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MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**JOHN WRIGHT**

State Representative  
District 47

August 14, 2014

Missouri Public Service Commission  
Local Public Hearing  
Moberly City Auditorium  
201 West Rollins  
Moberly, Missouri 65270  
RE: Grain Belt Express Transmission Line Case

To the Missouri Public Service Commission:

Although I cannot be physically present to testify tonight, I want to express, in the clearest possible terms, my reservations about the potential use of the power of eminent domain to facilitate the Grain Best Express Transmission Line.

As the elected State Representative for the 47<sup>th</sup> District, it is my responsibility to transmit legitimate complaints and concerns from the residents of mid-Missouri when state action threatens their interests. Over the past several months, my office has received dozens of phone calls, letters, and emails from concerned citizens whose family farms lie on or near the proposed transmission route.

Eminent domain pits the State against one of the foundational individual interests in American life: the property interest that a man or woman holds in his or her own home. Moreover, the compensation that the use of eminent domain provides a family whose home is affected is rarely equal to the harm caused to that family. Many of the farms in our region have been held by local families for one hundred years or more, and “market value” does not begin to approach the true value that a family farm has to a person whose parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents have worked through decades to preserve their home and way of life for their posterity. For these and other reasons, the power of eminent domain must be used only in limited circumstances, when there is a highly compelling public interest at stake, and when all other alternatives have been exhausted.

Witness Exhibit No. 22  
Date 8-14-15 Reporter msm  
File No. EA-2014-0207

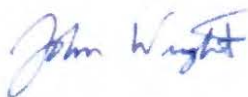
The primary purpose of the Grain Belt Express Transmission Line is to carry electricity from regions to the west of Missouri to regions to the east of Missouri. Although many individuals and groups outside of our state may benefit from this project, mid-Missouri citizens have rightly questioned whether the State of Missouri, itself, has a compelling interest in this project.

Some have argued that state and local authorities have an interest in the project because the installation of new lines and equipment will bring new property tax revenues into the public coffers that can help improve local schools and transportation infrastructure. While this may be true, Missouri law (523.271) explicitly states that the power of eminent domain shall not be used solely for such purposes.

Our country has always recognized that private property rights are among the foundational rights of any free society. I urge you to listen carefully to the grievances of the potentially affected citizens and families of mid-Missouri, and please consider whether the potential benefits of the proposed Grain Belt Express Transmission Line to the State of Missouri are such as to justify abrogating these foundational rights of fellow Missourians.

Please feel free to call me any time to further discuss this matter.

Yours Truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Wright". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "W".

John Wright  
Missouri State Representative  
47<sup>th</sup> District