Elizabeth Olauson

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Land Owner/1/4 mile to proposed 765 Power Line Route

Additional Information for APPLICATION FOR PARTY STATUS – EL26-026

Re: Xcel Energy / Otter Tail Power Company – Proposed 765-kV PowerOn Midwest Transmission Project

To the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission:

I respectfully request intervenor status in this proceeding because the proposed 765-kV transmission line could directly affect my home, property, exciting health-related concerns, as well as the ability to use and enjoy my land with my future family.

I am a 29-year-old woman who lives on our family farm, less than one-quarter mile from the proposed transmission line route. I am also a part owner of the farm and acreage. Additional family farmland currently owned by my grandparents is intended to be passed down to me as part of my family's inheritance.

This is not an issue happening somewhere else in South Dakota. It is happening next to the place where I live and where I intend to build my future.

I have existing health conditions, including arthritis, migraines, colitis, and autoimmune issues. I am not claiming that this proposed transmission line has caused these conditions. However, living in such close proximity to a new 765-kV transmission line raises legitimate questions for me about long-term exposure, safety, and what independent scientific evidence supports the assurances being made by the applicants. I feel Xcel should provide medical facts about these lines, not rely on just a neurologist/sleep specialist. I would like them to provide heart specialists, cancer and internal medicine doctors to show proof that there is no correlation between health issues and these towers, they should not be paid doctors that travel around disclaiming the health effects when he has never been under the lines.

Xcel Energy has repeatedly represented that the line is safe to be around and that farming can continue beneath it. I believe those assurances deserve careful examination. I want the opportunity to ask questions and review the actual evidence supporting those statements, including potential effects on people who live nearby, work around the line, and regularly operate farm equipment underneath it.

I also have serious concerns about liability and insurance. We have concerns that our existing insurance coverage will not protect us from injuries or damages associated with the transmission easement and activities involving the line. I have talked with 2 different companies that say them

will not pay for damage and of equipment or land that is damaged that are related to the lines. I am still working with my doctors and insurance company about the health insurance and how they will cover/or not cover if they question my health concerns connection with the lines. I have been asking questions since hearing about the lines, but they are new thing to South Dakota and honestly most of the country and no one knows the answers. But again, if the potential can cause harm to individuals or make a hardship for South Dakota Citizens the burden of proof should be on the company not SD tax payers. I feel a trust or a payout program should be set up the company asking to invade my property to pay quick payouts for people injured. It should not be the burden of mine to call up my attorney and ask for help and pay $500 for my 15 minutes when Xcel should be making it as safe as walking down my county road.

I want to understand who accepts responsibility if a landowner, family member, farm employee, or visitor is injured while working or living near the easement, particularly when the company maintains that the area is safe for normal farming activities. I want assurances in writing and follow up that Xcel is fulfilling their responsibility that comes with being on my property.

I should not be expected to accept assurances of safety without clear answers about responsibility, insurance coverage, and the rights of affected property owners. Xcel should be showing scientific proof that they will not harm South Dakota Residence.

My concerns also include:

- The potential effect of a 765-kV transmission line on the value and future use of my property.
- The long-term implications for my family's farmland and inheritance.
- Potential health and safety questions that deserve independent scientific review.
- Electrical hazards and risks associated with working around and beneath the transmission line.
- The responsibility of the utility for accidents, injuries, property damage, and future claims.
- Whether nearby residents and landowners will have adequate protection if problems arise after construction.
- Whether alternative routes or existing utility corridors could reduce the impact on families and agricultural landowners.

At 29 years old, I could be living with the consequences of this project for the next 50 or 60 years. My grandparents have spent their lives building and maintaining this farm. I want the opportunity to carry that legacy forward without being forced to accept permanent changes to my home and property without having my concerns heard.

I am not simply asking to express an opinion. I am requesting the opportunity to participate in this proceeding, review evidence, ask questions, examine the applicants' claims, present information concerning my individual interests, and help ensure that the rights and safety concerns of nearby landowners are fully considered.

The decisions made in this proceeding will have consequences long after the construction crews leave.

I respectfully ask the Commission to grant my application for party status so that I may protect my individual property interests and participate meaningfully in this important decision.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Olauson
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