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From: Bonnie Svarstad [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 23, 2025 2:12 PM
To: PUC-PUC <PUC@state.sd.us>
Subject: [EXT] Comments on PUC Docket: HP24-001

Name: Bonnie Svarstad
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Phone: [REDACTED]; Email: [REDACTED] PUC Docket: HP24-001

Dear Commissioners: Thank you for your service and this opportunity to comment.

I co-own and rent out two parcels of cropland in Brown County. One parcel is on the proposed path and one parcel is adjacent to this path.
I have three main concerns.

1. Preemption of county setbacks. SCS has requested but failed to justify preemption of six county setbacks designed to protect public safety. For example, SCS has asked PUC to preempt or supercede a 1500 ft setback for protecting public safety in Brown County (including Aberdeen). Surprisingly, SCS provided no alternative plan for protecting public safety if this setback is preempted in Brown County. As commissioners know, Aberdeen has an ethanol plant on the west side of town, is a major shopping and airline hub, and has nearly 28,000 residents, 52 primary schools, 14 secondary schools, 6 colleges, and 7 nursing homes in the area. As result, it seems irresponsible to disregard a 1500 ft ordinance set by local officials.

2. County burden. SCS briefly proposed a grant of \$50,000 to each county. Few details were provided, but this grant seems grossly inadequate for covering the initial and continuing cost and burden of providing specialized equipment, training, alarm system, community education, and appropriate vehicles for first responders in a county with several ethanol plants. For example, a one-time \$50,000 grant would provide only \$1.32 per resident in Brown County ($\$50,000 \text{ grant} / 38,000 \text{ residents} = \$1.32 \text{ per resident}$). Thus, it seems likely that taxpayers will incur an additional burden or cost.

3. Land values, soil degradation, and decline in crop yield. There is no way to predict how land values will be impacted, but I do have concerns about land values in the next 5-10 years. Also, it is a mistake to assume that crop yields will return to normal in 3 years, as predicted by SCS. In fact, recent scientific studies show that crop yield declines persist 5 years after pipeline installations — even if the best installation practices are used. See: Brehm, T., & Culman, S (2023). Soil degradation and crop yield declines persist 5 years after pipeline installations. *Soil Science Society of America Journal*, 87, 350–364.

Thank you for your consideration,
Bonnie Svarstad