

My fellow South Dakotans,

For those of you who don't know me, my name is Deb Bonebright. My husband, [REDACTED] and I were both born in South Dakota, with him growing up about 15 miles from here and myself in South Dakota and Iowa. Both of our family roots in SD go back to our great-grandparents who came here as settlers. [REDACTED] and I attended Kindergarten together in Huron and reconnected in our Junior year at SDSU and were married in Brookings 35 years ago.

The 31 years following graduation were spent living in many different towns and cities in South Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Missouri while my husband worked in the Dairy Foods Industry. His career also afforded him and myself the opportunity to travel the world.

Yet we always wanted to come back to South Dakota! We made the decision 4 years ago to move back to be the next generation to live on our family's Century Farm. 3 years ago we decided to invest in our rural communities by becoming owners of two ACE Hardware stores in Miller and Redfield.

There is something special about the land here. Friends that visit us from all over the country and the world are in awe and call it "Big Sky Country". There are no more beautiful sunrises and sunsets and sweeping views in the world than here in Hand County and South Dakota. Hunters, fishermen, bikers, and other visitors to our stores remark about the unspoiled beauty of our state and our area. Our children who live in Denver and Seattle come here to, as they say, "decompress". And folks from all over the country have moved here to get away to a simpler place. There is peace and quiet here. There is wildlife and livestock to watch and hear. We enjoy an incredible quality of life...that some take for granted. This land has seen few real changes since our great-grandparents settled here...until the last few years.

International companies, including those who own Scout, are now knocking on South Dakota's door so they can build towering structures to harness our wind. They will sell it elsewhere to make money – all the while using our tax dollars, properties and infrastructure to do it. I believe their wind turbines standing at almost 500 feet tall – 3 ½ times the size of our Miller water tower - are eyesores on our beautiful landscape. I believe they put the health of those that live near them at risk and have a negative impact on the land they sit on, on our wildlife, on South Dakota tourism, and on property and home values. And I don't like the way Scout has done business here!

My biggest concern is the people of our county. As Commissioner Hanson has so aptly put it; "It has really fractionalized communities. To see citizens who are going to the same church, playing on the same sports teams and cheering for each other, and helping each other when there's a challenge; to see the tremendous animosity that exists in some areas is a very sad situation." We are close-knit communities here in Hand County. I'm concerned that the erection of these huge structures will cause division amongst us... It already has.

Scout has promised money to a lot of people. Unfortunately, I think it will weaken a people who have always been self-reliant and always taken care of ourselves and our own. I feel there will also be negative economic impacts because people will want to move out of our county – not into it – which is exactly what we have been fighting against for years. We will have less residents resulting in less students and our businesses shutting their doors.

These are the main thoughts that come to mind about the Sweetland Project's application. Thank you for your consideration of my comments and the other voices of Hand County who speak to you tonight. May you have wisdom in deciding this matter and others like it in our great State.

Thank you, Deb Bonebright

Regarding the Sweetland Wind Farm in Hand County, SD 4/25/2019