford, I've got 19 Kenny. I got a Mac that my son owns that once in a 20 while I can do. And we recently added Petey. 21 But in all of it I can't give you a legal 22 description. But if you need those, I can certainly get 23 those to you. 24 MR. PELHAM: It just helps us out just to see 25 where on the map it's specifically located. PAGE 121	1 could to working three jobs. I railroaded over 16 years 2 of our marriage, leaving our children with him and his 3 parents to almost raise because I was too busy in the 4 railroad industry trying to save the farm. We've almost 5 lost that farm multiple times. So we don't own a lot of 6 land. 7 But at this point, when that JETx transmission 8 line does come in, I believe firmly that there's going 9 to be an impact on future farming. I don't believe that 10 the farming is going to have the same practice. 11 An incident of which my husband and I, 12 fortunately, again, we're glad that we're here, is one 13 of our pieces of farm equipment. It gets big. You get 14 used to that little old car you're driving around and 15 you kind of know where you're at, and all of a sudden 16 you decide to go out and buy this great big vehicle and 17 now you're over there and all of a sudden you're 18 sideswiping something because, "Oh, I didn't adjust for 19 that." 20 So one day he calls. He hit one of Dakota 21 Valley Electric's power lines. He hit it with his farm 22 equipment. I said, "Wow. Okay. Glad everybody's okay. 23 No harm, no foul." But at the end of the day our farm 24 operation had to buy that utility pole from Dakota 25 Valley Electric. We had to purchase that. PAGE 123
1 And you mentioned that there were three owners 2 that you lease from, one of which -- 3 SANDRA RUPP: Correct. 4 MR. PELHAM: -- had signed an easement with the 5 company. Have the other two owners also signed or -- 6 SANDRA RUPP: They will not. 7 MR. PELHAM: They will not. 8 SANDRA RUPP: They will not. 9 I will give you just a little background on the 10 one that I know will not. She's actually an 11 out-of-state landowner. She has been solicited, of 12 course. You know, I mean, that's how you get things 13 done. So that is no issue. But she's 92 years old, in 14 Alameda, California. She's never been married. She 15 doesn't have a farm background, but she has the value of 16 what farmland means. She said, "Sandy, we have to feed 17 the people." I said, "Vera, you're so right." 18 The footprint of what this project is going to 19 do, in my opinion, is going to impact our area in ways 20 that I don't think any of us in this room can even begin 21 to understand. That's my opinion. We've heard that 22 this is an artery to something else that's about to 23 come. 24 My husband and I don't own a lot of land. We 25 simply don't. We never could. We did everything we PAGE 122	1 And, to me, again, I'm safety. I think after 16 2 years of getting it drilled in your head when you 3 know -- I've actually seen people -- on the railroad you 4 see a lot. I'll just leave it at that. But when I say 5 that those rules are written in blood, it is -- 6 MR. PELHAM: There's a reason why they're 7 written -- 8 SANDRA RUPP: It is. 9 MR. PELHAM: -- and unfortunate things because 10 they're written. And you think that they're obvious, 11 but they're only obvious because something bad has 12 happened. 13 SANDRA RUPP: So he hit the pole. We paid 14 Dakota Valley Electric. After we could afford to put 15 the money together, we paid Dakota Valley Electric, 16 after we bought the pole some years following, over 17 \$12,000, and asked them to please put that power line 18 under the ground. 19 As a mother, as a wife, as somebody that's in a 20 community, I think there's nothing more tragic than when 21 you have something that can be prevented. And as I 22 could see, the only land that we had, what kind of an 23 improvement could we leave to our son who is now taking 24 over that land that we've worked so hard for? I don't 25 ever want to see any of my grandchildren or my children PAGE 124

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1 or my husband be in harm's way. 2 These power poles that they're talking about now 3 are huge. Huge. Can we really say that there's maybe 4 never going to be a day that somebody might not hit 5 them? I don't think that would be fair. Chances are 6 maybe -- I don't know if you could put a percent on it, 7 but it affected me. I am somebody who had power poles 8 on their farmland, and we did have an incident and we 9 are here to talk about it. But we also paid that money 10 in order to secure and have more safe farming 11 environment. 12 MR. PELHAM: Thanks. I don't have any other 13 questions for you. 14 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Mr. Schock, any 15 questions? 16 MR. SCHOCK: No questions, Your Honor. 17 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Commissioner Kringstad. 18 COMMISSIONER KRINGSTAD: No questions. Thank 19 you. 20 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Commissioner Christmann. 21 COMMISSIONER CHRISTMANN: I do not. Thanks for 22 being here, though. 23 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Commissioner 24 Haugen-Hoffart. 25 COMMISSIONER HAUGEN-HOFFART: Yes. I have a PAGE 125	1 responsible for safety? I'm just going to say we all 2 are. 3 And I really appreciate your testimony. It was 4 insightful. And I look forward to your next testimony. 5 SANDRA RUPP: Okay. Thank you. 6 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: Thank you. 7 Is there anyone else that wants to testify 8 today? 9 All right. Well, that brings us to the end of 10 our hearing then. I will just ask the parties if 11 there's any other matters we need to address before we 12 adjourn. 13 Ms. Furey, did you have anything? 14 MS. FUREY: I don't have anything at this time. 15 Thanks, Your Honor. 16 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: All right. Mr. Pelham. 17 MR. PELHAM: No, Your Honor. 18 HEARING OFFICER HOGAN: All right. Well, then I 19 will note for the record it's 12:57 p.m. That'll 20 conclude our hearing. 21 And, again, just to note our next hearing will 22 be this Wednesday, January 14, in Edgeley. Thank you. 23 We will stand in recess. 24 ----- 25 PAGE 127
1 question. 2 Thank you for your testimony, Sandra. Did you 3 go to any of the initial public meetings that were held 4 on this project? 5 SANDRA RUPP: I actually have that for my 6 testimony for the Wednesday meeting. 7 COMMISSIONER HAUGEN-HOFFART: Okay. Well, then 8 I'll hold on. 9 SANDRA RUPP: So, you know, I have the gift of 10 gab. I don't like talking up in public. I really 11 don't. But can I please hold that for Wednesday? 12 COMMISSIONER HAUGEN-HOFFART: Yeah. 13 I want to make a comment, and please take this 14 with good intention. You sat and talked about the 15 safety and who's going to enforce if they put up speed 16 limit signs, right. Valid. So when you sit and talk 17 about you driving down the road in your truck and the 18 speed limit sign is 40, I just think it has a lot to do 19 with self responsibility where we all police ourself on 20 conditions. 21 I mean, I totally support safety. The last 22 thing anybody ever wants is to have an accident. But 23 I'm just going to make my comment and reiterate, it all 24 comes down to self responsibility on some of this stuff 25 when there's a speed limit sign of 40. So who's PAGE 126	<u>CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIPTIONIST</u> STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA) ss. I, Lisa A. Hulm, CET-783, a certified electronic transcriber, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a correct transcript from the electronic sound recording of the proceedings in the above-entitled matter, to the best of my professional skills and abilities. I further state that I was not present during these recorded proceedings, and I am only the transcriber of the recorded proceedings. I further certify that I am not a relative or employee or attorney or counsel of any of the parties hereto, nor a relative or employee of such attorney or counsel; nor do I have any interest in the outcome or events of the action. Dated this date of September 30, 2026. Lisa A. Hulm LISA A. HULM, CET-783 The foregoing certification of this transcript does not apply to the reproduction of the same by any means, unless under the direct control and/or direction of the certifying transcriber. PAGE 128

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