



South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (PUC) members, my name is Mark Zimmerer; I am the President and CEO of the Norfolk Area Chamber of Commerce.

On behalf of the Norfolk Area Chamber of Commerce and its more than 680 member firms, the 20,000 area residents our members employ and the 125,000 people in the Norfolk trade area, I would like to share our experience with TransCanada and the Keystone Pipeline in our area of northeast Nebraska. It would be pretentious for us to say what is best for our friends in western Nebraska but, we are qualified to share our story of the Keystone Pipeline in northeast Nebraska.

We proactively recruited TransCanada and the Keystone Pipeline to bring their base camp to Norfolk and Madison County in June of 2009. Our experience with their organization and their employees was extremely positive. They entered our community as great corporate citizens and quickly became tremendous community partners for Norfolk and all of the communities in our area.

The spouses of the pipe liners, who quickly became famously known to Norfolkans as the "Pipeline Ladies", completed a full blown renovation of a crisis center for abused children. This was done with a total donation of time, talent and dollars. After a 12 hour day on the job, pipe liners then brought in heavy equipment to build and landscape a children's playground. They also volunteered their personal time at Bright Horizons and the Orphan Grain Train. This intense level of community involvement was not simply a goodwill gesture for weekend project but rather a way of life that took place over a period of five months.

The positive economic impact of the TransCanada Keystone Pipeline in the Norfolk area was nothing short of amazing. They brought 750 new jobs into the area. TransCanada became our 3rd largest employer in our area for the five months their full staff was working on the project. We believe that our partnership and positive experience with TransCanada and the Keystone Pipeline helped us to lead northeast Nebraska in economic success over the past two years. At the end of the day, we experienced a \$10 million economic impact in Norfolk and the Madison County area. Please keep in mind that this was all happening at a time when most areas of the country were experiencing the peak of the recession.

CNN and Money Magazine recently designated Norfolk and Madison County as "The 2nd Best Place for Jobs in America" and Norfolk as one of the "Top 100 Best Places to Live in America". We are very proud of those accolades but we certainly do not take them lightly. We strive each and every day to make them a reality. And more importantly, we will not do anything to risk our success, the future of our community or our environment. Just last week, the Nebraska Department of Labor confirmed that our unemployment rate in Norfolk dropped once again to an amazing 2.4%. The positive social and economic development impact from the Keystone Pipeline helped us achieve these accolades and will help our community carry this torch forward for a long time to come.

For the citizens of Norfolk and all of Madison County, the Keystone Pipeline was not just about bringing 750 workers into our communities for five months. It was about building a rural economic development success story in northeast Nebraska. It was about new job creation in our part of Nebraska.

Nebraska is positioned very well in the coming years to come out of America's slow economy as the country's leader in economic development success. As long as we can maintain our current plan to not raise taxes and combine that policy with tremendous new economic development initiatives such as the investment made in Nebraska by TransCanada with the Keystone Pipeline, we will be that shining state on the prairie that all others look to for leadership. More importantly, America's business community will look to Nebraska as one the best places to call home for their own entrepreneurial and business investment success.

Thank you for your time.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Zimmerer', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mark Zimmerer
President and CEO
Norfolk Area Chamber of Commerce

Email: mzimmerer@norfolkareachamber.com
PH: 402.598.6200