

Office of Administrative Hearings  
The Honorable Judge Beverly Jones Heydinger  
600 North Robert Street  
P.O. Box 64620  
St. Paul, MN. 55164-0620

RE: CapX 2020 High Voltage Transmission Lines

Dear Judge Heydinger,

The decision on whether or not the CapX 2020 power lines will be built is a critical decision with long-term impacts on Minnesota's energy future. I am writing to voice my concerns regarding the CapX 2020 High-Voltage Transmission Line Project and respectfully ask that you deny the Certificate of Need for the proposed CapX 2020 project.

It is time that our energy needs are met through a combination of conservation, increased efficiency, and increased generation of local, renewable energy that is clean, forward-thinking, and will keep dollars in our community. It is crucial as we build infrastructure for our energy future that that any new power transmission be designed to support and transmit local, renewable energy. The CapX 2020 power lines are NOT designed to support rural communities in building energy generation near to where it will be used. They are designed to carry coal and corporate wind long distances.

Moving electricity long distances is inefficient and expensive. Line losses can be as high as 15-20% of the energy wasted. Large amounts of electricity are lost and the impact on citizens through electromagnetic field (EMF) exposure and loss of land rights is greater. The electric utility industry is the largest source of pollution in our country. Electric utilities generate 66% of the sulfur oxide pollutants, mostly from coal plants. It is far smarter, environmentally safer and more economically viable to meet electrical energy needs with conservation and dispersed renewable energy.

Any transmission that is built in Minnesota should be designed to:

- i. use the lowest voltage power lines possible to minimize exposure to EMF; and
- ii. affirmatively plan for and support distributed, community based energy; and
- iii. coordinate purchase and construction of power lines so that they carry predominantly if not exclusively renewable energy generation; and
- iv. fully offset construction-phase greenhouse gas emissions and include a specific rigorous plan to prevent SF6 emissions to mitigate climate change impact; and
- v. be designed in light of the Precautionary Principle to minimize the potential of harm, both from generation and from electromagnetic fields of the power lines themselves.

The environmental effects of the power lines are a serious issue. The proposed Cap X lines were planned based on using increased megawatts of energy from coal power plants. Emissions from coal-fired power plants contribute to climate change and pollute our air, lakes and rivers. It is irresponsible and unhealthy to rely on coal-generated energy when there are sustainable, clean, and renewable energy alternatives available.

The utility companies have failed to demonstrate that they have fully explored the possibility of obtaining power from distributed renewable energy sources, rather than far off and substantially non-renewable energy sources assumed for the CapX projects. They have not shown that it wouldn't be cheaper to make better use of conservation and renewable energy closer to home. Considering that this is such a large project with a total price tag of at least 1.7 billion dollars, it is only fair to know whether or not we truly need these lines.

The only way to change this business as usual is to deny the utilities the choice of using our ratepayer money to build these power lines. Please do not approve the CapX transmission project. Tell them to design an energy system that meets the needs of the future through conservation and local, dispersed, renewable energy generation.

Thank-you for reading my comments,

Name

Member of Citizens Energy Task Force

Address