From: Jon Puetz [redacted]
Sent: Monday, November 16, 2026 2:59 PM
To: PUC-PUC <PUC@state.sd.us>
Cc: Jon Puetz's Personal Cell Phone [redacted]
Subject: [EXT] Letter to the SD PUC.

November 10, 2026

Dear Honorable SD Public Utilities Commissioners Nelson, Fiegen, and Hansen:

We write to express our concern, having only recently become aware of the proposed PowerOn high voltage transmission line to be constructed through Brookings, Deuel and Grant counties in South Dakota. We express our utmost opposition to the proposed industrial PowerOn Midwest 765kV transmission line, appearing proposed to be built very close to our beloved, quiet, untouched agricultural property in Deuel County, South Dakota.

This proposed high voltage line will create an overwhelming change to the unique Prairie Pothole/Prairie Coteau ecoregion and surrounding agricultural landscape, imposing a permanent, irreversible physical, visual, and biological scar and psychological burden on eastern South Dakota. The proposed industrial activity will fundamentally alter how our beautiful land appears, sounds and functions for *our* family's plans, permanently interfering and undermining our future economic security and that of future Puetz family members.

Reasons for strongly objecting to the proposed PowerOn 765 kV high voltage transmission line include:

• Permanent and pervasive industrialization & transformation of our peaceful, quiet area of rural eastern South Dakota tallgrass prairie & prairie pothole landscape and habitat intentionally kept out of production in favor of directly supporting many vital wildlife and biological plant communities native to eastern South Dakota. South Dakota's economy relies heavily upon rural agricultural & hunting driven economic activities, and further

industrialization of the Prairie Pothole landscape will permanently alter this region for generations to come and impact local SD economic resources.

• Substantial property devaluation - industrial infrastructure of this magnitude places a permanent physical and visual burden on peaceful, quiet rural prairie and agricultural property. It will significantly lower the fair market land value and complicate any potential future resale value.

• Interference of private family development plans - our personal/private goals include the potential to build a home on our land and an accompanying phased livelihood project. Essential to any personal plans is not only visual beauty of our land and surrounding area, but also safety. The imposing of such an electrical monstrosity in the area will undoubtedly deeply impact not only the visual landscape for the above mentioned reasons, but also cause potential health and safety concerns.

• Habitat fragmentation of tallgrass prairie & prairie pothole ecosystems - South Dakota is home to one of the most productive and biologically diverse plant communities, the tallgrass Prairie. These prairies, which evolved with vast herds of grazing mammals, frequent natural wildfires, and harsh winter conditions have resulted in one of the globe's most productive and carbon rich soils on the planet which today support our agricultural and ranching communities. Approximately 4% of native & unbroken tallgrass prairies remain today, which directly support untold numbers of essential native plants, pollinators, wildlife, and provide vital biological services such as clean air and water. Our family places in high regard, respect and appreciation for the ever-limited areas still left of nature. Constructing 175 ft tall, 50x50 square ft bases and the accompanying 765 kV high voltage lines, each line 3 ft in diameter, along the proposed corridor will forever cause permanent environmental disruption to wildlife and migratory bird species and completely alter the area's rural natural, agricultural, and recreational esthetic & value.

- Energy efficiency & deliverables: renewable energy resources such as wind and solar projects have been experiencing a rapid expansion in the United States, and have reached a record ~17% of net generation in 2025, which is up from ~ less than 1% in 2000s. Advancing research suggests that renewable energy generation is also often cheaper than energy produced from coal and natural gas sources. As the clean energy transition grows in the United States, bituminous coal burning plants such as the 475-megawatt plant in Big Stone City, SD may become less cost

effective as the coal burning industry declines from peak production levels in the early 2000's. These further highlights how construction of large scale industrial transmission lines may be viable in the short-term, but lack long term foresight. Additionally, according to the UN Environmental Program (UNEP) earth's global temperature is expected to cross and overshoot the 1.5 degree Celsius goal set at the 2015 COP21 agreement. Today the most optimistic peak temp rise is projected to be 1.8 – 2 degrees Celsius warming driven by anthropogenic activity. Transition away from fossil fuel dependence will preserve global economic stability, climate stability, and food security. The current geopolitical turmoil experienced in the global oil markets, is a perfect example for the need for the U.S. to diversify energy production with the most economical and most long-term dependable energy sources coming from renewable energies.

- Energy consumption and use of AI: As the nation endured a rushed and pervasive push to build AI Data Centers across the nation, one flashpoint issue has united both political parties which includes pushing back against artificial intelligence. As AI companies race to build infrastructure in lightening speed, this unproven and shaky industry consumes vast quantities of electricity while producing record profits for wealthy investors. This technology also faces significant safety and security concerns with the high likelihood of contributing to job loss for working class families. One can only be skeptical of how the power running through the proposed 765kV line will be used, and must assume energy will contribute to AI. Burning fossil fuels to support the AI data industry also leaves local populations to experience the negative health impacts, legacy air pollution of coal and natural gas combustion, and depletion of water resources, while profits leave rural working-class communities in South Dakota.

- Industrial corridor expansion: Eastern South Dakota has experienced transmission line construction in the recent past, such as the CAPX 2020 transmission line. Further industrialization of this corridor will predictably lead to a slippery slope of increasingly more unwanted, unwelcome industrial infrastructure being built in the area.

We respectfully request that those in authority completely reject this proposed PowerOn 765 kV high voltage transmission powerline project and protect our South Dakota lands and citizens. We strongly urge that the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission reject

any facility permit applications that rely on encroaching upon private land or exploiting eminent domain against the wishes of those involved in the area.

We respectfully and thoughtfully request that each of you, in your professional Public Utilities Commission capacities, stand up to halt the implementation of this project in our state. Please utilize the services available to your department, finding the most significant factors pertinent to the argument against this project and available means, and stop this intrusive infrastructure that many do not want and that disproportionately benefits those outside our state. We ask how eager you would be to have this massive industrialization permanently disfigure and devalue your precious neighborhood?

Thank you.

Sincerely and respectfully,

Jon & Lori

Jon & Lori Puetz

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