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STATE OF MICHIGAN
BEFORE THE MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

VIRTUAL PUBLIC HEARING
BEFORE ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE CHRISTOPHER S. SAUNDERS
CASE NO. U-21471 (Consolidated with CASE NO. U-21472)

REGARDING THE APPLICATIONS OF MICHIGAN ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION
COMPANY, LLC FOR AN ACT 30 CERTIFICATE OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE AND
NECESSITY FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A MAJOR TRANSMISSION LINE

Via Videoconference
Thursday, October 3, 2024
6:03 p.m.

RECORDED BY: Rachelle Roberts, CER 9585
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APPEARANCES:

Michigan Public
Service Commission: Daniel Scripps, Commissioner Chair
Katherine Peratick, Commissioner

ALSO APPEARING: Naomi Simpson, LARA

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1 Via Videoconference

2 Thursday, October 3, 2024 - 6:03 p.m.

3 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Good evening and thank you all
4 very much for attending this virtual hearing of the Michigan
5 Public Service Commission. We are holding tonight's hearing
6 on the Commission's docket MPSC case number U-21471, which
7 has been consolidated with MPSC case number U-21472,
8 Applications by the Michigan Electric Transmission Company,
9 or METC, for certificates of public convenience and
10 necessity for two high voltage transmission lines and
11 related equipment.

12 My name is Christopher Saunders, and I'm an
13 Administrative Law Judge with the Michigan Office of
14 Administrative Hearings and Rules. My role here tonight is
15 to make sure that we are able to hear from as many folks
16 wishing to make a comment this evening as we can. I'll also
17 be providing some instructions to make that opportunity as
18 easy as possible. Tonight's hearing is being held virtually
19 via Microsoft Teams. Telephone Relay Service is available
20 through the phone option. If you're participating via
21 Microsoft Teams, you may turn on the live captions by
22 clicking on the "More" button at the top of your Teams
23 window -- at the top right of your team's window and then
24 clicking on "Language and speech" from the drop down menu,
25 and finally clicking on "Turn on live captions".

1 The transcript of tonight's hearing will be filed
2 in the docket for case number U-21471. Following a
3 presentation by MPSC staff member Naomi Simpson regarding
4 the METC applications, we will open the meeting for public
5 comment. With me tonight are two of the three members of
6 the Michigan Public Service Commission, Chair Dan Scripps
7 and Commissioner Katherine Peretick. Commissioners, I will
8 turn it to you for any opening remarks that you'd like to
9 make before we go to Ms. Simpson.

10 MR. SCRIPPS: Thank you, Judge Saunders. My name
11 is Dan Scripps, and I am the Chair of the Michigan Public
12 Service Commission. And I wanted to offer a good evening
13 and special thanks to all of you for joining us here
14 tonight. Before I get into my comments, I want to just
15 briefly acknowledge the absence of Commissioner Carreon.
16 She is out for the next several weeks on parental leave.
17 And while we certainly miss her, we're incredibly excited,
18 both for her and for her growing family.

19 We know that these two applications from METC have
20 generated a lot of interest. We've appreciated the folks
21 who have over the past year attended one or more of our
22 regular commission meetings to share their thoughts,
23 concerns and perspectives on these projects. And we
24 appreciate everyone who's chosen to attend tonight. The
25 comments being made tonight are being transcribed, as was

1 indicated by Judge Saunders, by our court reporter, and will
2 be included in the transcript that will be posted publicly
3 in the case docket. Thank you to Rachelle Roberts, our
4 court reporter, for being here as well.

5 I'm going to try to speak slowly to make our court
6 reporter's job a little easier, and I would encourage you
7 all to do the same as you make your comments so that she can
8 accurately record them. Comments in a contested case such
9 as this are posted to the record and reviewed by the
10 Commission. However, I want to note that there is a
11 difference between comments and the evidence that's provided
12 by expert witnesses in this case. Those folks provide
13 testimony that can be challenged during cross-examination,
14 and because comments are not subject to the same level of
15 scrutiny and proof, they're not evidence on which we can
16 make this a decision, but, again, are reviewed by us.

17 I would note, however, that we are intentionally
18 holding this public hearing relatively early in the process
19 and well ahead of the December 4 deadline in the filing of
20 testimony by interveners, so that those parties who are
21 formally intervening in this case have the option to build
22 on any arguments or points raised in this public comment
23 hearing and add them to the formal evidentiary record.
24 Again, thank you for joining us tonight. I'm going to
25 invite my colleague, Commissioner Peretick, to say hello and

1 offer any initial comments she may have as well.

2 Commissioner Peretick.

3 MS. PERETICK: Thank you, Chair Scripps. As Judge
4 Saunders noted, I'm Katherine Peretick. I'm one of the
5 other commissioners on the Michigan Public Service
6 Commission, and I just want to extend my thanks to all of
7 you who are joining us tonight. I echo the Chair's
8 comments, and I really believe that it's important for us to
9 hear from you, and I'm really pleased to have the
10 opportunity to do so, and very thankful to all of you for
11 taking the time out of your evening to join us here right
12 now.

13 As the Chair mentioned, we must do our work in a
14 very structured way, following the laws that govern us. And
15 we think it's very valuable to hear from the people who are
16 directly affected by the decisions that we make, and that's
17 why we're here tonight. Applications like these that are
18 filed -- filed by METC, cases that we refer to as Act 30
19 cases, are as complex as any that come before the
20 Commission, but, unlike many cases, they involve the private
21 property rights of landowners who will be impacted by our
22 decisions.

23 I know many of you may have process or other
24 questions that you'd like to ask tonight, but -- and as much
25 as we would like to be able to engage in a conversation with

1 each of you, because this is a contested case, we're
2 prohibited by law from doing so. So tonight we are just
3 here to listen, but to help answer any some -- any
4 questions.

5 I want to highlight a resource that we hope will
6 help. The Commission has developed an issue brief on
7 electric transmission line siting. This issue brief answers
8 more than 20 frequently asked questions about the process.
9 To find the issue brief, visit our home page, which is
10 www.michigan.gov/mpsc, and scroll down to "Be Informed",
11 where you'll click on "View Consumer Tips". This will take
12 you to our "Be Informed" page, where you'll scroll down to
13 "Issue Briefs". This will be towards the bottom of the
14 page.

15 Click on the "View Issue Briefs" button, and once
16 you're there, scroll down until you find "Electric
17 Transmission Line Siting", and then you'll also see a link
18 to this issue brief, both as a link and as a QR code if you
19 want to view elsewhere on the "How to Comment" slide that
20 will be shared throughout the meeting tonight. It's also
21 available on the event page for tonight's hearing.

22 So we hope this resource will be helpful for you.
23 And, again, thank you so much for joining tonight.

24 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Okay. Thank you, Commissioners.
25 Now I'm going to turn things over to MPSC staff member,

1 Naomi Simpson, who will provide an overview on the METC
2 applications. Ms. Simpson?

3 MS. SIMPSON: Thank you, Judge Saunders. I would
4 like to confirm that everybody can see the presentation.

5 MR. SCRIPPS: Yes, it looks good.

6 MS. SIMPSON: Okay; good. Thank you. Hello
7 everyone, and thank you for participating in tonight's
8 meeting. I have a short presentation to share with you this
9 evening. Michigan Electric Transmission Company, or METC,
10 filed an application for an Act 30 Certificate of Public
11 Convenience and Necessity for the construction of two major
12 transmission lines. The applications are in MPSC case
13 number U-21471 and -21472. As stated earlier, these cases
14 have been combined into a single case. All future filings
15 about this case will be in MPSC case number U-21471 in the
16 docket system.

17 The first application is for the construction of
18 Nelson Road to Oneida. METC is proposing to construct a
19 39.27 mile, 345 kilovolt transmission line. This line would
20 connect the existing Nelson Road substation to the existing
21 Oneida substation. It would run through Gratiot, Clinton,
22 Ionia and Eaton counties. The application includes both a
23 primary route and an alternative route, as shown here.

24 The second application is for the construction of
25 the Helix to Heiple Line. METC is proposing to construct a

1 51.93 mile, 345 kilovolt transmission line. It would
2 connect a new Helix substation to the Indiana State border
3 and would run through Calhoun and Branch Counties. Again,
4 the primary and alternative route are shown here. Both of
5 these applications will go through the Act 30 process. The
6 basic steps of the Act 30 process are as follows.

7 First, the transmission owner files a construction
8 plan, as it is done in case -- in both cases. The
9 transmission owner holds public meetings, and then the
10 transmission owner files its application. Parties can
11 petition to intervene to provide their expert testimony.
12 Staff reviews the application and provides its expert
13 testimony. Then within one year of the application filing
14 date, the Commission makes a determination -- determination
15 based on the facts in the case.

16 So a summary of the upcoming dates for case number
17 U-21471 are as follows: First testimony from staff and
18 intervening parties is due December 4th, 2024. Rebuttal
19 testimony is due January 24th, 2025, followed by motions to
20 strike, which are due by February 10th, 2025. Any responses
21 to motions to strike are due February 14th, 2025.

22 Cross-examination for all parties and all testimony will be
23 held February 19th through February 21st, and then February
24 24th and 25th, 2025. Initial briefs are due March 19th,
25 2025, and reply briefs are due April 9th, 2025. The

1 Commission's decision is expected on or before July 15th,
2 2025.

3 The MPSC's jurisdiction is limited to setting
4 authority. It may grant the certificate for the proposed or
5 alternative route, or deny the certificate within one year
6 of the application filing date. The law states that the
7 Commission shall grant the certificate if it determines all
8 of the following: First, that the quantifiable and non-
9 quantifiable public benefits of the proposed major
10 transmission line justify its construction; second, the
11 proposed and alternative route are feasible and reasonable;
12 third, that the proposed major transmission line does not
13 present an unreasonable threat to public health or safety;
14 and, fourth, the applicant has accepted any conditions that
15 are contained within a conditional grant. The MPSC does not
16 participate in or rule on eminent domain or property
17 evaluation -- valuation. Sorry.

18 The pre-hearing for this case occurred on
19 Thursday, August, 29th, 2024, via video and teleconference.
20 During that pre-hearing the dates, that I reviewed earlier,
21 were set. As stated earlier in this meeting, cases U-21471
22 and -21472 have been consolidated into one single case.
23 Therefore, all future details, filings and comments for both
24 cases will be within case number U-21471 in the E-Dockets
25 system. If intervention was granted to a party in case

1 number U-21472, it will automatically apply to case number
2 U-21471.

3 Any interested person can provide comments in this
4 docket. To do so, go to case number U-21471 in the E-Docket
5 system and use the comment feature, or email your comments
6 directly to LARA-mpsc-commissioners2@michigan.gov, or direct
7 mail your comments to Michigan Public Service Commission,
8 7109 West Saginaw Highway, Lansing, Michigan 48917. For
9 additional information on transmission siting, please visit
10 the Michigan Public Service Commission website, so
11 michigan.gov/mpsc. Click on "Regulatory Information", then
12 click on "Facility Siting", followed by a click on "Act 30".
13 Information will be provided in a Q and A format. Thank
14 you, Judge Saunders. That concludes my presentation.

15 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Okay. Thank you very much,
16 Ms. Simpson. Okay. We are now going to turn to public
17 comment, and I'd like to say a few things about our public
18 comments. We're going to limit our comments tonight to
19 three minutes per person, because we want to give everyone
20 the opportunity to make a comment. We want to make sure
21 that we have enough time for everyone to make their
22 comments, so each individual will be allowed to make one
23 three-minute comment.

24 You may make a comment from Microsoft Teams or by
25 calling into the hearing by phone. For individuals

1 participating by Microsoft Teams, you may click on the
2 "Raise hand" button at any time to be queued up for comment.
3 For individuals participating by phone, you may press star
4 five to be queued up for comment. Commenters on both
5 Microsoft Teams and on the phone are added to the same
6 speaker queue and will be called upon in the order they
7 enter the speaker queue. Please do not lower your hand or
8 press star five again, or you will be removed from the queue
9 and will lose your place in line.

10 To minimize disruptions, attendees will be muted
11 until being called upon for public comment. For those
12 participating on Microsoft Teams, when it's your turn to
13 comment, please click on the mic button to unmute. You will
14 also have an option to turn on your camera. For those
15 participating by phone, when it's your turn to speak, please
16 press star six to unmute.

17 As a reminder, this is a public comment period for
18 the commissioners to listen to comments and concerns, not to
19 answer specific questions or engage in discussion. And,
20 finally, when providing a comment, please indicate your name
21 by stating and spelling your name and tell us where you
22 live, if you're willing to share, so that we have that for
23 our records.

24 So thank you all very much. And, moving forward
25 at this point, we'll go ahead and start with our comments.

1 And it looks like our first comment is going to be Marcia
2 Klein, followed by Sierra Club of Michigan. Please,
3 Ms. Klein, go ahead.

4 MS. MARCIA KLEIN: Good evening. Thanks for
5 scheduling this public hearing. I just heard about this in
6 early August. I guess the route had been -- proposed route
7 was changed to include my property. My name is Marcia
8 Klein; M-a-r-c-i-a, last name is Klein, K-l-e-i-n, and I
9 reside on Kenyon Road in Oneida township for 34 years. My
10 house, sadly, does not have a star on the METC map in volume
11 three, since it's covered by trees in the overhead view.

12 But, anyway, I'm here tonight to just hope that
13 you have all read the comments on the case filing -- the
14 electronic filing of U-21471. Easily said, I believe the
15 proposed route is simply in the wrong place. I don't feel
16 it's reasonable. The reason I state this, and it's my
17 opinion, that it's unnecessary public use of these
18 residential agricultural properties, instead of using
19 existing state, public or electric company right-of-ways and
20 corridors, instead of proposing the use of all virgin
21 residential and agricultural properties. This cannot be
22 very cost effective.

23 The other thing is I noticed on the application
24 that the customers that will be benefitted by this proposed
25 route and transmission lines -- which I am not against the

1 project at all. I'm just against the use of this proposed
2 route. These customers are DTE, Consumer Energy and
3 Wolverine Properties. Well, I am not participant or a
4 consumer of those electric companies. My electric company
5 is HomeWorks Tri-County Electric. So I believe that if you
6 are going to have a proposed route, that the easements that
7 these companies own should be utilized versus using eminent
8 domain to seize my property and other HomeWork consumer
9 properties or electric company properties. I mean, to me,
10 that only makes logical sense.

11 The -- before making your decision, I hope that
12 you would ask METC to provide other solutions that include
13 the use of these existing state, public electric company or
14 the Consumer properties. I don't know if they have done
15 that. I've gone through parts of that application. It's
16 very lengthy, but the way I save it -- see it they have on
17 the application plus or minus Oneida, et cetera, et cetera.
18 But, anyway --

19 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Ms. Klein, I hate to jump -- jump
20 in and cut you off, but we're running out of time here.
21 We're --

22 MS. MARCIA KLEIN: Okay.

23 JUDGE SAUNDERS: -- getting close to our three
24 minutes.

25 MS. MARCIA KLEIN: All right. So I thank you. I

1 join with others, asking you to deny their application as
2 it's currently requested and put the transmission lines on
3 the other properties that I've suggested. Thank you for
4 your time and thank you for your service on the Commission.
5 Thank you.

6 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you so much, Ms. Klein.
7 And next we have Sierra Club of Michigan. Is there anyone
8 who wishes to make a comment on behalf of Sierra Club of
9 Michigan? Okay. Well, moving on then, it looks like we
10 have a phone number, which is 517-449-8821. Is that
11 individual present? If you'd like to make a comment, please
12 press star six and you will be able to make a comment
13 through the phone. Okay. Again, press star six if you're
14 on the phone if you'd like to make a comment.

15 MR. GORDON DIEMER: Can you hear me?

16 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Oh, yes, certainly.

17 MR. GORDON DIEMER: Okay.

18 JUDGE SAUNDERS: And -- and your name, please?

19 MR. GORDON DIEMER: My name is Gordon Diemer.

20 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Okay. Thank you very much.

21 MR. GORDON DIEMER: I'm sorry. I was madly
22 pushing buttons, but I couldn't make it work.

23 JUDGE SAUNDERS: That's okay. Could you -- could
24 you please spell your name for the court reporter?

25 MR. GORDON DIEMER: Gordon, G-o-r-d-o-n, and then

1 Diemer, D-i-e-m-e-r.

2 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you, Mr. Diemer. Please go
3 ahead with your comment.

4 MR. GORDON DIEMER: Thank you, Judge Saunders.
5 Like I said, my name is Gordon Diemer. I reside on the
6 southern end of the Nelson Road, Oneida substation proposed
7 route. And, yeah, my wife and I bought our land -- our kind
8 of unique land here 40-some years ago, after carefully
9 researching it for land for use as a runway. I have a
10 business -- avionics business, where I work on airplanes.
11 The land was, like, 2,000 foot long, ran east and west and
12 was clear of houses, like, two miles off each -- each end of
13 it, and it's perfect for a little runway.

14 So I operate my business here. It was an FAA
15 approved repair station for many years. Many of my
16 customers included, like, crop duster people and even state
17 police helicopters, and they could land there whenever they
18 wanted. My wife and I raised our six kids here and put them
19 through high school and college. Two of the kids were
20 valedictorian and salutatorian in high school, and in a
21 college some of them have earned master's and doctorates
22 degrees. They now are all kind of self-employed, and my
23 wife and I are super proud of them and our 18 grandkids.

24 My wife was an excellent seamstress, and we talked
25 about doing aircraft upholstery repair on the airplanes. I

1 even bought adjacent land along the property here in case
2 people wanted to build and have access to the runway. About
3 20 years ago, my wife had a brain injury that left her
4 unable to speak, and she requires 24-hour constant care.
5 For the time being, I have cut back on the business and
6 planted crops on the runway. I currently have a small
7 trike-type powered parachute that I hope to fly off here in
8 the future yet.

9 Last year, I was informed that a very large power
10 line was going to be installed right across my runway, which
11 would render it useless. Even if the line is moved just off
12 my property, it still would be too dangerous to fly around,
13 being that it would be the 160-foot tall, 345,000 volts, you
14 know, a crackling bug zapper type of line, and it wouldn't
15 be -- work to have a runway around that anymore.

16 So taking away my livelihood and future plans was
17 kind of heartbreaking. It will greatly, greatly reduce my
18 property value and make it difficult to sell in the future.
19 I tried to --

20 JUDGE SAUNDERS: I'm sorry, Mr. Diemer. Mr.
21 Diemer, I'm sorry. I don't mean to jump in, but we're
22 running out of time here.

23 MR. GORDON DIEMER: Okay. Anyway, they -- they
24 want to leave the substation and angle cross country and
25 come across my line -- my land, but there is the Consumers

1 right-of-way that they had already purchased many years ago
2 to try to use for that, and I don't understand why they
3 can't do that yet. It just makes more sense. And,
4 anyway -- so there's just so many things that aren't --
5 aren't answered that seems to be a secret, and they just
6 can't get answers for these types of things. And I think
7 there's a lot of stuff that has happened in the -- in the
8 current time that would impact the necessity of whether this
9 line is even needed. So --

10 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you, Mr. --

11 MR. GORDON DIEMER: -- you know --

12 JUDGE SAUNDERS: -- Mr. Diemer, I'm so sorry, but
13 we're well past our three minutes at this point. I'm going
14 to have to ask you to wrap up here.

15 MR. GORDON DIEMER: Thanks. That's -- I'll --
16 I'll just cut off there. I have many more things to try to
17 say, but I talk too slow. Thank you for your time, guys.

18 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you so much, Mr. Diemer.
19 Okay. It looks like the next individual we have in the
20 queue is Fred Miller.

21 MR. FRED MILLER: Hi, can you hear me?

22 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Yes. Mr. Miller, could you just
23 say your name for the court reporter?

24 MR. FRED MILLER: Yeah, Fred Miller; F-r-e-d M-i-
25 l-l-e-r. I was also set to speak for the Sierra Club

1 Michigan Chapter, but couldn't get the mic going.

2 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Okay.

3 MR. FRED MILLER: I'm the chair of the Michigan
4 Chapter's Conservation Committee. The Sierra Club is the
5 nation's oldest and largest environmental organization. We
6 have 70,000 members and supporters in Michigan, and have
7 long addressed many of the state's most pressing
8 environmental issues, including the transition to clean
9 energy. We've been in front of the MPSC and dozens of IRP
10 and rate cases, and we are always urging utilities to
11 transition away from fossil fuels to clean energy.

12 Many times utilities have tried to justify
13 continuing with dirty energy, based on concerns about not
14 having the energy resources necessary, in part due to
15 transmission issues and congestion. The proposed lines are
16 important as far as we are concerned, because they are part
17 of a region wide transmission plan to ease that congestion.
18 They will allow for the retirement of about 58 gigawatts of
19 mainly coal fired power plants, by supporting the addition
20 of clean energy to the system.

21 Michiganders will benefit from that. Health
22 benefits coming from reduced fossil fuel air pollution, and
23 likely fewer rate increases due to the ability to access
24 lower cost energy across state lines. If the lines are not
25 built, there's a real risk that utilities like DTE will seek

1 to continue their reliance on dirty energy. For these
2 reasons, the Sierra Club urges the Commission and the
3 developer to work to resolve land owner controversies as
4 fairly and expeditiously as possible, and to move to this
5 important project put it online.

6 Sierra Club would like to see the METC continue
7 outreach and discussion with effective landowners, and
8 recommends the Commission provide active facilitation and
9 mediation support in an effort to avoid protracted
10 litigation. Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

11 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you so much, Mr. Miller.
12 Okay. Next in the queue, we have a Teams participant with
13 the initials K.S.

14 MS. KAROL SANBORN: That's me; that's me, Karol.

15 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Okay. Could you please state and
16 spell your name for the whole reporter?

17 MS. KAROL SANBORN: It's Karol, K-a-r-o-l,
18 Sanborn, S-a-n-b-o-r-n. No "D" in that name.

19 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Okay. Thanks so much.

20 MS. KAROL SANBORN: I'm Karol, and I, along with
21 my husband, Gene, and three young adult sons, live at 4550
22 North Hubbardston Road, Pewamo, Lebanon Township, Clinton
23 County, just south of the Maple River. My husband is a
24 retired dairy farmer, and we bought this parcel of land in
25 2013 after leaving his family dairy farm. We built our home

1 in 2016. If we had any clue that this would be happening on
2 this property, we would have never chosen to buy and build
3 here.

4 The 345 kilovolt high voltage electrical line is
5 planned across our 80 acres of prime agricultural land
6 diagonally, and come within one football fields distance of
7 our house. Three monopoles will be planted 20 feet deep
8 into our water table. After leaving his family's farm, it
9 was very difficult to find a large parcel of land in the PW
10 School District. Nobody wants to sell it, and it's usually
11 the favorite firstborn that gets the farm. It was not easy
12 obtaining this land. My husband spent 40 years of working
13 18-hour days and ruining almost every major joint in his
14 body to have what we have today.

15 I first heard of the transmission line from my
16 cousin who attends County Planning Commission meetings. We
17 then received two postcards, as we own two parcels, and
18 that's how we were notified, by tax parcel. I attended all
19 four of the ITC meetings that were held, and gave them
20 letters at each and talked with them. They told my son, who
21 also attended, that an algorithm was used to decide the
22 route. We gave them an alternate route to consider, and it
23 apparently fell on deaf ears.

24 I have also spoken at the MPSC meeting at least
25 four times, if not more, and I'm afraid they are also not

1 listening to me. I started out by explaining to anyone that
2 would listen that we have historical documentation via a
3 local history book, that our farm was said to contain Indian
4 burial mounds, and also our neighbors, which used to be the
5 Norwood Tabor Farm.

6 I also told them that we just spent \$86,000 to
7 install field tile on our land. The tile will be crushed
8 and destroyed when the heavy equipment comes in. No matter
9 how many mats are brought in, the Earth will still be
10 compacted for years to come, resulting in poor crop
11 production. If they crush the tile, we want our own tiler
12 to fix it, not ITC METC. The land will never be as
13 productive.

14 I'm also concerned about health concerns, both
15 medically and psychologically. My son lives in Rose City,
16 where 345 kilovolt lines were already installed, and he
17 recorded the crackling, buzzing, hissing and snake noise
18 that is emitted by these high voltage lines. He stood 700
19 feet away and could still hear it. He had a range finder,
20 so he knew the distance was accurate.

21 I worry about what this will do to my family's
22 health, both medically and mentally. I've heard that it can
23 cause cancer, especially in children. I don't want my
24 future grandkids to be near these high voltage lines. I
25 don't want my sons to be around the lines if they're going

1 out to hunt or cut wood or just spending time in our yard or
2 shop, which my husband and his sons do the majority of the
3 time they are home. I don't want to be exposed to it if I
4 just want to be out in our yard.

5 Gone are the dreams of my future grandkids riding
6 horses on our property. Will it affect our internet service
7 so I can't work from home, or TV and phone service? Our
8 home's value will plummet if these lines are installed.
9 Even if I don't live here anymore, if the lines are
10 installed, who would want to buy it? We invested all that
11 we have into our land and home, and that investment will be
12 destroyed. It's not easy to just up and leave and find
13 another home -- farmstead to buy. We've been there, done
14 that in 2013 and it was not easy and almost impossible
15 anymore. We already have --

16 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Ms. Sanborn, I'm sorry. I hate
17 to jump in here, but we are running out of time. Can you --
18 can you try to wrap your comments up for us, please?

19 MS. KAROL SANBORN: We already have dealt with one
20 lower voltage Consumers power line in our front yard that
21 extends -- actually, I want to just show you. Can you see
22 me? Never mind. I guess I can't. I'm on our back porch.
23 Anyways, we already have one Consumers line that goes
24 straight through our front yard, nor through state land.
25 They need to use state land property for public services

1 like this. They need to use already existing right-of-ways.
2 They don't need to be bothering private property landowners.

3 I'll put this on -- I'll submit this letter on the
4 page so people can read it completely. What they're doing
5 is not right -- what they're doing is not right, and they
6 need to stay off our property. You need to -- you need to
7 totally -- do not approve -- approve this project as
8 written. And they're breaking the law, because Public Act
9 30 requires an alternate route.

10 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Ms. Sanborn --

11 MS. KAROL SANBORN: It -- there's no alternate
12 route from my neighbor's property, all the way up to Carson
13 City. Thank you.

14 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you, Ms. Sanborn. Okay.
15 Our next comment is from Tony Wohlscheid.

16 MR. ANTHONY WOHLSCHEID: Hello, commissioners and
17 Judge Saunders. My name is Anthony Wohlscheid.

18 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Hold on. Could you state --
19 could you spell your name for the court reporter, please?

20 MR. ANTHONY WOHLSCHEID: Anthony, A-n-t-h-o-n-y,
21 and that's Wohlscheid, W-o-h-l-s-c-h-e-i-d.

22 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you very much.

23 MR. TONY WOHLSCHEID: And I live in Eagle Township
24 on the proposed -- proposed route. So I'm here in
25 opposition of the proposed ITC transmission route, outlined

1 in case U-21471. I want it to be known that I am not in
2 opposition of green energy or infrastructure upgrades. I'm
3 in opposition of the way things are being handled by ITC and
4 the disregard for my family's safety and property rights.

5 When this project was brought forward, the
6 proposed route ran right next to my house, over my
7 geothermal, which not only affects my utilities, but
8 endangers my children in my own yard, not to mention
9 disrupts the property that my family has lived on for seven
10 generations.

11 Obviously, I complained at the meetings, and it
12 was moved from one side of my house to the other side of my
13 house, which if they would have taken the time to ask, I
14 would have told them they now planned it for it to be over
15 my drain field and my reserve drain field, still dangerously
16 close to my home where my children play. I fail to see how
17 a for-profit company can take away my family's Centennial
18 Farm and endanger my children and call it for the greater
19 good. I guarantee that no one making these plans would do
20 this to their own home.

21 Another huge problem I have with this project is
22 the fact that Consumers Energy owns seven miles of property
23 that was purchased for transmission lines 50-plus years ago,
24 less than a mile east of the proposed route, which is
25 labeled as the alternative route. Taking the alternative

1 route would not -- would not only affect 50 less property
2 owners, but every owner on that route either sold their
3 property and has had free use of it for 50-plus years, or
4 bought that property knowing a transmission line might come
5 in.

6 How can we justify taking virgin farmland from
7 property owners that did not sell for a transmission line,
8 when a clear alternative exists that's so blatantly obvious.
9 Eminent domain is meant for the good of the public. Are we
10 truly sure whose good we are approving? Please don't take
11 away my family's property without serious contemplations of
12 how routes are being chosen and whose good we're protecting.
13 The Public Service Commission is our only line of
14 protection. Please stand up for the people you represent.
15 Thank you for your time.

16 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Mr. Wohlscheid, thank you so
17 much. Next, it looks like we have the Wohlscheid-Brennan
18 family.

19 MS. VAL WOHLSCHEID: Good evening, Your Honors and
20 Commissioners. I have four property -- can you hear me?

21 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Yes. Could you -- could you
22 state and spell your name for the court reporter, please?

23 MS. VAL WOHLSCHEID: I do. My name is Val
24 Wohlscheid-Brennan, spelled W-o-h-l-s-c-h-e-i-d dash B-r-e-
25 n-n-a-n. Before I start, I have four property owners in the

1 room. Due to technical -- ease of tech -- of using
2 computers, I have four property owners here. So can each
3 one have an opportunity to speak, please?

4 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Yes, we -- we're all going to be
5 limited time-wise of course. So everyone can speak, but I'd
6 like everyone to identify themselves in the same manner that
7 you did, and just be aware that we've only got three minutes
8 a piece. Okay?

9 MS. NATALIE WOHLSCHEID: Understood. Thank you.

10 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you.

11 MS. VAL WOHLSCHEID: All right. I am here today
12 as a property owner affected by ITC and METC's Nelson to
13 Oneida Road 345 kV transmission project, case U-21471. This
14 project disproportionately affects my entire family, as it
15 destroys all three of our family homes and properties.
16 METC's route goes through the 50 acres in Eagle Township
17 that my husband and I spent 12 years looking for, because
18 large parcels with all of the amenities that we enjoy are
19 extremely scarce and extremely expensive in our community.
20 We spent our life savings buying our dream property and just
21 finished building a new home this year.

22 The proposed route for this 345 kV transmission
23 line will have a disastrous and detrimental everlasting
24 effect on our investment and our American dream, in which my
25 husband served this country to protect. Making things even

1 worse the route also crosses through my family's registered
2 historical Centennial Farm, where myself and seven
3 generations of my family live, including my parents and my
4 brother, who just spoke.

5 Our Centennial Farm not only represents Michigan's
6 agricultural heritage, but our family's strong desire to
7 deserve -- preserve and protect it for generations to come.
8 No words can describe how devastating this is for my family.
9 Our Centennial Farm can never be replaced, and no amount of
10 money can compensate us for the devastation to our legacy
11 and eternal damage to our income and property use.

12 I know I'm limited on time, so I'm going to skip
13 through a few things. I think it's really important -- my
14 brother touched on the fact that our property and 50 other
15 neighbors are being unethical and unjustifiable -- this
16 damage is unjustifiable because a half mile from our route,
17 METC's alternative follows over seven miles of property that
18 was designated for a transmission line that was meant to
19 serve the Oneida Substation. METC, as Consumers Powers
20 transmission successor from the legislation, should be using
21 this route that Consumers purchased.

22 For all of these reasons, our family strongly
23 opposes the decision to destroy miles of agricultural open
24 space and historical land. I have additional concerns with
25 METC's application. The scenario in which they base

1 their --

2 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Ms. Wohl- -- Ms.
3 Wohlscheid-Brennan, I'm sorry, but we're starting to run out
4 of time here. Could you wrap up your comments for me,
5 please?

6 MS. VAL WOHLSCHEID: Yes, I can make them very
7 quick.

8 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you.

9 MS. VAL WOHLSCHEID: The scenario in which they
10 base their transmission line planning had an assumption that
11 812 megawatts is no longer going to be available from the
12 Palisades Power Plant. The Palisades plant is going to --
13 is scheduled to restart this fall, before METC can even
14 obtain easements for this project. So this will undoubtedly
15 change the transmission planning analysis in our region, and
16 on that ground alone, they should be required to submit a
17 revised plan.

18 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Okay. Ms. Wohlscheid-Brennan,
19 we're running past our time here. You have --

20 MS. VAL WOHLSCHEID: Thank you.

21 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Do you have other individuals
22 present who would like to make a comment as well? Would you
23 put those individuals on the line, please?

24 MS. VAL WOHLSCHEID: Sure thing.

25 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you so much.

1 MS. VAL WOHLSCHEID: I will submit my -- the rest
2 of my remaining comments. Thank you.

3 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you so much.

4 MR. ROBERT BRENNAN: Good evening, commissioners.
5 My name is Robert Brennan; R-o-b-e-r-t B-r-e-n-n-a-n. I
6 live at the same address, part of the family. Spent my life
7 buying this property, and now ITC wants to destroy it. My
8 wife kind of covered it, so I'm going to make it sweet.
9 I've spent my career keeping the lights on for Michigan --
10 Michiganders. I'm a journeyman lineman. This project is
11 not needed.

12 IT states in the project to -- to build this line
13 to avoid future upgrades or replacing paging infrastructure.
14 They should not be getting incentives to take land to build
15 new transmission lines instead of maintaining their existing
16 infrastructure. That's wrong. It is a feasible in today's
17 technology to increase the existing lines with high
18 performance conductors and other means. They should not be
19 giving away or wanting to take more property when they can't
20 seem to maintain what they have.

21 The State and MTC regulate this better and stop
22 this out of control profit companies like ITC, who's going
23 to make big bucks on the -- on this line for their
24 stockholders and their CEOs, because they don't have to
25 invest their own money. The state should actually -- would

1 actually create more jobs in this state if ITC would upgrade
2 their existing infrastructure, instead of doing a quick fix
3 like this one.

4 So I'm just adding to that, and you need to take
5 that in consideration and stop taking advantage of
6 Michiganders' properties. Thank you.

7 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you very much, Mr. Brennan.
8 Could you put the nice individual on?

9 MS. DIANE WOHLSCHEID: I'm here.

10 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Okay. Could you state and spell
11 your name for me, please?

12 MS. DIANE WOHLSCHEID: I sure can. This is Diane
13 Wohlscheid, D-i-a-n-e W-o-h-l-s-c-h-e-i-d, and I am here
14 talking about the case U-21471. And what I am talking about
15 here and stuff is the fact that our Centennial Farm, you
16 know, it has been the family for 129 years. The seven
17 generations that have been on it, three generations still
18 live on it right now. We're hoping that more do, but
19 depending what happens, they may choose not to.

20 Our 50 acres has always been farmed. We use the
21 income from the crops to help keep it up, pay the property
22 taxes, insurance on the farm. Right now, the way it looks,
23 they're going to use approximately nine acres, because it
24 runs a whole length, from north to south. In this nine
25 acres that they're going to be doing, you know, they're

1 going to destroy our lane, and it's our livelihood that's
2 used in this here lane. It's the only spot that we have
3 that we can do things with.

4 Our two grandsons ride their motorcycles, you
5 know, snowmobiles down through there. Our son's got an
6 orchard that he's worked on for years with, you know, the
7 fruit trees, nut trees, berries, everything else. That's
8 going to be destroyed. And we heat two different houses
9 with wood in the winter to help, and our wood would be what
10 they would be tearing down. So that's going to kind of cut
11 all that out for us.

12 We don't disagree with the fact that it's got to
13 be done. Like everyone in the family says, it's just the
14 way that they're doing -- going about it. You know,
15 we're -- hate to see them profit from what we're going to
16 lose from this, you know, by them doing the eminent domain.
17 We're going to lose the value of our Centennial Farm, and we
18 still get to pay the taxes and the insurance on the
19 approximate what they're going to use. And, you know, what
20 about the rent from the land? You know, are we going to end
21 up losing that? We don't know.

22 As close as it's coming to our son's house, you
23 know, we're concerned -- our grandsons' bedrooms are going
24 to be almost right next door to this thing. You know, what
25 about their health? You know, is it going to be safe for

1 everybody? Makes me sick to think that ITC can use eminent
2 domain to ruin Michigan Centennial Farms and the history of
3 families that lived here for so many years. The state of
4 Michigan needs to take and -- needs to take and, you know,
5 protect Centennial (pronouncing) Farms.

6 Please help us. We can't forget that it's the
7 people, family and farms that make Michigan what it is. And
8 both my husband and I -- we're 66 and 71. To think at our
9 age, that we're using our retirement money to get a
10 wonderful lawyer that we have to fight for something that we
11 already own and have paid for. I want to thank you guys for
12 listening, and hopefully somebody out there can help us out.
13 Thank you.

14 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you so much,
15 Ms. Wohlscheid. Is there any other individuals who wish to
16 make a comment?

17 MS. VAL WOHLSCHEID: I think we are all set.
18 Thank you for listening to us.

19 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you very much. Okay.
20 Moving on then, it looks like the next individual in the
21 queue set to make a comment is Natalie McIntire.

22 MS. NATALIE MCINTIRE: Hello. Thank you. My name
23 is Natalie McIntire. It's N-a-t-a-l-i-e M-c-I-n-t-i-r-e.
24 I'm a resident of Elk Rapids, Michigan, near Traverse City,
25 and I'm a Senior Advocate for the Natural Resources Defense

1 Council and the Sustainable FERC Project, and we work to
2 support the clean energy transition and wholesale
3 electricity markets. After these comments in support of the
4 transmission lines that are the focus of today's hearing,
5 I'm going to address specific -- I'm not going to address
6 the specific siting plans for these lines, but we'll focus
7 on the electrical need for them and the expected consumer
8 benefits.

9 I want to start by summarizing the benefits of
10 these transmission projects for Michigan consumers. They
11 will improve reliability and resilience of our electric
12 grid, helping to keep the lights on when there is extreme
13 weather events and other emergencies. They're needed to
14 enable new, low cost clean energy resources in Michigan,
15 like solar, wind and battery storage, and will improve our
16 energy independence and our connections to our neighboring
17 states. The projects will help make electricity more
18 affordable by increasing access to cheaper energy sources,
19 and construction of these power lines, and the new
20 generation that they will support will create new jobs in
21 Michigan.

22 I also want to describe the process behind these
23 two transmission projects, which are part of a portfolio of
24 transmission lines approved by the Midcontinent Independent
25 System Operator, or MISO, in June 2022 following more than

1 two years of robust transmission planning and stakeholder
2 engagement. This portfolio, called Tranche 1, has 18
3 transmission projects that are spread across the nine states
4 in the northern part of the MISO footprint, and their plan
5 to serve the region for the next 40-plus years.

6 All these projects work together to bring billions
7 of dollars of reliable -- reliability and economic benefits
8 to consumers across the region. I, and others from my
9 organization and others in our coalition, participated in
10 this planning process. We sought to ensure that the Tranche
11 1 portfolio identified transmission solutions that would
12 allow utilities to reliably add new clean energy resources
13 to meet low growth and new -- and the state policy goals
14 well into the future.

15 The two projects mentioned here are critical to
16 ensure that these benefits are actually realized by Michigan
17 customers. These projects are key pieces of infrastructure
18 needed for Michigan utilities to meet their -- the state's
19 clean and renewable energy standards, because the grid must
20 be able to accept the power from these low cost solar and
21 wind generators, and to deliver that energy to residential
22 and business customers across the state. Clean generation
23 will reduce emissions, improving both air and water quality,
24 and a more robust grid will also help meet new electricity
25 demand, whether it's more electric vehicles or new homes

1 being built across the state, or new large industrial loads
2 that will help drive a healthy economy in Michigan.

3 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Ms. McIntire --

4 MS. NATALIE MCINTIRE: Thank you. I appreciate
5 the opportunity to make these comments today. NRDC and the
6 Sustainable FERC Project urge the commission to approve
7 these transmission projects after careful review of the
8 proposed siting. Thank you.

9 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you so much, Ms. McIntire.
10 Okay. Moving on, I believe the next caller in the queue is
11 Ed Rivet.

12 MR. EDWARD RIVET: Yes, thank you very much. My
13 name is Edward Rivet. That's E-d-w-a-r-d, Rivet, R-i-v, as
14 in Victor, e-t. I am the Executive Director of the Michigan
15 Conservative Energy Forum. We are a policy advocacy
16 organization that are very focused on the promotion of a
17 resilient, reliable grid that meets our needs, both
18 economically and our national security. And from our
19 perspective, having viewed the MISO's plans for expanding
20 the grid, not only through this Tranche 1, but 2 and 3 to
21 come, there is a tremendous need for expanding our
22 transmission infrastructure, and so this project is a
23 necessity.

24 But in addition, it does provide the very public
25 benefits that Naomi's presentation referenced, as an

1 obligation of the commission to examine, that being for a
2 number of reasons. The first of which is that we will see a
3 significant increase in demand for energy, whether that is
4 from the data driven economy, data centers and otherwise,
5 EV's, home electrification, et cetera. We cannot put
6 ourselves at risk of power shortages, and that's a
7 possibility. We see them in other states. We -- we have to
8 respond to what MISO is -- is indicating, and expanding this
9 infrastructure to move electricity where it's from to where
10 it's needed, is just critical.

11 And to point to that, we will be seeing our grid
12 changing. We're used to big power plants, centrally sending
13 energy in one direction. The grid is going to become two
14 directional, and our generation resources will be spread out
15 further and more abundance around the state. So we have to
16 be prepared for that reality of solar, wind or batteries, or
17 wherever the source may be, including bringing Palisades
18 back online. We still have to be able to move it where it
19 needs to be, and our connection to the larger grid, the
20 Midwest region.

21 So the helix project coming through Indiana, the
22 first time in a very long time we've added additional
23 capacity, to not only bring Michigan more electricity when
24 we need it, but to send electricity to other states when
25 they need it in times of crisis. So these are just a few of

1 the essential reasons why we need to expand our grid
2 reliability and our capacity.

3 I will add in having worked as well very
4 extensively on renewable energy projects, communities need
5 to be listened to. We need to be as sensitive as possible
6 to those local needs and the needs of the residents. I
7 offer the assistance of our organization as liaison to
8 communities to anyone involved in this process. We need
9 this infrastructure.

10 We need the energy, and there are fair and
11 reasonable ways that it can be done. And we would ask the
12 Commission to prioritize the needs of the entire state and
13 those benefits, as well as providing the most reasonable and
14 rational way of putting this infrastructure in place. And I
15 will end my comments there.

16 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Okay. Thank you so much, Mr.
17 Rivet. Okay. Next in the queue we have Lynn Colby.
18 Ms. Colby, if you want to hit the mic button on your
19 computer, it'll unmute you.

20 MS. LYNN COLBY: Yes. Can you hear me, sir?

21 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Yes, I can. Would you please
22 state and spell your name for the court reporter, Ms. Colby?

23 MS. LYNN COLBY: Absolutely. Good evening, Judge
24 Saunders. My name is Lynn Colby. First Name, L-y-n-n, last
25 name Colby, just like the cheese, C-o-l-b, as in boy, -y. I

1 live on Stoll Road in Eagle Township. I thank you for an
2 opportunity to share with you our involvement in U-21471.
3 My husband and I --

4 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Ms. Ms. Colby --

5 MS. LYNN COLBY: -- made a very conscious
6 choice --

7 JUDGE SAUNDERS: -- I'm sorry -- would you --
8 would you -- would you do me a favor?

9 MS. LYNN COLBY: -- live in a small rural Eagle
10 community by purchasing and maintaining the family farm.
11 It's a privilege to sit on the highest and the lowest banks
12 of the Grand River. Your Honor, Chairperson Scripps has
13 stated, "I'd like to see greater appreciation of the
14 challenges facing rural communities. The Public Service
15 Commission can certainly play a supporting role in
16 proactively working with our smaller rural communities to
17 understand their concerns, rectify their agricultural
18 challenges, identify appropriate alternatives and resolve
19 their issues."

20 Using Chairperson Scripps words of understand,
21 rectify, identify and resolve, please understand our
22 concerned farmers. Please rectify this situation by using
23 over seven miles of right away already owned by Consumers
24 Energy that has been preplanned and prepaid for by Consumers
25 for this purpose. Please identify that Consumers Energy has

1 this plan set aside for the very purpose of strengthening
2 Michigan's power grid. Please resolve this to the
3 betterment of families like mine that love agriculture and
4 are tapping into our retirement savings to protect our
5 property.

6 Sir, I'm asking you to play a major role in
7 protecting my agricultural and natural resources. Building
8 a transmission line across any farm is disruptive. Heavy
9 equipment compacts the soil. Crop yields suffer for years
10 after construction is complete. Please do not allow ITC to
11 roach our property, destroy beautiful timberland and
12 farmland top soil. I firmly believe no family would
13 volunteer to host a transmission line across their property.
14 It's an even better pill to swallow knowing that companies
15 such as ITC can even solicit government eminent domain
16 authority to ensure they are able to lay construction.

17 There is already a viable and functional route to
18 this line, sir. Please help Chairperson Scripps continue on
19 a path of preservation of farmland by using the alternative
20 route. Thank you for your time today, sir.

21 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you so much, Ms. Colby.
22 Next in the queue, we have Steve Colby. Mr. Colby, are you
23 on the same line there?

24 MR. STEVE COLBY: Good afternoon. Can you hear
25 me?

1 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Yes, I can. Thank you so much,
2 Mr. Colby. Could you please state and spell your name for
3 the court reporter?

4 MR. STEVE COLBY: Yes. My name is Steve Colby, S-
5 t-e-v-e C-o-l-b-y, and I also live on Stoll Road in Eagle
6 Township. I'd just like to say thank you, Your Honor, for
7 giving us this time to speak tonight. We have heard from
8 multiple families regarding the impact of the U-21471
9 project on their personal property, in addition to their
10 lives. As Lynn stated, our family is no different. We are
11 negatively impacted by the Nelson Road to Oneida Project,
12 and we are dismayed that the primary route is being
13 considered over the alternative route.

14 When was the last time you read a newspaper
15 headline proclaiming that an area farmer was breaking ground
16 on a new corn field or a new wheat field or a horse pasture?
17 You haven't. None of us have. You would have needed to be
18 here around 150 years ago for that type of news, back in the
19 day when increasing farmland was a priority among the early
20 residents and pioneers of Michigan. Farmland was then what
21 farmland is now, is what feeds us all and it is the backbone
22 of our local communities.

23 For many years, farmland has been and still is
24 under assault from different factions, from housing
25 developments, industrial parks, manufacturing sites, green

1 energy production sites and mega sites. Farmland is being
2 lost at an astonishing rate in this country, in this state,
3 in our county and townships, and those are the only
4 headlines we do hear regarding groundbreaking ceremonies.
5 It's always a great story for the greater good, but never is
6 consideration ever given to the lost farmland.

7 Any compensation received for this land can never
8 account for what has been lost, and that will never ever
9 return. The proposed primary route will disrupt multiple
10 farms to its path, yet the alternate route has the
11 opportunity to take advantage of land that has been intended
12 for a utility right-of-way for decades, but has never been
13 implemented. Now is the time for the intended usage of this
14 land to be utilized and to reduce the impact to our local
15 agricultural community.

16 Many miles of this right-of-way can contribute
17 greatly to the Nelson Road to Oneida project and make a
18 significant reduction in the amount of farmland that would
19 be lost forever. Back in 2007 the Michigan Public Service
20 Commission Chair Dan Scripps worked for the Leelanau
21 Conservation. His responsibility then was to develop new
22 approaches to protect farmland in the peninsula. He worked
23 hard to find innovative ways to protect threatened working
24 farms.

25 I ask for your help, Your Honor, to ensure that

1 Chair Scripps continues that valuable approach to protect
2 our farmland by choosing the alternate route. I thank you
3 for your time.

4 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you very much, Mr. Colby.
5 Okay. Moving on in the queue, it looks like the next
6 individual is Peter Sullivan. Mr. Sullivan?

7 MR. PETER SULLIVAN: (Indiscernible)

8 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Could --

9 MR. SCRIPPS: Yes.

10 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Could you please state and spell
11 your name for the court reporter, please?

12 MR. PETER SULLIVAN: Yeah, I'd be happy to. Peter
13 Sullivan, S-u-l-l-i-v-a-n. I reside in Strongsville, Ohio;
14 S-t-r-o-n-g-s-v-i-l-l-e. Tonight, I represent Margo
15 Sullivan, my mom, who resides in Fowler, Michigan, and she
16 would like to submit these comments under Rule 413. She
17 owns land along the proposed primary route of Jones and
18 Parks Roads in Dallas Township, the primary route for the
19 ITC Oneida Substation at Nelson Road.

20 The substation will impact the land that she owns.
21 There's an existing transmission line along the west side of
22 her property. She imposed -- she opposes having the new
23 transmission line located alongside, on, over, under or
24 through the property. She opposed the primary route for the
25 transmission line and the issuance of the Certificate of

1 Public Convenience and Necessity.

2 Since granting an easement or right-of-way would
3 have the following negative outcomes: This land has been in
4 her family since the 1860's, and my family also, and has
5 been celebrated as a Centennial Farm, and is -- therefore,
6 has historical significance in the community and my family.
7 The new line would degrade the natural beauty of the rural
8 landscape. It's been farmed and hunted for over 150 years.
9 She will not be willing to increase the easement by about 65
10 feet on the property, as increasing that easement would
11 precipitate the removal of almost a quarter acre of mature
12 trees.

13 The extension of the easement would remove the
14 option of her selling the timber on the land at the time and
15 price of her choosing. She won't be compensated for this
16 loss of timber or the optionality. She's not willing to
17 grant a larger easement that would allow the company or its
18 contractors to access the line at their convenience, with
19 the risk recurring farming activities would be disrupted
20 and/or crops would be destroyed, land would be damaged or
21 tiling would be destroyed.

22 Installing the transmission line would degrade the
23 market value of the land, and the easement will not
24 compensate her from that loss of value. Installing the
25 transmission line will reduce the number of potential buyers

1 of the property, should she decide to divest of it. The
2 fact that the property is along the proposed route could
3 impede her ability to divest of the asset if she chooses to
4 for years, as the line group is debated and until the
5 completion of the construction of the line.

6 Currently, the land is used for farming, but
7 installing the transmission line would impede her -- impede
8 her ability to lease the land for grazing or other purposes,
9 should she decide to do that. Granting the easement would
10 not compensate her for the loss of the optionality of
11 grazing, development or any purpose that she would choose to
12 execute. Should this line be installed, this line could
13 have a very long useful life measured in decades, and she's
14 not willing to desecrate the land and the landscape by
15 allowing this line to be sited on, over, under or through
16 the property.

17 I'm almost done. Should the Certificate of Public
18 Convenience and Necessity be granted, she objects to the use
19 of the condemnation process to essentially confiscate part
20 of the property, have the rights of ownership be impinged by
21 using this bullying tactic on a small private landowner --
22 owners. In summary, she demands that ITC not be granted the
23 Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity, and that
24 they find another route for this transmission line.

25 If it is sited on over, under or through the

1 property, the devaluation and esthetic damage will be done
2 for generations. She will not allow that to occur. Thank
3 you for your time.

4 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you, Mr. Sullivan. Okay.
5 It looks like the next individual we have in the queue for
6 comment is Jerad Marble. Mr. Marble, if you'd like to
7 unmute your mic, you can go ahead and make a comment.

8 MR. JERAD MARBLE: Hello, Judge Saunders. Can you
9 hear me?

10 JUDGE SAUNDERS: I can. Could you please state
11 and spell your name for the court reporter?

12 MR. JERAD MARBLE: Yes, sir. My name is Jerad
13 Marble; J-e-r-a-d, Marble, like the stone, M-a-r-b-l-e.
14 I'll just start off -- I'll introduce myself. So my --
15 yeah, like I said, my name is Jerad Marble. I was born and
16 raised in Eagle, Michigan. I'm 33 years old. I went off to
17 college at Michigan Tech to get my mechanical engineering
18 degree, where I got a job at Chrysler. Work -- COVID hit,
19 and then I was allowed to do a hybrid work schedule, where I
20 was then able to move back to Eagle where I'm from, and
21 start a family.

22 My wife and I have a 3-year-old little girl. We
23 found property that's on the proposed route, and I'm very
24 concerned about potential health effects. My wife -- I
25 don't like to talk about this a lot, but my wife just went

1 through cancer. She had stage three lung cancer, and so
2 we're getting over that, and I'll be damned if something
3 like this goes in and risks the health of my little girl and
4 any future kids we may have.

5 So what this would do to our property value, like
6 others have said, it would degrade it immensely. I would
7 never have bought this parcel had the line been on there
8 already. Land to find in Eagle, where I'm from, is
9 virtually impossible. When land does pop up, the residents
10 here have to compete with multi-million dollar out-of-state
11 companies, such as Sears Farms. I had to deal with that
12 several times. It took me a very long time to find this
13 parcel. I also harvest timber off the land, so that would
14 degrade future income on the land.

15 So I know I probably don't have a lot of time
16 left, so I'll come at you guys as an engineer. So ITC will
17 do a lot of hand waving, but they don't -- they're not
18 necessarily showing you all the data. You guys need to --
19 you need to question the data and make them prove that they
20 truly need this. And as an automotive engineer, they talk
21 about the vehicle mandates to support battery electric
22 vehicles. Well, you'll see all the OEM's are currently
23 gesturing on rolling back the BEV percentages they're going
24 to sell.

25 So the regulations themselves will be eased, and

1 the OEM's are going to not sell as many. So the true need
2 for these 349, or whatever the kilovolt line is, I don't
3 believe it. So I'm just -- I'm getting worked up, but the
4 most important thing to me is the health of my family, and
5 I'm trying to tell you to do not let them do hand waving.
6 Make them absolutely prove it, and I don't think they can.

7 So I guess that's all I've got to say. I
8 appreciate your time, and -- and please consider everyone
9 here who -- whose lives will be truly negatively impacted by
10 this going in. Thank you.

11 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you very much, Mr. Marble.
12 Okay. It look --

13 MR. JERAD MARBLE: Yep.

14 JUDGE SAUNDERS: It looks like our next speaker in
15 the queue is Scott Blanchard. Mr. Blanchard, if you'd like
16 to hit the mic button, it will unmute you.

17 MR. SCOTT BLANCHARD: Yes, hello. I'm Scott
18 Blanchard. My wife, Louri Blanchard, is here as well.
19 That's S-c-o-t-t B-l-a-n-c-h-a-r-d. I want to thank Your
20 Honor and the Commission for this opportunity to speak, and
21 I'd just like to say a few words. Calhoun County and
22 Marshall, in particular, have been hit hard by progress,
23 with 1700 acres being gathered up by Michigan Economic
24 Development Cooperation for projects such as BlueOval
25 battery plant here in Marshall. Several Calhoun County

1 residents have signed agreements with solar companies to
2 give up their farmland, with totals reaching near 10,000
3 acres and climbing.

4 These projects have led to houses being torn down,
5 forcing families to relocate, and farms being gobbled up,
6 all in the name of progress and clean energy. This leads us
7 to this project that we're dealing with here today, the need
8 for more transmission lines to move the power being
9 generated by all these solar farms. Again, more land being
10 taken from Calhoun County residents. And I understand,
11 utility companies give compensation to these landowners, but
12 very few residents ever want this. It's pushed on them.
13 It's destroying our landscape. No one wants to look at
14 large transmission lines.

15 I went to an ITC meeting, and I was told that the
16 Helix line here in southern Michigan actually is being
17 instructed to take the power out of Michigan, down to
18 Indiana and out to Illinois and Wisconsin. So I would
19 definitely like to see a lot more transparency on where this
20 power is actually going.

21 For the Blanchard family, this project is very
22 disruptive and likely a costly one. Even though the
23 transmission line doesn't actually touch our property, it's
24 literally right next door. And by next door, I mean 120
25 feet from my house. The representatives for the power

1 company at the last meeting that we were on, seemed to think
2 that we were not affected because it's not on our land. But
3 I asked the committee to think about 120 feet from your
4 house, I would definitely say we're affected. Our view will
5 be permanently altered. Our property value will go down,
6 and we get no compensation for it.

7 We have 14 beautiful acres, country acres, a
8 two-acre building lot across the street for one of our boys
9 to be able to build on someday. And just so the Commission
10 knows, this is the primary route that we're dealing with
11 here, and it was changed. The first submission that
12 happened a year ago. Neighbors were able to go get
13 attorneys and plead their cases and have the line moved, so
14 it didn't affect us early on. It wasn't until about a month
15 or so ago that now all of a sudden it's dumped in our lap,
16 so -- and it's that way for many residents.

17 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Mr. Blanchard, I'm so sorry. I
18 hate to cut you off, but we are starting to run out of time
19 here. Could you -- could you wrap up --

20 MR. SCOTT BLANCHARD: Yep.

21 JUDGE SAUNDERS: -- your comments for me, please?

22 MR. SCOTT BLANCHARD: Yeah, I'm sorry. Gladly.
23 So we're just asking that the Commission deny the
24 application at this time and give those residents that were
25 notified late of these changes -- we didn't even know you

1 could change it. We thought it was the primary route or the
2 alternative route. Apparently, that's not the case. So
3 just give consideration, give more time for us to be able to
4 react like these -- the first group of residents were.
5 Thank you.

6 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you very much,
7 Mr. Blanchard. It looks like our next commenter in the
8 queue is a phone number of 269-425-0653. And, again, if you
9 want to hit star six, you will be able to unmute make a
10 comment.

11 MR. ED COSTINE: Hello, can you hear me?

12 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Yes, I can. Could you please
13 state and spell your name --

14 MR. ED COSTINE: Hello?

15 JUDGE SAUNDERS: -- for the court reporter?
16 Hello. Can -- can you hear me?

17 MR. ED COSTINE: Yes, I can hear you.

18 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Okay, great. Could you please --

19 MR. ED COSTINE: My name is Ed Costine; E-d -- E-d
20 C-o-s-t-i-n-e. I live in Tekonsha Township on the Helix
21 Hiple Route. We met with ITC at the meeting that they had
22 in our local -- I'm sorry; I'm in Gerard Township, Tekonsha,
23 Michigan -- at our local township hall. They presented
24 their plan for their power lines. I own 32 acres that's a
25 rectangle shape. It's farm field, and what it can best be

1 described as a park.

2 Their proposed route runs diagonally through my
3 property. They were not aware that my house was even there
4 because of the trees, which will all be gone if they do
5 their proposed route, because their proposed route is 100
6 feet from my house. One -- exactly one mile south of my
7 house, on the other side of Vincent Lake is -- two years ago
8 Consumers Power put these exact same poles on with four
9 transmission lines.

10 When it was brought up to them that they were
11 crossing these four lines that -- by the way, ITC built for
12 Consumers, and then go north of the lake, and then -- one
13 mile, and then run parallel on the other side of the lake,
14 approximately 300 feet from the lake, behind the houses
15 along the lake in between my house and the lake, and then
16 diagonally back towards the Consumers lines across I-69.
17 The Consumers line runs exactly perpendicular to I-69.
18 They're going to cross it, go a mile north, run parallel to
19 it, and then go back south to cross I-69.

20 When I suggested that -- Consumers Power could
21 never object to power lines being put on their power lines
22 property. I would think that that would be a very simple
23 solution. Instead of crossing the lines, follow them. Many
24 of those silver poles have eight wires on them instead of
25 four. Consumers power lines have four. If you need bigger

1 poles, put bigger poles on those same ones, and use those
2 smaller poles later on.

3 To disrupt farms and families and ruin property
4 values of lakefront properties with absolutely no
5 consideration of what's already there. It sounds like
6 they're doing this all over the state with other easements
7 that are already there for power lines that they're choosing
8 not to follow. And when I asked them at the meeting, why
9 aren't they following these lines, they acted like they were
10 unaware that they were there, when they built them.

11 I think that if they'll lie to me, I'm sure
12 they've lied to the Commission and to the judges and to all
13 the politicians, just because the algorithm said this was
14 the cheapest and most cost effective for the investors way
15 to -- place to put the lines. There is also a bent tree on
16 my property, and if you're not aware what that is, is the
17 Indians, about 200 years ago, bent a tree so it pointed
18 north so that they could find the lake and find their way
19 back. That tree --

20 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Mr. Costine, I'm so --

21 MR. STEVE COLBY: -- is going to be destroyed by
22 this power line.

23 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Mr. Costine, I'm so sorry, but
24 we're running out of time here. Could -- could you
25 please --

1 MR. STEVE COLBY: I can wrap it up there -- I can
2 wrap it up there, that -- I can wrap -- I can wrap it up
3 there and just say that I urge the Commission to deny this
4 application. As for one, it makes absolutely no sense.
5 There is no common sense or any sense, other than someone's
6 getting rich. The property owners are not going to be
7 compensated for the value that they're losing. Thank you.

8 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you so much. Okay. And it
9 looks like our -- next in the queue we have a Larry and
10 Coreen Strzalka.

11 MS. COREEN STRZALKA: Yes, hi. Larry and Coreen
12 Strzalka. It's S-t-r-z-a-l-k-a. Both Larry and I are here,
13 so we'd each like three minutes, please. Oh, he didn't hear
14 me.

15 JUDGE SAUNDERS: I'm sorry. Could -- could you
16 repeat that one time, please?

17 MS. COREEN STRZALKA: Sure. Larry and Coreen
18 Strzalka. Both Larry and I are here, and we would each like
19 three minutes. I'm sorry. I need to do something else. S-
20 t-r-z-a-l-k-a.

21 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Okay. Please go ahead.

22 MS. COREEN STRZALKA: Okay. Thank you. Larry and
23 I, we own a 200-acre farm in Eagle Township that is on the
24 proposed primary route. We've owned this property since we
25 were married, since 1990. I agree with many of the

1 speakers. It is unfeasible to not use the existing
2 Consumers right-of-way for the alternative, (indiscernible)
3 for Consumers right-of-way and, also, instead use additional
4 land and disrupt property owners on the primary, such as
5 ourselves.

6 METC takes almost 20 acres of our property on the
7 green route, or primary proposed line. It goes right
8 through the middle of our property and cuts it in half,
9 rather than going along the edge of the property, like it
10 does on other people. Because that's really considered for
11 us a double whammy, as we have a property -- we have it
12 disrupting the (indiscernible) the other farm. I'd rather
13 have the route along a property line, and we suggested this
14 to ITC, but have not heard back.

15 We use drones in our farming, so anything in the
16 air will disrupt the drones. My son has actually ruined one
17 of his drones by running it into a power line. Also, we
18 have cattle, and I've noticed that the facility siting
19 choices, one of them is whether there are cows -- cow barns
20 on the site. So I think MTC is -- METC -- I'm sorry -- is
21 noticing that cows not -- were not able to produce milk and
22 be able to nurse their young, and saw the dairy production
23 as reduced. So I think, in our case, they made a mistake,
24 because we have over 50 cows, and their facility is going
25 right the middle of our cattle grazing living area.

1 The lines will affect our business, as the
2 electric magnetic line will reduce the ability of the cattle
3 to produce milk and nurture young, and then ruin our grass
4 fed business. We see the value of our property will be
5 decreased from these lines. And, also, we have
6 grandchildren -- young grandchildren, and we are concerned
7 about health issues it might cost them. And, as other
8 people have spoken, we are using our retirement money and
9 paying someone, a lawyer, to help protect something that
10 we've already purchased and paid for and owned outright.
11 Larry would like to speak.

12 MR. LARRY STRZALKA: Yeah, I just thank you, Your
13 Honor --

14 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Okay. Certainly. And, sir,
15 could you please state and spell your name for the record,
16 please?

17 MR. LARRY STRZALKA: Sure. Larry, L-a-r-r-y,
18 Strzalka, S-t-r-z-a-l-k-a.

19 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you.

20 MR. LARRY STRZALKA: Yep. You know, our farm,
21 it's not a Centennial Farm, but the house we live in was
22 built in the early 1880's. You know, I could get all
23 emotional and stuff (indiscernible) horrible thing when --
24 when neighbor is pitted against the neighbor. Yeah, we
25 would love to see it moved over into the alternate site,

1 where Consumers owns parcels, but that's going to affect our
2 neighbors a lot. I don't like that. You know, it's just
3 like -- you know, somebody has got to pay, I guess.

4 The whole -- the whole information dissemination
5 by ITC was -- was poorly done, and for what the conditions
6 of the easement would be, you know, so we could make plans.
7 And they -- they said, "Well, we don't have those." Well --
8 well, you know -- you know, I can't just change my
9 operation, you know, on -- on a dime. I need to know what's
10 going on. And I know that they have conditions for the
11 easement.

12 We -- we rent out grounds -- some of our ground
13 for hunting. Well, I know that those areas won't be
14 available if ITC does not let us -- does not let us use that
15 ground for hunting. Just -- I just want to -- that's pretty
16 much it. Coreen handled everything very well for me. Thank
17 you.

18 MS. COREEN STRZALKA: Thank you.

19 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Okay. Thank you so much. I very
20 much appreciate that. It looks like the next commenter we
21 have in the queue is Mike Buza.

22 MR. MIKE BUZA: First name is Mike, M-i-k-e. Last
23 name is Buza, B-u-z-a, and I want to thank the Commission
24 for allowing me to speak. There is no denying that there
25 will be impact on people in the path of -- of the

1 development of this power line. A recent article in MLive
2 features some of these people. I think we need to make sure
3 that the impact of these people and the environment in the
4 path of this power line is minimally as -- is as minimally
5 as possible.

6 However, we need to remember the benefit for many
7 more people. The power line will help us transition from a
8 fossil fuel based electric grid to a clean energy grid.
9 This not only will save customers because -- money, because
10 of the renewable energy is the cheapest form of energy, but
11 also provide many health benefits. There are many people
12 that are suffering from the health effects of burning fossil
13 fuel.

14 According to the Union of Concerned Science --
15 Scientists to avoid the impacts -- the avoided impacts from
16 the electricity sector alone can save Michigan 17 or 14.9
17 billion in public health costs between 2022 and 2040,
18 largely due to reduction in carbon dioxide and sulfur
19 pollution from the power plants. Michigan rates number nine
20 in rate of asthma in 2022, according to CDC. I've seen the
21 suffering in Genesee County/Flint areas that has been many
22 times where new polluting plants are polluting the area with
23 already existing industrial plants. These polluting plants
24 are approved by the state, and the people are -- feel
25 abandoned.

1 This is an opportunity by the State to help with
2 these people's health conditions in the area. They say
3 natural gas is clean burning. It is true at the point of
4 combustion. It produces less carbon and other pollutants,
5 but it's still pollutants. If you look at the entire life
6 cycle from production to combustion, there is much methane,
7 which is -- which is leaked, which is 80 times more powerful
8 greenhouse gas than carbon. Natural gas is not the answer.

9 The building of clean energy sources will help
10 with the health of the State, and the construction of the
11 power line will enable it. I want to thank you for this
12 opportunity to speak.

13 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you very much, Mr. Buza.
14 Okay. It looks like the next commenter we have in the queue
15 is a phone number of 517-617-85 -- 8510. If you hit star
16 six, you will unmute on your phone.

17 MS. MARECE HUTCHISON: My name is spelled M-a-r-e-
18 c-e, last name H-u-t-c-h-i-s-o-n. I live in Batavia
19 Township in Branch County. Originally, the original route
20 that we were told about at the township meeting, where the
21 ITC spokesperson came to, has been changed without anybody's
22 knowledge. We heard about it through the grapevine, myself
23 and some neighboring farmers, supposedly to stay out of the
24 way of a flight path of the county airport. So this came
25 through the grapevine through a drain commissioner that went

1 to coffee with one of the farmers.

2 My concern is that that affects two of our
3 parcels. We're farmers, crop farmers. The first parcel is
4 40 acres it will go through, and that affects our timber
5 crop. The second one is regular crops, rotating crops.
6 It's nearby a lake, which we have a family cabin on. It's a
7 Centennial Farm. We're in our fifth generation of residents
8 here. It goes right through the backyard of that cabin, and
9 there are two eagle nests there that are active. They have
10 two and three eaglets every year. It's, also, just by a
11 wetlands, right next to the wetlands there.

12 It affects our pivots, the summer residents there.
13 Our property taxes are paid by our farm revenue. No one
14 will answer our questions. One person finally came out
15 after we did digging to get a hold of somebody and took
16 pictures and basically said -- no business card, no phone
17 number, you know, nobody asked us. The phone number that
18 came out on the original information sheet that was given to
19 us at that original township meeting, that phone number no
20 longer works.

21 So we have -- we have concerns about property
22 value too. You know, this is going to affect how we get the
23 crops in the -- in the land. How -- how we irrigate it if
24 we go from -- potentially from wetland to dry land,
25 non-irrigated, if it affects that. And the lack of any

1 timing here. You know there were deadlines to make written
2 comments or -- or requests for more information or wiggle
3 room to change some of these lines, and we didn't find out
4 until well after that deadline, which was July 31st. We
5 found out on August 12.

6 We're also concerned about -- you know, we've
7 heard the rumor that they are selling the power also out of
8 state, yet we don't benefit from that.

9 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Ms. Hutchison, I'm so sorry, but
10 we're starting to run short on time here. Could you wrap up
11 your comments for me, please?

12 MS. MARECE HUTCHISON: Yeah, just a -- just a few
13 hundred yards away is a Consumer substation that they could
14 use the existing routes and -- and brand new big power lines
15 there. So I don't know why they're trying to reinvent the
16 wheel, and it really makes such a big impact on the farming
17 community. And thank you for this opportunity to make
18 comments. I really appreciate it.

19 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you, Ms. Hutchison. Okay.
20 It looks next in the queue Rod Dunlap. And Mr. Dunlap, if
21 you want to hit the mic on your computer, it should -- hit
22 the mic button on your team's computer, it should unmute
23 you.

24 MR. ROD DUNLAP: Thank you. Yeah, Rod Dunlap --
25 Rod Dunlap, and my phone number is 248-474-4000. I'm an

1 attorney, and I'm representing the interest of the Devereaux
2 Sawmill. They have a area which is -- which has a airstrip,
3 which is -- this -- this whole project is going right
4 through the middle of that. And I just think it's something
5 to consider in this, when we start talking about a total
6 take that would be involved there. I mean, obviously it
7 would have to be far away from the property in order to, you
8 know, have an airstrip.

9 Somebody else had an airstrip that may be along
10 the same lines, from what I heard here for the first time
11 today. I just think that's something that would need to be
12 considered. Nobody's contacted my client or myself in
13 relationship to this, and I think it's something that could
14 have an impact in looking at alternative routes. Certainly,
15 there's other people that have expressed other reasons as
16 well, which I think also need to be weighed in as to whether
17 or not you go with the primary route, or whether you decide
18 to go as an alternative route.

19 I know there's a lot of people here that want to
20 be heard, so I'm -- that's -- that's all I need to say.
21 Thank you.

22 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you very much, Mr. Dunlap.
23 Okay. It looks like the next -- the next caller that we
24 have as commenter in the queue is -- is a telephone number,
25 517-281-5783. And if you want to hit star six on your

1 phone, it will unmute you.

2 MS. ELIZABETH PRICE: Can you hear me?

3 JUDGE SAUNDERS: I can, yes. Could you please
4 state and spell your name for the court reporter?

5 MS. ELIZABETH PRICE: My name is Elizabeth Price;
6 E-l-i-z-a-b-e-t-h P-r-i-c-e.

7 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you, Ms. Price. Please
8 go --

9 MS. ELIZABETH PRICE: And I -- I live on the
10 alternative route, and I don't know why the system is set up
11 to make people hate each other, because this whole project
12 has just been one hate and bad feeling after another. But I
13 will tell you that I live in 150-some-odd year old
14 farmhouse. I am a widow. If this line were to use -- if
15 you were to use the alternative route, my chair that I have
16 my coffee in, in the morning, would sit approximately 128
17 feet from the line.

18 I don't hear anyone talking tonight about the
19 alternative line, except myself. If the proposed line is
20 not accepted, the question that I have is then does the
21 process start all over, and then the alternative route
22 individuals can become more involved, or are we just -- it
23 doesn't really matter if you didn't speak up now? I thought
24 seriously about hiring an -- hiring a lawyer, but I don't
25 have anything to fight against. I mean, I don't --

1 there's -- it's like vapors out there.

2 My big question is, you know, we just had that
3 huge hurricane, and if we didn't learn anything, we need to
4 be putting these lines underground. With global warming,
5 if -- I mean, California does it, Wisconsin does it. They
6 put them along highway lines where the state already owns
7 the property, so that those -- if they're above the ground,
8 that's where they run. If they are in areas where people
9 live, they go underground.

10 I guess there is nothing that I can say, except
11 just exactly like anybody on the proposed line, I don't want
12 that line here. I am very concerned. I have a pacemaker
13 and sitting that close -- when Consumers has big rules about
14 individuals who work for them, who have pacemakers, how
15 close they can be to those big lines. So I guess that's
16 just my point, Judge Saunders, and I thank you very much for
17 listening. Not that I know that it will do much good, but I
18 just absolutely had to have a voice. Thank you.

19 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you very much, Ms. Price.
20 Okay. It looks like the next commenters in the queue are
21 Joseph and Jennifer Haddix. And Mr. and Mrs. Haddix, if you
22 want -- if you hit the mic button on your Teams screen
23 there, it should unmute you. Joseph and Jennifer Haddix, if
24 you can hear me, if you hit the -- your -- it's your turn
25 for a comment, so if you hit the mic button on your

1 computer, it will unmute you. The mic button is in the top
2 right-hand corner, along the top of the ribbon on your Teams
3 screen.

4 Mr. and Mrs. Haddix, can you hear me? From what I
5 can tell, it looks like you're unmuted, but I can't hear
6 you. Maybe try muting and unmuting your computer again.
7 Again, Mr. and Mrs. Haddix, I can -- I can see that you're
8 unmuted, and I saw you mute and unmute, but I still I can't
9 hear anything. Let's -- let's do this, Mr. and Mr. (sic)
10 Haddix, I'm so sorry, I can't hear you. I'm not sure
11 exactly what's going on. Maybe if -- if you were to try to
12 rejoin the group, that might help -- that might help move
13 things along here.

14 Okay. Let's give the Haddix just another minute
15 or so to see if they come back on and if they're available
16 to -- to make a comment at this point. All right. Well,
17 let's -- let's do this, while we're -- while we're waiting
18 for the Haddixes -- and I'm sorry to everyone else. If the
19 Haddixes come back on, I'd like to jump in and kind of put
20 them back up front. But while we're waiting for them to
21 come back on, it looks like the next commenter is Frank
22 Russo.

23 MR. FRANK RUSSO: Yeah, can you hear me, Your
24 Honor?

25 JUDGE SAUNDERS: I can, Mr. Russo. Thank you so

1 much. Will you please state and spell your name for the
2 court reporter?

3 MR. FRANK RUSSO: Yes. My name is Frank Russo, F-
4 r-a-n-k, last name R-u-s-s-o. My address is 18192 P Drive
5 South in Tekonsha.

6 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you. Please go ahead,
7 Mr. Russo.

8 MR. FRANK RUSSO: All right. So I just want to
9 make comment up here. I own 20 acres, and the proposed
10 route will traverse the entire length of my property. The
11 lines will route through about a thousand foot of my
12 property and run within 120 foot of my bedroom window -- of
13 me and my kids' bedroom window here. Just to put that into
14 perspective for everybody listening, 120 feet is less than
15 half of a football field and about the standard length of a
16 residential driveway.

17 I'd like all the members of the court to think if
18 they would be willing to handle this interruption to their
19 dreams. I've gone out and personally observed a 345
20 kilovolt line that make sounds and buzzing continual, 365
21 days a year, 24 hours a day. That could be heard hundreds
22 and hundreds of yards away, so let alone 120 feet. We
23 purchased our home just one year ago. Never would have
24 purchased if we have known this was coming. Our home's
25 value will never be near the same.

1 A 2018 study showed that lines -- high voltage
2 lines near homes can decrease their value by 40 percent.
3 I'm concerned to the possible health issues and mental and
4 psychological impacts of hearing that kind of noise and
5 buzzing 365 days a year, 24 hours a day. In order to route
6 that line, they have to cut down a wooded fence line that
7 blocks our home from a large open field, the harsh winter
8 winds and the direct sun or sunlight, and their route will
9 cross less than 70 feet away from a pond that has ducks and
10 wildlife through it all year.

11 In my full-time job as a firefighter for the City
12 of Lansing. However, my secondary income is from raising
13 cattle on this property. These lines will destroy 600 feet
14 of fencing, and all three of our cattle barns are within the
15 200-foot easement. When I spoke to IC -- ITC, they weren't
16 even aware of the barns or the fencing or the pond, and this
17 shows to me how little research was done for the route that
18 they proposed.

19 This truly destroys my home and our investment,
20 our dream, and I ask for you guys to consider rerouting
21 these lines away from any residential structures, as this
22 would impact anybody the same as me, and I don't wish this
23 upon anyone else. That's all I have to say.

24 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you very much, Mr. Russo.
25 Okay. It looks like the next commenter we have in the queue

1 is Dawn Green.

2 MS. DAWN GREEN: Thank you for the opportunity to
3 speak tonight. My name is Dawn, D-a-w-n, last name Green,
4 G-r-e-e-n. We are located on the proposed route for Helix
5 Hiple in Branch County, Bethel Township. I live at 201
6 South Butcher Road, Coldwater, Michigan, and we have three
7 parcels that are impacted by Helix Hiple. They are
8 agricultural farmland, but they also contain wetlands that
9 will be impacted by this project, as well as natural
10 prairie, which is rare.

11 That means that the soil has never been tilled
12 since the start of the state of Michigan. And we are unable
13 to work that ground or clear that ground or do anything with
14 it, but we are being told by ITC that they will get special
15 dispensation of those and be able to -- to just move through
16 that land as they wish. So it seems like it's a double
17 standard.

18 My concern, too, and I think -- I won't reiterate
19 points that have already been brought up tonight, but there
20 is a lack of communication and transparency with this line.
21 And, frankly, there was no research done up front, as we
22 were included in the 10 -- October 26th Bethel Township Hall
23 meeting last year, and they already had a proposed route
24 with no research, asking landowners to do -- fill in with
25 information, where we provided this information.

1 And, also, this 130-acre field that they plan to
2 bisect with these poles falls into a solar project right now
3 with Branch Solar, LLC. And this has been in the works for
4 over five years, and the documentation was all available at
5 the Register of Deeds office, but obviously they have not
6 pulled any of that information when they put this proposed
7 line together.

8 We sit in between two routes, where there are
9 existing high transmission lines through (indiscernible)
10 Township, and then also here in Bethel Township, a property
11 less than a mile down the road. I do not understand why
12 they cannot use existing lines or property to put this
13 through and just upgrade their equipment, but that's the
14 reason we are asking for Certificate of Public Convenience
15 and Necessity be denied until they can come back and do
16 their research and propose right -- right routes.

17 And the other piece, I guess, is our property is
18 less than five miles from the Branch County Memorial Airport
19 in Coldwater, Michigan, and we're understanding that 160
20 feet tall poles will go in with 345 kilowatts. And we
21 constantly have air traffic around here, and I just can't
22 see how if we have issues with silos going up that are 80-90
23 feet, how a 160-foot tall high transmission line goes up
24 without being considered what that is to -- this to the
25 airport as well. Thank you for your time.

1 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you very much, Ms. Green.
2 Okay. I'd like to ask before I move to the next individual
3 in the queue here, is -- are Jen- -- are Joseph and Jennifer
4 Haddix back on the line? Okay. Hopefully the Haddixes will
5 be able to join us in a little bit here. But, moving on, it
6 looks like our next commenter in the queue is Walter Mills.

7 MR. WALTER MILLS: Hi, Your Honor. Can you hear
8 me?

9 JUDGE SAUNDERS: I can, yes. Mr. Mills, could you
10 please state and spell your name for the court reporter?

11 MR. WALTER MILLS: Sure. My name is Walt, W-a-l-
12 t, Mills, M-i-l-l-s. Your Honor, Commissioners, thank you
13 for the opportunity to speak tonight. I live in Girard
14 Township, which is near Tekonsha, Michigan. I live on the
15 west side of Vincent Lake, outside of Tekonsha.

16 The proposed route is literally coming within a
17 couple hundred feet of a house I just moved into three weeks
18 ago on a piece of property that we bought 20 years ago to --
19 to live out -- live out my life with my wife and -- and in a
20 quiet, peaceful place that we -- that we've earned and
21 worked hard for. The transmission lines will literally be
22 within sight of where I'm sitting at this moment, and I
23 can't imagine the crackling and the nuisance that that's
24 going to cause.

25 Over the last several years our area has been

1 inundated by solar panels. We have them all around us,
2 within just a couple miles. And just about two years ago,
3 as Mr. Costine said, another transmission line went through
4 and scarred the south end of Vincent Lake. Vincent Lake is
5 a pristine glacial lake that's surrounded by families that
6 live here their entire lifetime. We have farms, we have
7 eagles, we have beavers, we have all kinds of things around
8 us that -- that you don't get to see in everyday life in
9 this area.

10 The -- during the course of this process, I've
11 caught on trail cams ITC surveyors on my property, walking
12 around my property without permission, and there's been very
13 little communication to us about the true impact of this.
14 I -- I beg, plead with the commissioners deny this. Use
15 right-of-ways that already exist, whether it's along I-69,
16 existing transmission lines. Do not destroy this pristine
17 farm property and lake property that all of us have worked
18 so hard to maintain and keep pure for the last several
19 decades. Thank you for your time. Thank you very much.

20 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you very much. And, moving
21 on, it looks like the next commenter we have in the queue is
22 Dennis S.

23 MR. DENNIS STRAHLE: I think I am unmuted. Am I
24 unmuted?

25 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Yes, you are.

1 MR. DENNIS STRAHLE: But then I couldn't hear you.
2 Oh, you are muted.

3 JUDGE SAUNDERS: I'm so sorry. I was muted. I
4 can hear you just fine. Can you please state and spell your
5 name for the court reporter?

6 MR. DENNIS STRAHLE: Very good. My name is
7 Dennis, D-e-n-n-i-s, Strahle, S-t-r-a-h-l-e. I am in Eagle,
8 Michigan. I am on the alternate route along with -- along
9 with Elizabeth. This family will be -- my grandson will be
10 fifth generation on this place. We've been here a little
11 while. It's been a family farm for quite awhile. This
12 project, the alternate route, which everyone seems in favor
13 of, except for us on the alternate route, will divide our
14 property just about in half.

15 We use HomeWorks Tri-County electric here. We do
16 not use Consumers Energy, so it's not the Consumer -- it's
17 not the power company that I pay that's going to benefit
18 from this. I think that's unfortunate. I do strongly agree
19 with the commenter earlier who said that he's a lineman, he
20 worked as a lineman, and does recognize that we don't need a
21 new power line. We need to upgrade and repair and clear
22 trees away from our existing lines. That's what we truly
23 need. Yes, this big monster new line is going to transmit
24 342,000 kilovolts or 340 -- yeah -- kilovolts, but it's not
25 going to give it to the people that need it. The people

1 that need it need to have the existing power lines upgraded
2 and given some care.

3 The alternate route will go within about a hundred
4 feet of our house, so, yeah, that's hitting pretty close to
5 home. I did hear -- I do not have confirmation -- that this
6 power line was set up to help supply a potential mega site
7 in Eagle Township. I'm on the Eagle Township Board. I've
8 been fighting that mega site since it came across two years
9 ago. This is almost like a mega site, something that seems
10 pretty hard to stop.

11 This will use up over five acres of our 69 acres.
12 That's not a good thing. Cuts right across some prime
13 farmland. And I am very, very disappointed that, as was
14 stated earlier, this is pitting neighbor against neighbor.
15 It seems to be the process that this Act 30 sets up that
16 there's a proposed route and an alternate route. Well, as
17 soon as you set that up, then you've got one side saying,
18 "Send it the other way," the other side saying, "Send it the
19 other way." So we're fighting ourselves, which is good for
20 ITC, but it's not good for our neighbors. It's just a
21 lose-lose for the properties that are affected by this.

22 Our field is tiled. We just tiled that a few
23 years ago. That was an \$18,000 expense. This will for sure
24 screw that up. It's going right through the tiled section
25 of our property. And someone else brought up that their

1 property was within five miles of an airport. The alternate
2 route comes much closer to the Grand Ledge airport. That's
3 a daily-used facility. It's also a facility used by the
4 National Guard. So why do we want to run this super tall
5 power line closer, or even near a National Guard facility?
6 We're -- that's a facility that does a lot of training and
7 work for our National Guard people.

8 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Mr. Strahle, I'm so sorry to jump
9 in here, but we're running low on time. Could you wrap up
10 your comments for me, please?

11 MR. DENNIS STRAHLE: I'm good. I just wanted to
12 speak up and say that us alternate route people are indeed
13 listening. Thank you so much.

14 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you. Okay. Moving on, it
15 looks like Joseph and Jennifer Haddix are back. Will the
16 Haddixes please try to unmute your computer and see if we're
17 working this time?

18 MS. JENNIFER HADDIX: Can you hear me this time?

19 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Yes, I certainly can. Thank you
20 so much. Could you please state and spell your name for the
21 court reporter?

22 MS. JENNIFER HADDIX: Yep. My name is Jennifer,
23 last name is Haddix, H-a-d-d-i-x. We live at 14086, West
24 State Road in Grand Ledge. We're in Eagle Township. And my
25 husband and I are opposed to the lines going through our

1 property. This property was purchased from Joe's great-
2 grandfather in 1902, and we own over 200 acres. We do run a
3 active gravel pit in this area, we farm, and we also have a
4 maple syrup woods.

5 The first route would have went right through our
6 gravel pit, and then it would angle over. The proposed line
7 now goes through our farm fields and right through our maple
8 syrup woods. The line will cover about one mile of our
9 property, because of all of the turns that they want to do
10 when they come into the property, then angle over, then
11 angle back.

12 We feel that it would negatively affect our
13 income, being that we do run a couple small businesses off
14 of the land that we currently live on. It's going to
15 decrease our property value if for some reason, heaven
16 forbid, we ever had to sell in the future. The heavy
17 equipment that will be used to build the lines would compact
18 the ground so much, making it hard for us to farm our land
19 around them. The high voltage lines would be a health
20 concern, not only for us, but also the employees that we
21 have.

22 We also hunt on our property to help feed our
23 families, and we worry about what the power lines will do to
24 the wildlife here. The property also follows the Grand
25 River, and we do see eagles in this area. We, too, are

1 spending money on lawyer fees that we do not have, just as
2 many others. We don't feel that this should be necessary,
3 when there's already a proposed route one to -- one and a
4 half miles from here, that we feel that should be used
5 instead of going through our land. Thank you.

6 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Okay. Thank you very much,
7 Ms. Haddix. Okay. Moving on, it looks like the next
8 individual we have in the queue is Robert Lust. Mr. Lust,
9 it looks like you -- it looks like you un- -- there you are.
10 Can you hear me okay?

11 MR. ROBERT LUST: Yes, sir. Sorry. I hit the
12 wrong button.

13 JUDGE SAUNDERS: That's fine. Could you please
14 state and spell your name for the court reporter?

15 MR. ROBERT LUST: Yes. My name is Robert, R-o-b-
16 e-r-t. Last name is Lust, L-u-s, like Sam, -t, like Tom.

17 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Okay. Thank you so much, Mr.
18 Lust. Please go ahead.

19 MR. ROBERT LUST: My wife, Dawn, which is D-a-w-n,
20 and I are landowners in Eckford Township in Calhoun County.
21 As you know, in August of 2023 METC submitted a construction
22 plan for the Helix to Hiple transmission line that showed a
23 route -- a primary route that was approximately one mile
24 from our property. In August of this year, we learned that
25 the primary route proposed in METC's application was now

1 contiguous to our property.

2 We are very concerned about the lack of
3 transparency on the part of METC and ITC, and the fact that
4 we didn't have prior notification of the changes or proposed
5 changes to the route that were being considered. Today,
6 we're asking the Commission to pause the application
7 process -- application approval process to allow those of us
8 now impacted by the siting route to have sufficient time to
9 react. If that is not possible, then we urge the Commission
10 to deny the application. Thank you for your time.

11 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you very much, Mr. Lust.
12 Okay. It looks like the next individual in the queue for
13 comment is a phone number that is 517-250-7449, and if you
14 will hit star six on your phone, that will unmute you.
15 Again, if you hit star six on your phone that will unmute
16 you so that you can make a comment. One more time, that's
17 star six on your phone and that should unmute you so that
18 you can make a comment. Do we have someone on the line set
19 to make a comment at this point? Oh, there we go. Can you
20 hear me?

21 MS. LISA CROUCH: Yes. Can you hear me?

22 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Yes; yes. Could you please state
23 and spell your name for the court reporter?

24 MS. LISA CROUCH: Yes. My name is Lisa Crouch; L-
25 i-s-a C-r-o-u-c-h. I am coming on tonight on behalf of my

1 parents and myself. We live on the county line between
2 Branch County and Calhoun County, part of the proposed Helix
3 Hiple line that's being brought through Tekonsha Township.

4 I just want to voice my agreeance with so many of
5 the people that have already spoke tonight, that it is
6 ruining generational farms in Michigan by either of these
7 lines. I think both should be denied overall, but
8 (indiscernible). There are already high power lines running
9 just south of Tekonsha that this -- they could use for this
10 line and not destroy these farms. And, also, you know,
11 running up 69, all the people that said using public land,
12 state land, already used power lines. Please don't approve
13 these.

14 The proposed route is going to be cutting
15 diagonally through my parents' farm, which we live on part
16 of. It will ruin the entire farm. It also runs across the
17 back of the farm, protected wetlands, which ITC told us when
18 we went to the meeting, that they weren't going to go
19 through any wetlands, which obviously is a lie. They also
20 told us at that meeting it's a route to see what they were
21 proposing. They just did it on, like, computer imaging of
22 what they thought would be ideal, which, from the sounds of
23 it, is not ideal for so many farmers because it's cutting
24 through their farms diagonally.

25 There's got to be a better way to run the route

1 (inaudible) land. So I just asked that the Commission
2 please take into consideration all of these people that are
3 voicing the concerns for their property value, the wildlife,
4 the farmland being destroyed. My parents have cows on the
5 farm; right? So, like someone else said earlier, the power
6 line can't be over range land where cows are grazing. So,
7 yeah, I just ask that you please consider all of these
8 comments when you make your decision, and ask if there is a
9 different route that can be used that doesn't destroy all
10 these farms. Thank you.

11 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Okay. Thank you so much. It
12 looks like we do not have any additional commenters in the
13 queue right now. So why don't we go off the record for
14 about 15 minutes. We'll take a break and come back on and
15 see if we have any additional commenters at that point.
16 Okay? All right. Let's take a break off the record.

17 (A recess was taken.)

18 JUDGE SAUNDERS: (Inaudible) and if you would hit
19 star six on your phone, that will unmute you so that you can
20 make your comments. Again, that's -- if you hit star six on
21 your phone, that should unmute you.

22 MR. JACK WAGES: Hello?

23 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Hello. Can you hear me?

24 MR. JACK WAGES: Yes, can you hear me?

25 MR. JACK WAGES: I can, yes.

1 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you so much. Would you
2 please state and spell your name for our court reporter?

3 MR. JACK WAGES: My name is Jack Wages, W-a-g-e-s,
4 J-a-c-k.

5 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you very much, Mr. Wages.
6 Please go ahead.

7 MR. JACK WAGES: Well, I live down in Girard
8 Township in Union City, and this ITC line -- first of all, I
9 think the transparency with this thing has been absolutely
10 criminal. I understand that they have been having meetings
11 for a year or close to that, but yet my wife and I were
12 notified about this thing wanting to come across our
13 property August 5th in a form letter with our tax ID code
14 numbers for two pieces of property that they want to go
15 across on it. I guess they even, in my -- at the township
16 meetings they were talking about it, that the first notice
17 that we have -- that we had were from those form letters.

18 You know, this -- the property that my wife and I
19 live on is 80 acres that we have worked all our life to own.
20 And this line they want to put across it would come in on
21 the northeast corner, go across the property and exit out
22 the center of the south side of the property. I have a
23 couple fields here that I rent out, and we use that money to
24 pay our taxes. But, you know, this is property that my sons
25 and I hunt on.

1 Where this -- where this line would be -- we built
2 our house here 20 years ago, a little over 20 years ago.
3 This line would be about 300 feet from my house. Now, you
4 know, I feel really bad for people that I've heard that,
5 that they're talking about it being 100, 120 feet from their
6 house, you know, when it's 300 from mine. But, still, I had
7 a guy from -- that said he worked for ITC come out here,
8 tried to talk to us. He was very unprepared. I asked him
9 if he had a map that he could show us where the thing was
10 going to go. Well, he didn't, other than on his phone, and
11 that really was very difficult to see, you know, the small
12 parcels that it looked like on the -- on your phone.

13 But, anyway, we have a pool here. I asked him, I
14 said, "You know, if we're getting out of the pool on the
15 ladder, are we going to feel shock and tingle?" "Well, I
16 don't know. Can't tell you about that." I said, "How wide
17 is the field of stray -- stray voltage?" "Well, I don't
18 know." And I -- I said, "I've been told by a couple
19 different people that you could walk out underneath it with
20 a fluorescent light bulb and it would light up." He said,
21 "Yeah, that's right. Yeah, it'll do that." And --

22 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Mr. Wages, I'm sorry to jump in
23 here, but we're running short on our comment time. Could
24 you -- could you wrap up your comments for me, please?

25 MR. JACK WAGES: Yeah, I think this is bull crap

1 when they've got state property. You know, the 69 corridor
2 is about five miles from me. If they -- if they want to go
3 across people's farms and disrupt their lives and their --
4 their livelihood, they need to be using, either -- you know,
5 come and buy the property like we had to. If they want to
6 buy the property, then they can do whatever they want.
7 Other than that, you know, eminent domain is -- is
8 government theft in my eyes. And, you know, the -- the
9 amount of money that it devalues our properties is
10 unrecoverable. What do you -- you know, what do we do with
11 it?

12 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Again, Mr. Wages --

13 MR. JACK WAGES: (Inaudible)

14 JUDGE SAUNDERS: I'm sorry, but we've got other
15 commenters that are waiting. Could wrap up your comments
16 for me, please?

17 MR. JACK WAGES: Yep, I hope you just -- you don't
18 allow this thing to go through it all, period. And if it
19 does go through, I hope that they are forced to use, like,
20 the 69 corridor and other power line right-of-ways that are
21 already out there. Thanks. I appreciate the time.

22 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you very much. Okay. It
23 looks like the next commenter in the queue is, again, from
24 the phone number, and this is 517-449-8821. And if you hit
25 star six on your phone, that will unmute you.

1 MR. GORDON DIEMER: Hello?

2 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Hello. Can you hear me okay?

3 MR. GORDON DIEMER: Yes. My name is Gordon
4 Diemer. I had talked a little bit earlier, but I didn't get
5 a chance to speak for my wife. She's nonverbal at this
6 time, and I was just wondering if I could put down some of
7 the stuff that she was interested in, too.

8 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Okay. Mr. Diemer, that's --
9 that's fine, Again, please just limit -- make sure we have
10 your comments limited to three minutes, please.

11 MR. GORDON DIEMER: Okay. All right. Since a lot
12 of us families are -- are asked to give up, you know, a lot
13 of our hopes and dreams for this community good, I think we
14 should be kind of given rational answers to a lot of our
15 questions. But everything seems to be really secret, which
16 makes me think other motives might be involved.

17 It seems that the idea for a new line was made
18 many years ago, but many things have changed since. And I'm
19 wondering if this is really being considered by the people,
20 because I'm wondering if the -- if this new line really is
21 necessary anymore. With the new -- or the nuclear plant
22 coming back online here in Michigan, that'll feed an awful
23 lot of energy, a different route than what they want to run
24 down this. And then there's also talk of a new line
25 possibly being sent underneath Lake Michigan, over to

1 Wisconsin. And I'm wondering, again, if this is being
2 considered for this type of line.

3 And then, really, I think, for the future here,
4 the future is going to be superconducting lines, and they're
5 already being put in different places in the U.S. and
6 different places in the world that they are a lot -- they
7 can then -- they're super efficient. They can be buried and
8 carry, like, ten times the amount of energy of an equivalent
9 line. And that's really going to be kind of the future of
10 all these things, and these big power lines will not be even
11 used anymore like this.

12 So I'm wondering if -- since this is all supposed
13 to be for the future of Michigan and stuff, I'm wondering
14 that this stuff might be almost implemented by the time we
15 really need that other type of stuff. And then also high
16 efficiency nuclear little power plants, miniature ones,
17 they're actually putting them in different places around the
18 world, too. And Michigan would be a great place for those.
19 I'm wondering if things like that could be considered. All
20 this I think would change the necessity of this power line
21 here in the real near future.

22 And then one of the last comment -- or last thing
23 is, how come ITC can get away with not completing the
24 alternative route on the northern end of this line here, and
25 was that not mandatory for them to do that? But I don't

1 ever see that happening. So, anyway, that's my comments
2 there. Thank you for your time. Appreciate it.

3 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Okay. Thank you very much. It
4 looks like we have another comment in the queue, and this is
5 from -- it looks like a Teams participant, K.S.

6 MS. KAROL SANBORN: I want to finish my letter
7 because my husband won't speak. So I can -- I should have
8 his three minutes to speak.

9 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Well -- well, hold -- okay. Hold
10 on for a second, Miss. You know that you can -- you can
11 upload your letter and --

12 MS. KAROL SANBORN: I know, but I would like to
13 speak.

14 JUDGE SAUNDERS: -- (inaudible).

15 MS. KAROL SANBORN: I would like -- I would like
16 to hear -- have people hear what I want to say.

17 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Okay. So, again, I'm sorry,
18 Ms. -- your name again?

19 MS. KAROL SANBORN: It's Karol Sanborn; Karol, K-
20 a-r-o-l, Sanborn, S-a-n-b-o-r-n. Can I do it?

21 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Well, Ms. Sanborn, your husband
22 doesn't want to talk?

23 MS. KAROL SANBORN: No.

24 JUDGE SAUNDERS: But, I mean, I guess -- you know,
25 I thought I said --

1 MS. KAROL SANBORN: He never does. That's why I
2 go to the meetings. I do the speaking. I can't control
3 him, but other couples' husbands are speaking, so I should
4 be able to continue with three minutes --

5 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Well --

6 MS. KAROL SANBORN: -- to finish my letter.

7 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Okay. Well, I -- I -- I tell you
8 what I'm going to do, Ms. Sanborn, I'll give you two minutes
9 to finish your letter. Okay? Because, again, like I said,
10 this is -- I said at the beginning, we've got to make sure
11 that everyone has enough time, and it's three minutes per
12 individual. So --

13 MS. KAROL SANBORN: I know. And I am one of two
14 people that are --

15 JUDGE SAUNDERS: I understand that. So --

16 MS. KAROL SANBORN: -- fighting this.

17 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Okay. So, once again, could you
18 please just state your name for the record and then -- and
19 I'll give you two additional minutes. Okay?

20 MS. KAROL SANBORN: Karol Sanborn.

21 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you.

22 MS. KAROL SANBORN: So we've -- we were already
23 dealing with another low voltage line. They're going out of
24 their way, probably three miles one way, going into Ionia
25 County avoiding -- to avoid public state land, when there is

1 a power line that goes through our front yard and extends
2 north to the public state land. If they would do it -- if
3 they could do it back then, they should do now.

4 We are also discovering other areas where power
5 lines are being installed through public state land. When
6 they go through Ionia County, they're going through wetlands
7 where the rattlesnake habitat is and the box turtle, which
8 are endangered. They are going through this area that is
9 improperly marked by EGLE as not being wetlands. It's
10 wetlands, as my husband used to farm it 40 years ago, and
11 there's a reason it is no longer farmed, because it's
12 wetlands.

13 So there are also many other homes along this
14 curvature route. It makes no sense. Above all, they're
15 breaking the law by not following Public Act 30. I have
16 told this to the MPSC Commission several times in my letters
17 and when I've spoken. They're required to provide an
18 alternate route -- route, and that's (indiscernible)
19 property. Both lines converge back to one line, and that
20 one line continues all the way up to Carson City. So
21 there's actually no alternate route. Once you pass
22 (indiscernible) property.

23 They are not following the law, and if the MPSC
24 Commission approves this plan, they are also guilty of
25 breaking the law. There is no common sense anymore. The

1 most practical thing we do -- we -- to do would be to draw a
2 straight line between Oneida and Nelson Substation and then
3 avoid any huge obstacles. By going six miles out of the way
4 in a curvature manager -- manner, they are wasting taxpayer
5 and ratepayer dollars by adding this mile -- six to ten mile
6 stretch. Not only are they doing this by our house, it's
7 evident they are doing it in other areas. As my husband
8 says it's more easy to spend other people's money than your
9 own.

10 The most important thing that needs to be done is
11 keeping these extremely high voltage lines away from
12 people's homes. Our homes are our sanctuary. All of our
13 neighbors agree with this. A lot of them are elderly. I
14 will not let my husband's lifetime of hard work be in vain.
15 I will fight and I will speak out until someone listens to
16 me. We need to maintain private property rights. The
17 government needs to listen to the people, as the government
18 is of, for and by the people, not the other way around.

19 I've listened to other Commission meetings where
20 the Detroit residents are complaining that their service is
21 bad and rates are going higher. These high voltage
22 transmission lines will supply their electricity, yet ruin
23 our property. Why are their rights more important than
24 ours? Their rates are going up because of all the solar,
25 wind and transmission lines being put in. Back 20 years

1 ago, when we lived two miles to the north, our power would
2 go out all the time, and nobody came to Karol and Gene's
3 rescue every time the power went out, so we bought our own
4 generator. Maybe they should have to buy their own
5 generators.

6 Now, all of a sudden, it's an emergency because
7 the city dwellers are losing their power, but 20 years ago
8 in the rural areas, no one cared if our power was out.

9 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Ms. -- Ms. Sanborn --

10 MS. KAROL SANBORN: Same goes for the internet.

11 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Ms. Sanborn, I've let you go
12 three minutes at this point. Can you please wrap up your
13 comments for me?

14 MS. KAROL SANBORN: We recently had to switch to
15 Starlink, so, you know, that's basically all I have to say.
16 I'll upload my letter, but I wish I could have read it the
17 first time straight through, because I've skipped through a
18 lot of things. But it's not right. What's being done is
19 not right, and I agree with everybody else that this should
20 be being denied. Thanks.

21 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Okay. Thank you. All right. It
22 looks like we have an additional comment in the queue here.
23 I just -- I just want to make a note that we are set to --
24 to adjourn at 9:00 o'clock. It's now 8:30, so I just want
25 to make a note that we're starting to run low on time. So I

1 just want everyone to keep that in mind. But the next
2 comment we have in the queue is from a phone number, and
3 that is 517-617-8510. If you hit star six, that will unmute
4 your phone.

5 MS. MARECE HUTCHISON: Marece Hutchison. Can you
6 hear me?

7 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Yes. Ms. Hutchison, hello? Do
8 we have a commenter on the line?

9 MS. MARECE HUTCHISON: This is Marece Hutchison.
10 I just would like to see if you could let us know how to
11 upload a letter. What information do we have to have to do
12 that?

13 JUDGE SAUNDERS: You know, Ms. Hutchinson. I
14 am -- if you just give me a --

15 MR. SCRIPPS: Judge Saunders?

16 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Yes.

17 MR. SCRIPPS: So on the screen in front of you,
18 you should have the information on how to submit written
19 comments or letters. You can do that through the docket
20 page, and the docket in -- in this case, of course, is --
21 sorry -- U-21471. And you can also email it to
22 LARA-MPSC-Commissioners2@michigan.gov, or you can send it by
23 mail to Michigan Public Service Commission, PO Box 30221,
24 Lansing, Michigan 48909. And, again, that information
25 should be on the screen in front of those individuals who

1 were able to participate through -- through the Teams link.

2 MS. MARECE HUTCHINSON: Thank you. I just
3 couldn't -- I could not connect on the link, so therefore
4 I'm on my phone. So that would be LARA.MPSC- what?

5 MR. SCRIPPS: It's -- it's LARA dash, or hyphen.
6 So LARA-MPSC-Commissioners2@michigan.gov.

7 MS. MARECE HUTCHINSON: Thank you.

8 MR. SCRIPPS: Absolutely. Thank you,
9 Mrs. Hutchison.

10 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you so much, Chair Scripps.
11 Okay. It looks like -- I don't believe we have anyone else
12 in the queue right now, so why don't we take a break off the
13 record and we'll come back at about 8:45, and we'll see if
14 we have any additional comments then?

15 (A recess was taken.)

16 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Okay. It is now 8:45. So,
17 Rachelle, let's go ahead and go back on the record.

18 THE REPORTER: All set.

19 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Okay. We're back on the record.
20 It is -- it is now 8:45 p.m. It does not appear there is
21 anyone in the queue for a comment at this point in time. So
22 what I'd like to do is I'd like to, once again, just tell
23 everyone who would like to make a comment that if you would
24 like to make a comment and you're on via Microsoft Teams,
25 raise your hand, click the raise your hand button, and that

1 will put you in the queue. If you are participating via
2 phone, hit star five, and that will also put you in the
3 queue. What I'd like to do now is I'd like to take 10
4 minutes. We'll come back at 8:55. We'll see if we have any
5 additional comments, and we'll move forward with closing
6 comments from there. Okay. So thank you very much, and
7 let's take another break off the record. We'll come back at
8 8:55. Okay. Thank you.

9 (A recess was taken.)

10 JUDGE SAUNDERS: It is 8:55 now, and it looks like
11 we have -- we have -- really, we got time, I think, for one
12 more comment here. So it looks like we've got in the queue
13 five -- a phone number of 517-937-5395. I'm sorry. I
14 should say we're back on the record. I apologize. So if
15 you're on the phone, if you can hit star six that will
16 unmute you. Again, hit star six on your phone, that should
17 unmute you. One more time, if you can hear me, hit star six
18 on your phone, and that will unmute you.

19 MR. MARK BARONE: Yeah, this is Mark Barone.

20 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Okay. Could you -- sir, could
21 you please state and spell your name for the record?

22 MR. MARK BARONE: Yes. Mark, M-a-r-k, Barone, B-
23 a-r-o-n-e.

24 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Okay. Mr. Barone, we're limiting
25 comments to three minutes. So you've got three minutes for

1 your comments. Please go ahead.

2 MR. MARK BARONE: Yes. My comments are on this --
3 this project here. I attended all the meetings previously,
4 and my -- I was told that my property was not in any of the
5 pathways or any of the path of the transmission lines. And
6 then come August 5th, I was notified that they now changed
7 the route because the airport decided they felt that it was
8 too close. I don't know if there's any official
9 documentation on that, and then now my property is affected.

10 I'm a farmer. I own this land that they propose
11 this line to go across. It's irrigated. It's highly
12 productive soil, and it's my livelihood. And this company
13 has been very non-transparent with anything. I didn't even
14 hear about this meeting. It was through a friend of mine
15 that forwarded this to me. There's no communication.
16 There's no documentation that's been presented to me or
17 anything, as far as necessity for this line, what this line
18 is for. It's really going to affect my livelihood. And,
19 you know, they had -- the only contact I had was they
20 decided that they want to -- want me to sign an easement
21 someday, and that's basically what they told me.

22 So how can this even be fair to the public, or as
23 a need to the public, if this company is not even
24 transparent of what they're doing? And now they're asking
25 for permits from -- from the MPSC. And I don't understand

1 where this is coming from. You know, this -- this is
2 supposed to be the public good, but the public doesn't even
3 know what's going on with this project.

4 So that is -- my comment is we should be a little
5 bit more informed as community and -- actually, a lot more
6 informed. And there should be some transparency of what's
7 going to happen, what's going to -- instead of just eminent
8 domaining some -- our property to put this power line across
9 for Who knows what reasons. And that is my comment. Thank
10 you very much.

11 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Thank you very much. Okay. That
12 is going to have to conclude our hearing tonight. For
13 anyone who still wishes to provide a comment, you may do so
14 in any of the following ways: You may make comments during
15 the public comment portion of any regular commission hearing
16 meeting. These are held roughly every two to three weeks
17 and can be attended in person at the offices in Lansing, and
18 every one of them is also available to attend virtually
19 through the Microsoft Teams meeting link. Information on
20 upcoming commission meetings is available at
21 www.michigan.gov/MPSC.

22 You may also submit comments through mail, email
23 or by using the comment feature in the online case records
24 management platform, E-Dockets, for case number U-21471.
25 So, with that I'd like to turn back to the commissioners.

1 And do the commissioners have any closing comments for this
2 evening?

3 MR. SCRIPPS: Just briefly, Judge Saunders.
4 First, thanks to you for running this well organized hearing
5 and the work that you did to make sure that each of the 33
6 people, as I wrote down, I think, were able to provide
7 comment here tonight. I also want to thank our court
8 reporter for her work in transcribing the comments and
9 making sure that they're uploaded to the docket, and my
10 thanks to Ms. Simpson for her presentation earlier this
11 evening, as well as to the many Michigan Public Service
12 Commission staff who are instrumental in organizing this
13 meeting to making sure that the IT worked as expected, and
14 doing all the work behind the scenes to make this meeting
15 happen.

16 It definitely takes a lot of work, but it's also
17 definitely worth it in order to provide the public with this
18 opportunity to share their comments. And, finally and most
19 importantly, I want to thank each and every one of you who
20 have given up a portion of your evening tonight to share
21 your thoughts and perspectives. I certainly appreciate your
22 participation. Again, as Judge Saunders noted, there are a
23 number of other ways to provide comments.

24 So if you weren't able to provide comment, or if
25 you have more comments than you were able to share tonight,

1 we encourage you to use any of those other means to share
2 full or fuller comments with us as this -- this case
3 proceeds. And, again, the docket in this case for both
4 lines is U-21471.

5 Again, thanks to all of you who have participated
6 in this public meeting. And with that, I'll turn it over to
7 Commissioner Peretick for any closing comments.

8 MS. PERETICK: That was very well said, Chair
9 Scripps and also Judge Saunders, just want to just reiterate
10 your thank you both to -- to Judge Saunders, to all of our
11 staff who put this together, but especially to the
12 commenters who took time out of their -- out of their
13 evenings to come and speak to us. You know, we really do
14 appreciate that and really do listen. But no further
15 comments from me. I'm -- I'm just thankful for everybody's
16 participation.

17 JUDGE SAUNDERS: Okay. Thank you so much,
18 Commissioners. Well, that being all that there being
19 nothing further, that's going to conclude tonight's hearing.
20 So, again, thank you to everyone who participated tonight.
21 I very greatly appreciate everyone's time, and I hope
22 everyone has a good night. We are off the record and
23 goodnight.

24 (Hearing concluded at 9:03 p.m.)
25

CERTIFICATE

I, Rachelle Roberts, a Certified Electronic Recorder and Notary Public within and for the State of Michigan, do hereby certify:

That this transcript, consisting of 98 pages, is a complete, true, and correct record, given in this public hearing on October 3, 2024.

I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage; and that I am not interested in the outcome of this matter, financial or otherwise.

IN WITNESS THEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 16th day of October, 2024.

Rachelle Roberts

Rachelle Roberts, CER 9585
Notary Public, State of Michigan
County of Montcalm
My commission expires: April 29, 2027