

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

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

HP24-001

DIRECT TESTIMONY OF

DAVE ELLENS, LAKE COUNTY, SD

ON BEHALF OF

SUMMIT CARBON SOLUTIONS, LLC

EXHIBIT #

December 13, 2024

1 **Q. Please state your name and business address for the record.**

2 A. My name is Dave Ellens. My address is 45778 SD Hwy 34, Madison, SD 57042.

3 **Q. What is your occupation?**

4 A. I am a Lake County farmer.

5 **Q. Please briefly describe your operation.**

6 A. I have a bachelor's degree of science from SDSU and have 12 years of experience in
7 various facets of row crop agriculture. Our operation includes growing corn and soybeans. We
8 grow and sell corn every year to Dakota Ethanol of Wentworth.

9 **Q. Please describe your affiliation with Summit and Dakota Ethanol?**

10 A. I sell corn every year to Dakota Ethanol in Wentworth, SD.

11 **Q. What is the basis for your testimony?**

12 A. I want those listening to know what agriculture and the ethanol industry mean to myself,
13 my family, and my community, but also to every citizen in South Dakota.

14 **Q. Why is the Summit project necessary for you/your neighbors/South
15 Dakota/Ethanol?**

16 A. I am a firm believer I would not be farming today if it weren't for the ethanol industry.
17 What the ethanol industry did for family farms and small rural communities is worth much more
18 than just prosperity it has brought to those I mentioned. Because of the profitability of raising
19 corn, it has allowed me to come back to my farm and become the next generation on our family
20 farm. Some people do not understand the impact this has on our communities when the next
21 generation is able to come back to their farm and continue the family legacy. It is another family
22 raising children that will eventually attend our school districts. It is another family spending
23 money downtown in their small town, buying groceries and buying vehicles and equipment at

1 local dealerships. I see it every day in my town of Madison. When I talk to any local business
2 owner in my town, they will tell you how agriculture is the horsepower behind the economy in
3 our town. Without the ethanol industry and the ability to grind our product we produce and
4 export it to different parts of the country and world; farmers are not the only industry that would
5 be affected. This project not only preserves the viability and future of the ethanol industry, but it
6 also opens new markets and opportunities for corn grind such as sustainable aviation fuel.

7 **Q. What does Summit mean to you in terms of opportunities to grow your operation?**

8 A. Like any industry, farming is only successful if we are profitable. US farmers are the
9 greatest in the world at what we do, which can turn into a supply and demand issue. Keeping
10 demand high is how our farms stay profitable and able to grow. Local grind and demand are the
11 best way to not only keep our farms profitable but also create jobs in our small communities, so
12 everyone prospers.

13 **Q. What context is missing from the concerns stated by others?**

14 A. In South Dakota, the ethanol industry grinds roughly 45% of our total production. I do
15 not think opponents of this project realize the magnitude of losing that grind and demand. It
16 could spiral and affect the whole economy of South Dakota.

17 **Q. What fears do you have if the project is not completed?**

18 A. Our way of life in South Dakota, our ability to bring the next generation back to the farm,
19 school districts dwindling, downtowns closing down, and people leaving our communities for
20 lack of jobs. These concerns may seem excessive, but they are real. People need to understand
21 the importance of keeping our agricultural sector strong.

22 **Q. Has your county acted against the project?**

23 A. Our county has been supportive of this project.

1 **Q. How do you feel about that? How do you feel about other counties which have tried**
2 **to stop the project?**

3 A. I have been very happy with our county keeping our ordinances and setbacks at a
4 reasonable distance. I think it is terrible there are counties that have created unreasonable
5 setbacks and ordinances just to kill this project. Under no law should one county be able to kill a
6 linear project like this. The worst policy is policy created to kill one project. It sets precedence
7 for any future progress and projects in the future. I think of projects like the interstate. We, as a
8 society, are lucky those large projects were done when they were because progress is going to be
9 very hard to get done in the future if we keep allowing a few people to take away something that
10 could positively affect so many people.

11 **Q. Do you have safety concerns about the Summit project?**

12 A. As with any large project like this, there are concerns. There are concerns of leaks, but
13 there are risks in any project like this. When the interstate came along, I am sure there were
14 concerns about driving too fast and accidents. When natural gas lines are put in, there is concern
15 for leaks or someone rupturing it while digging. When dams are put in, I am sure there was
16 concern for the dam to breach causing major flooding downstream. I am not saying the concerns
17 people have are not important. I am saying we need to listen to sound science and not let scare
18 tactics halt progress in this state.

19 **Q. Is your ground part of the Summit project?**

20 A. My ground is part of the Summit project.

21 **Q. How was your easement experience? Were you fairly treated and compensated?**

22 A. It was a very pleasant experience. Summit was cordial, made sure we understood the
23 project, and always gave us notification they would be on our property.

1 **Q. Does your ground currently have other easements?**

2 A. No, it does not.

3 **Q. What has been your overall experience with easements, both Summit and others?**

4 A. As I stated above, my experience with the Summit easement was a very pleasant
5 experience.

6 **Q. Does this conclude your testimony?**

7 A. Yes.

8

9 Dated this ____ day of November, 2024.

10

11

12 /s/ Dave Ellens

13 Dave Ellens