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**Date:** December 16, 2016 at 10:05:48 PM CST  
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**Subject:** Northern Natural Gas/Northwestern Energy

Member of the PUC board,

We are a life-long Union County farm family, who is in need of your help. We have received two registered letters one from Northern Natural Gas and the other one from Northwestern Energy. In these notifications we have learned that there is a very real possibility of losing our natural gas farm tap.

We know this matter has been brought in front of you for consideration for what reason, we do not fully understand. We have an easement dated July of 1931 assuring us that because of a pipeline constructed under our farm land that we would forever have a farm tap and natural gas for our personal use.

It is very hard to figure out for what conceivable reason Northwestern Energy a, public utility, would have to discontinue supplying a very necessary commodity to over 195 South Dakota farm residents, tax payers, and voters. These people have homes with furnaces and hot water heaters, livestock facilities, grain dryers and storage units, irrigation motors, and equipment shops all utilizing their farm tap natural gas. When we made improvements to our farmsteads, we always had several options on what power source to use and we made that choice to be natural gas, never ever thinking that at a stroke of a pen it would no longer be available to us.

Now the trust we put in having a perpetual supply of natural gas may be taken away because of two corporations that are in some sort of contractual dispute and we will be the collateral damage. Our numbers are small but each one of these farm families will suffer untold inconveniences, great cost for conversion of equipment, and possibly loss of personal property if they are unable to afford to change energy sources.

The bottom line in this matter to us is not which corporation is right or wrong, but that you, as the PUC, consider the great impact the lose of each one of the 195 farm taps would make in the lives of these families. We South Dakotan's believed in the natural gas line back in the 30's and 50's when easements were signed and now to find out that we can lose our much needed service is life changing in so many ways. We implore you to find a way to rectify the problems that are before you, but without us losing our very necessary farm tap.

Craig McInerney

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