Sept 4, 2026

Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
121 7th Place East, Suite #350
Saint Paul, MN 55101
Consumer.puc@state.mn.us
Scott.ek@state.mn.us

**RE: PowerOn Midwest 765kV Transmission Routing in Ewington Township, Minnesota**

To the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MPUC) and PowerOn Midwest Project Leadership,

The Ewington Township Board of Supervisors, acting on behalf of our residents, officially issues this letter of formal opposition to the routing and construction of the proposed 765kV transmission lines in Ewington Township. On Sept. 4, 2026, the Board passed a resolution opposing this project as the 765kV transmission lines and the massive supporting infrastructure will severely degrade our area in numerous ways:

- **Township Roads, Maintenance, Cost:** The proposed transmission line would follow minimum-maintenance roads within our Township that the Township does not currently grade nor gravel. The township is concerned that construction and long-term maintenance access for a 765kV transmission line will require these minimum-maintenance roads to be upgraded and maintained to a higher standard, resulting in new and unfunded recurring costs to the township for gravel, snow removal, and road maintenance. Concerns that our population will decrease, which will decrease our funding to maintain our township.
- **Agriculture & Livestock**: Our community consists of vital, productive agricultural land. The placement of towers will fragment working farms, disrupt modern heavy-equipment navigation, compact soil, and impede drainage systems. The large structures and ultra-high voltage transmission lines create giant physical obstacles to manure dragline operators and aerial applicators, where electromagnetic fields can cause GPS and flow-control system malfunctions, which compromises application accuracy. Furthermore, the electromagnetic fields and stray voltage associated with extra-high-voltage lines are known to pose dangerous health and behavioral risks to livestock.

Falling ice from the ultra-high voltage suspended power lines and tower structures can inflict deep bruising, fractures, or fatal trauma on livestock directly underneath. Additional concerns include the dangers to humans and livestock from step and touch voltage caused by ground potential gradient in the event of conductor, hardware, or tower structure failure.

- **Water Flow & Drainage**: The construction of massive tower foundations and access roads across the township threatens to alter natural water flow, cause severe soil erosion, and disrupt established agricultural drainage and tiling systems.
- **Interference with Radio and GPS Communication**: The intense electromagnetic fields (EMF) generated by a 786kV transmission line are documented to cause electromagnetic interference. This will disrupt critical farm equipment that relies on radio frequencies, including two-way radios used by farm crews, emergency services, and modern precision agriculture systems that depend on clear GPS signals for planting, Application, and harvesting systems.
- **Streams, Wetlands, Wildlife, Birds, Pollinator Habitat, Scenic Viewsheds and Recreation**: Installing a 765kV transmission line permanently alters the local landscape, sedimentation, reduced viewshed quality, and impose potential EMP-related limitations on recreation use. Additionally, intense Electromagnetic Fields and wide right-of-way can alter habitat and navigation cues of wildlife, negatively impacting wildlife including but not limited to, Ring-necked Pheasant, Bald Eagle, Gray Owl and other birds of prey, Monarch Butterfly, Topeka Shiner Minnow, White Tail deer and Wild Turkey within the area. An industrial transmission corridor will also cause massive view disruption, blight the landscape and ruin the recreational experience for residents and visitors.
- **Homes, Church and Places of Business**: Proximity to these lines during construction and ongoing maintenance activities negatively impact our property owner's rights to privacy, creates potential safety hazards and places an undue burden on our residents. It would also limit the ability of residents to expand their business or farming operations.
- **Noise & Vibration**: Extra-high-voltage lines are known to generate consistent, disruptive audible noise (such as buzzing and humming) and corona discharge, particularly in damp weather, which will destroy the rural benefits and quiet atmosphere that our residents currently enjoy.
- **Property Values**: The sheer scale and number of structures (5 towers per mile) will fundamentally alter the rural character of our township. The visual and audio disruption, as well as the potential for health risks, including long term effects, such as cancer; including childhood related cancers and birth defects. This will lead to a substantial and permanent decline in property values for homes, working farms and places of business.

Given these irreversible and severe negative impacts, the Ewington Township Board, Jackson County, Minnesota urges PowerOn Midwest to halt current planning in our area and remove Ewington Township from all proposed routing maps.

The attached resolution was passed in Ewington Township, Jackson County, MN.

Ewington Township Board of Supervisors

Jackson County, Minnesota

Adam Christoffers
Eric Bremer
Hunter Lubben

Sincerely,

_____ Chairman

_____ Supervisor

_____ Supervisor

**EWINGTON TOWNSHIP BOARD**
**JACKSON COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

**RESOLUTION NO. 04 -2026**

**A RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE CERTIFICATE OF NEED FOR THE POWERON MIDWEST 765 kV TRANSMISSION PROJECT AS PROPOSED, AND AUTHORIZING SUBMISSION OF FORMAL COMMENTS TO THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION IN DOCKET NO. 25-117**

**WHEREAS,** Great River Energy, ITC Midwest LLC, and Xcel Energy (collectively, the "Applicants") have filed an application with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission ("Commission") for a Certificate of Need for the PowerOn Midwest project, a proposed 765 kV high-voltage transmission line, in Docket No. 25-117; and

**WHEREAS,** Ewington Township, located in Jackson County, Minnesota, lies within the identified study area for this project, and current route information indicates that several miles of the proposed transmission line would follow minimum-maintenance roads within the Township that the Township does not currently grade nor gravel on a seasonal basis nor plow snow from; and

**WHEREAS,** the Township Board is concerned that construction and long-term maintenance access for a 765 kV transmission line will require these minimum-maintenance roads to be upgraded and maintained to a higher standard, resulting in new and unfunded recurring costs to the Township for snow removal, gravel, and road maintenance that were not contemplated in the Township's budget or levy; and

**WHEREAS,** construction activity associated with the project is likely to damage the surface and subgrade of Township roads, and the Applicants have not identified who will bear the cost of restoring those roads to a usable condition following construction; and

**WHEREAS,** the Applicants and the Midcontinent Independent System Operator ("MISO") have identified a claimed need for up to 10,000 megawatts of additional transmission capacity in Minnesota, without providing the Township or the public a specific, itemized breakdown of how much of that capacity is intended to serve Minnesota load directly, as opposed to facilitating the transfer or export of power across state lines; and

**WHEREAS,** MISO's own long-range transmission planning documents indicate that Minnesota electricity demand has been flat for many years, and that future load growth is substantially attributable to data centers and other large, single-site loads rather than to baseline residential, commercial, and agricultural demand; and

**WHEREAS,** residents of Ewington Township along the proposed route face significant impacts from this project, including but not limited to permanent visual impacts, ongoing noise, electric and magnetic field (EMF) exposure concerns, disruption to agricultural drain tile systems, soil compaction on cropland, the use of eminent domain to acquire right-of-way, and diminished property values driven by both the physical presence of the line and real and perceived health concerns; and

**WHEREAS,** under Minnesota law and Commission practice, once a Certificate of Need is granted for a high-voltage transmission line, questions of need, alternatives, and line configuration are generally foreclosed from further consideration at the subsequent route permit stage, making it necessary for the Township to raise these concerns at the Certificate of Need stage of this proceeding; and

**WHEREAS,** the Township Board finds that the Applicants have not adequately demonstrated that this project, at the scale and voltage proposed, is necessary to meet Minnesota's own electricity needs, or that reasonable alternatives — including transmission upgrades, lower-voltage lines, or generation sited closer to demand — have been fully explored and ruled out;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** that the Ewington Township Board formally opposes the Certificate of Need for the PowerOn Midwest 765 kV transmission project as currently presented, and requests that the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission require the Applicants to fully justify the need for this project, including a specific

breakdown of intended in-state use versus interstate transfer, and a specific accounting of the extent to which forecasted demand growth is attributable to data centers or other large single-site loads;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** that the Township Board requests the Commission require the Applicants to identify all township and county roads within the study area that are minimum-maintenance or otherwise below a standard adequate for construction and long-term maintenance traffic, and to enter into a binding road-use and restoration agreement with each affected road authority — addressing both construction-related damage and any ongoing maintenance burden created by the project — prior to the issuance of any route permit;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** that the Township Board requests the Commission fully evaluate reasonable alternatives to the proposed 765 kV line, including transmission system upgrades, lower-voltage transmission lines, and generation sited closer to the areas of demand, before granting a Certificate of Need;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** that the Township Board is very concerned for our residents and requests the Commission weigh the impacts described herein — including the negative visual impact of lines this size, noise from the transmission lines, EMF exposure, health risks including childhood cancers and birth defects, drain tile disruption, soil compaction, eminent domain, stress on our farming families, and property devaluation along with the loss of highly productive farm land — as part of its review of this Certificate of Need application;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** that the Township Clerk is directed to submit this Resolution, along with any accompanying comments, to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission for inclusion in the official record of Docket No. 25-117, and to the Township's state legislators and Jackson County Board of Commissioners for their information and support;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** that this Resolution does not constitute the Township's position on any specific proposed route, and that the Township Board intends to submit a separate comment addressing route-specific concerns once route alternatives are finalized.

The foregoing Resolution was moved by Eric Bremer, seconded by Hunter-Lubben, and upon vote being taken thereon, the following voted in favor thereof:
_____; and the following voted against the same:
_____; whereupon said Resolution was declared duly passed and adopted this 4 day of September, 2026.

Board Chair, Ewington Township

ATTEST:

Township Clerk, Ewington Township

**Ewington Township**
Special Board Meeting
By conference call
April 30, 2026

Attending were Supervisors-, Adam Christoffers and Eric Bremer, Hunter Lubben

Motion to keep Data Centers out of Ewington Township. Motion by Adam Christoffer, second by Eric Bremer. Passed

Meeting adjourned

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Respectfully Submitted

Ron Obermoller Clerk

**From:** Ronald Obermoller
**To:** Staff, CAO (PUC); Ek, Scott (PUC)
**Cc:** Ron Obermoller
**Subject:** Powerline and data centers
**Date:** Saturday, October 31, 2026 4:10:33 PM
**Attachments:** Resolution4.pdf
PCU.pdf
Board 43026.doc

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