

From: Thresea Wright [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, January 21, 2025 2:38 PM
To: PUC-PUC <PUC@state.sd.us>
Subject: [EXT] HB 1052 and Summit Carbon Pipeline

Duane and Thresea Wright

[REDACTED]

Wentworth, SD 57075

November 21, 2025

Attention HB1052

Dear Public Utilities Commissioners,

My husband and I live in Lake County, South Dakota. We are on the county line bordering Moody County. We own 400 acres of land, half in Lake County, half in Moody County. We are in the corner of four townships and those 400 acres are in three of them-Wentworth, Rutland, and Jefferson. We are in the corner of three school districts, Oldham/Ramona/ Rutland, Colman/Egan, and Chester. Most of this farmland was homesteaded in the 1870s by my husband's families. We are recognized as a quasiqucentennial farm. We worked very hard and sacrificed very much to purchase this land so as to keep it in the family. Very little was inherited. We have lived on our original six acres for nearly fifty years. My husband grew up across the road.

Our son lives a mile east of us in Moody County. He raises 1000s of pigs and may expand into other livestock. He has farmed our land since he graduated from college. Our son pays cash for part of our land. And part of our land we are on shares so are actively farmers.

Before that, my husband farmed the land and held a full-time job. I am a certified teacher and have been a substitute teacher in the community for almost fifty years. I served on the Rutland School Board for six years, thirty years ago when we voted against consolidating with Oldham Ramona School District.

We also were among the first 100 farmers who invested in the Lake Area Ethanol plant. The ethanol plant is six miles away. We can see the plant from our home night and day if we step out of our large shelter belt. Often there is a smell in the air that reminds us of bread. It is not as bad now as it was in the beginning.

This past year Lake County Commissioners proposed an opt-out to help improve the road conditions. At the same time, as part of the Rutland School district, we have had to vote many times concerning consolidation with Oldham Ramona which was approved by a small margin and now there will be a school built in Ramona, twenty-seven miles away from our home. We are ten miles from Chester School and seven from Colman Egan School. At the same time Colman Egan has an ongoing addition to the school project. There is talk of adding a sports field. Since we do not live in the Colman Egan school district, we could not vote on these issues, but it does affect our taxes. We do have grandchildren attending the Colman School. Our daughter-in-law is currently on the Colman Egan School Board.

Several years ago East River Electric ran electric lines down the county line to connect with the ethanol plant. This was to ensure an extra line in case of a power outage that would shut the plant down. They also ran lines east of us to connect to Egan. We are with Sioux Valley Electric and there are electric lines running down the county line on the Moody County side. When East River came through they wanted a 30 foot easement on the Lake County line of which they would pay a little a fraction of what we paid for some of the land. A thirty-foot easement is quite a large easement that we would lose control of. We did not give an easement. We did learn that the poles and lines run such that we are "marked" as not cooperative. We did give written permission to the East River that they could do repair work if needed as long as any crop damage was reimbursed to our son. One argument that East River Electric had for us is that they wanted a 30-foot easement in case the road was ever widened. Then they would not have to move the lines. This was puzzling because this county line dead ends several miles away both on the north and south ends. We could not understand why the road would ever need to be widened, unless East River knew something was coming that had not been discussed in public. We still do not understand that argument.

There is also a five-mile stretch where we live that weather is often extremely different from that outside that stretch. The first years we were married, we were hailed out when no one else was. Some years we get much more snow than those outside this strip. For the last three years we have seen extreme drought even though it rains outside this strip.

We mention all the above to help you understand that we have been hit by many sides. We are not the only ones this is happening to. Our taxes just keep increasing.

We received a certified letter several weeks ago stating Summit Carbon has proposed to put in a pipeline to the ethanol plant that will run a mile and a half from our home, a bit closer to our farmland. Where the pipeline crosses the road, there will be a main line valve. The pipeline comes from the north and runs along the county line then angles toward Wentworth. This puts us, our son's family, and our neighbors in the four mile kill zone. Also at the main line valve point, all three school districts would be within eight miles. It is my understanding that the Chester district at one point is even closer to the pipeline. I think Rutland would be also, but I didn't measure.

If the pipeline goes in, my thought is that a lot of heavy equipment will need to run up and down the county line destroying the road and the extra heavy traffic will be a nuisance and a danger to those that live along the road. Will Summit be responsible for any road damage? Will Summit be responsible for any crop damage? We will not be required to sell an easement or for our land to be seized by eminent domain of which we voted against. There will be no financial compensation to us or our son who farms the land. If the pipeline should leak in our vicinity, and we become very ill or worse death occurs, will Summit be responsible for medical bills?

We are ethanol investors but we are not in favor of this of ridiculous pipeline that we see serves no real purpose other than to use federal money and for foreign investors to gain a foothold onto U. S. property and monies.

Easements are usually a lifetime right to another's property. If it is water or electricity and serves the public, that is one thing. For private investors that is wrong.

Another question: what is the percentage of carbon dioxide verses oxygen compared to the normal atmosphere and what percentage of that carbon dioxide is actually captured? What financial gains do the ethanol plants along the pipeline from the capture of carbon dioxide receive? Would it not be cheaper to capture and develop other uses such as dry ice or fire extinguisher use that could be dropped on out of control fires? What is the environmental effect caused by storing carbon dioxide underground? There must be a limit to what is stored. What happens to it then? What effect will the raised soil temperatures along the pipeline have on the crops and how far will they be affected? Are carbon credits here forever or will they be dropped ensuring that Summit Carbon and other such companies will sell out, close, or go bankrupt leaving a mess behind? If the pipeline is abandoned will Summit Carbon pull up the pipeline or will foreign control take place since foreign investors are involved? How long before the pipeline rusts or deteriorates, because it will eventually? If this happens who is responsible for removal, the property owner or the investors? Utilities are maintained indefinitely because there is a public need. Will Summit Carbon maintain indefinitely?

We are not against progress, but we are against a financial gain at the expense of tax-payers and unwilling property owners for the financial gain for a few. We are not looking for you to answer our questions but present them so that you know they are a concern to us. We asked you, the commissioners as representatives for all of South Dakota, to carefully consider this pipeline and the potential for harm to our state. As we stated before we are also investors in ethanol, we do not think this pipeline will be good on so many levels.

Thank you for your consideration.

Duane and Thresea Wright