

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION BY SCS CARBON TRANSPORT LLC FOR A
PERMIT TO CONSTRUCT A CARBON DIOXIDE TRANSMISION PIPELINE

SD PUC DOCKET HP22-001

PRE-FILED DIRECT TESTIMONY OF CHAD MUTZIGER ON BEHALF OF SOUTH
DAKOTA TELECOMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATION (“SDTA”)

JUNE 16, 2023

1 **Q: What is your name, the name of your employer, your title and business address?**

2 A: My name is Chad Mutziger. I am the CEO at Midstate Communications Cooperative located
3 at 120 E. First Street, Kimball, SD.

4 **Q: What is your professional experience, including your duties in your position at**
5 **Midstate?**

6 A: Prior to my work at Midstate, I was the Executive Director of the South Dakota Hall of Fame
7 in Chamberlain, SD. I began working at Midstate in 2001 as the Marketing Manager. In 2021
8 was promoted to General Manager/CEO of Midstate.

9 **Q: In what capacity are you testifying?**

10 A: In addition to my role as CEO at Midstate, I am also the Board President of the South Dakota
11 Telecommunications Association, (“SDTA”). Midstate is a member of SDTA. This testimony is
12 submitted on behalf of SDTA.

13 **Q: What is SDTA?**

14 A: SDTA is an association made up of 18 incumbent rural telecommunications and broadband
15 companies. Through SDTA we advocate for state and federal legislation and policy that will
16 facilitate our ability to provide high quality, sustainable and affordable communication services
17 to all areas we serve.

18 **Q: Where do SDTA companies serve?**

19 A: SDTA companies serve across the state, covering well over 80% of the state’s geography. A
20 map of our various service areas is attached as Exhibit A.

21 **Q: What services do SDTA companies provide?**

22 A: SDTA companies provide essential telephone and broadband services throughout their service
23 territories. Customers include but are not limited to residences, businesses, schools, hospitals,
24 and emergency services. All SDTA companies are buried fiber-based companies.

25 **Q: Who are the member companies?**

26 A: SDTA member companies include: Alliance Communications Cooperative, Beresford
27 Municipal Telephone, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Telephone Authority, Faith Municipal
28 Telephone Company, Fort Randall Telephone Company, Golden West Telecommunications
29 Cooperative, Interstate Telecommunications Cooperative, Inc., James Valley
30 Telecommunications, Kennebec Telephone Company, Midstate Communications, RC
31 Technologies, Santel Communications Cooperative, Swiftel Communications, TrioTel
32 Communications, Valley Telecommunications Cooperative, Venture Communications

1 Cooperative, West River Cooperative Telephone Company, and West River Telecommunications
2 Cooperative.

3 **Q: Are all SDTA member companies impacted by the pipeline?**

4 A: No.

5 Some companies in the proposed SCS Carbon Transport pipeline proposed route received a
6 formal notice from the pipeline company. In other cases, SDTA member companies were named
7 in condemnation proceedings due to the location of an easement on a tract of land involved in an
8 eminent domain proceeding. However, SDTA is not confident that all potential crossings or
9 impacted areas have been identified by SCS Carbon Transport.

10 SDTA's intent is to establish a general procedure that the pipeline must follow regarding
11 communication with the SDTA impacted companies and negotiation of crossing agreements.
12 We recognize that impact areas and crossings will be more specifically identified as pipeline
13 plans proceed. We intend to establish a general process to ensure all infrastructure impacts are
14 identified and will then occur safely regardless of the company and regardless of where in the
15 state the impact is experienced.

16 **Q: Are you aware that SDTA intervened in this docket?**

17 A: Yes.

18 **Q: Why did SDTA intervene in this docket?**

19 A: SDTA member companies have made and continue to make large infrastructure investments
20 throughout South Dakota. We believed it was prudent to engage in the PUC proceedings and set
21 forth conditions we believe will help protect our buried infrastructure and the employees that will
22 work in and around SCS Carbon Transport's proposed facilities.

23 **Q: Do SDTA member companies agree on how its concerns can be addressed?**

24 A: Yes. The SDTA membership discussed and agreed upon a list of conditions that we believe
25 will help protect our buried infrastructure and our employees.

26 **Q: Did SDTA present these requests to SCS Carbon Transport?**

27 A: Yes. SDTA presented our requests to SCS Carbon Transport. See the Attached Exhibit B
28 that sets forth our requests.

29 **Q: Did SCS Carbon Transport reply?**

30 A: Yes. SCS Carbon Transport acknowledged our requests, and discussion and negotiation has
31 occurred. As far as I know SCS Carbon Transport has not taken a formal position on any of our
32 requests, and I have no reason to believe we will not reach an agreement with SCS Carbon
33 Transport before the scheduled PUC hearing on this matter.

34 **Q: How would SDTA prefer to resolve its concerns?**

1 A: SDTA prefers to execute an agreement with SCS Carbon Transport to establish a process by
2 which all impacted companies and the pipeline can work jointly to protect infrastructure and
3 employees.

4 **Q: If SDTA is unable to resolve its concerns through an agreement with SCS Carbon**
5 **Transport, how will you proceed?**

6 A: If we are unable to resolve our concerns then I plan to appear at the upcoming siting hearing
7 to testify and request the PUC incorporate our requests into any permit that it issues.

8 **Q: Does this conclude your testimony?**

9 A: Yes.