

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,

I am very concerned about the proposed high voltage CapX transmission lines. Placing high voltage lines through our communities is a very serious matter. It should only be done if absolutely necessary and not at the whim of utility companies. It requires a thorough and unbiased analysis of all possible alternatives and costs to ratepayers and landowners. Yes, these costs include financial costs to ratepayers, but also the often overlooked costs, present and in the future, to our health from the effects of electromagnetic fields (EMF) exposure, and health and environmental costs from fossil fuel based electrical generation. It includes the costs to landowners whose lives and economic futures will be affected by the eminent domain associated with a certificate of need and the potential economic well being of Minnesota's citizens based on the opportunity to develop or not, local dispersed electrical generation projects.

Change happens because people, sometimes just one key person, think outside of the status quo system. It is time for just such a paradigm shift to create an energy system that meets the energy needs of Minnesota's citizens while protecting their health and economic opportunities and the health and sustainability of our environment.

Generation and transmission cannot be separated. The generation future supported by the CapX transmission line as presently planned is likely to include more remote generation, less renewable energy and less local economic benefits while causing human and environmental health problems and hardships for landowners.

It is time for a major shift in electric utility management, away from remote central station – such as coal and nuclear power plants – and huge power lines and toward more dispersed renewable energy and a more efficient use of power lines.

It is time for smart transmission planning and conservation that is based on consumer choice and helping businesses and homes use solar energy and reduce consumption at key peak times.

Before we invest billions of dollars in a long distance high voltage transmission line please ask the citizens of Minnesota what we want our energy future to look like. This is the world that we will leave to our children and grandchildren.

The benefits of community-based wind are numerous. Wind energy provides more jobs per dollar invested than any other energy technology. Every megawatt of new wind

capacity creates 15-19 jobs and about 60 person-years of employment. Each 100 MW of wind development in southwest Minnesota has generated about \$1 million per year in property tax revenue and about \$250,000 per year in direct lease payments to landowners.

On June 16, 2008, the Minnesota Department of Commerce released the findings of the first of two major distributed energy studies ordered by the Minnesota Legislature. The study's conclusions affirm that significant amounts of wind energy can be injected into the existing transmission system at costs far lower than building new transmission lines to more distant wind farms.

The study found that 600 MW of dispersed, community-based wind projects could be integrated across Minnesota into the existing grid system with no additional costs for transmission. For comparison, the proposed 600 MW Big Stone II coal fired power plant would need to spend at least \$250 million for new transmission infrastructure, just in Minnesota.

There is much more work to be done to figure out how we can turn away from the old business as usual and use better, more renewable power closer to home. But, this is no longer a pipe dream. There is experience throughout Europe and studies right here in Minnesota pointing the way to go.

There are economically viable alternatives to the CapX line based on conservation, more local, distributed, renewable generation and a smaller scale of transmission upgrades. These alternatives should be developed before any of the huge, long distance CapX lines are permitted for Minnesota.

Please recommend denial of the CapX certificates of need.

Name

Member of Citizens Energy Task Force

Address