

Exhibit No. 304
Issues: Opposition to proposed line
Witness: Wiley Hibbard
Type of Exhibit: Rebuttal
Sponsoring Party: MLA
Case No.: EA-2016-0358
Date Testimony Prepared: Jan., 2017

MISSOURI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

CASE NO. EA-2016-0358

REBUTTAL TESTIMONY OF

WILEY HIBBARD

ON BEHALF OF

MISSOURI LANDOWNERS ALLIANCE

January, 24, 2017

MLA Exhibit No. 304
Date 3-20-17 Reporter KLB
File No. EA-2016-0358

1 **Q. Please state your name.**

2 A. Wiley Hibbard.

3 **Q. On whose behalf are you testifying?**

4 A. I am testifying on behalf of the Missouri Landowners Alliance.

5 **Q. Where do you live?**

6 A. On a farm approximately 3 miles north of Perry, in Ralls County, Missouri.

7 **Q. Do you have any official position with Ralls County?**

8 A. Yes. I was elected as Presiding Commissioner of Ralls County in the

9 November, 2014 election. It is the first time I ran for County Office.

10 **Q. When running for that office, did you take any position regarding the**
11 **proposed Grain Belt transmission line?**

12 A. Yes, I opposed this Mega Power Line being given the power of eminent
13 domain. I have been opposed to this proposal even before I decided to run for election.

14 **Q. What is the purpose of your testimony?**

15 A. Among other things, I will address the direct testimony submitted earlier in
16 this case for Grain Belt Express by Richard Tregnago and Wayne Wilcox.

17 **Q. Have you read the testimony of those two witnesses?**

18 A. Yes, I have.

19 **Q. Do you own a farm in northern Missouri?**

20 A. Yes, I own 300 acres along with my wife, Susan. I also own 320 acres with
21 my sister Leanne Reed. This land is located north of Perry, Missouri. I also have one
22 half interest in 160 acres east of Paris, Missouri in Monroe County. My Father owns

1 approximately 80 acres east of Moberly, Missouri in Randolph County. All of these
2 farms already have easements for power, water, pipelines, roads, and phones on them.

3 Q. Do the existing power lines cause any problems with your farming operations?

4 A. Yes, they do. They present a very real obstacle when farming or ranching.
5 They are always in danger of being hit by equipment. Some of the poles are in the
6 middle of the fields that must be worked around, making it impossible to have proper
7 access to some areas of the field. They also preclude the use of certain irrigation
8 equipment. In addition, they do not allow spray equipment to be properly utilized.

9 Q. To your knowledge, do others share that view?

10 A. Yes, this is the general view of every farmer in Ralls County I have spoken
11 with about the subject. Attached as Schedule WH-1 to my testimony are signed forms
12 from some of them attesting to these problems. The problems are compounded where the
13 poles do not run in straight lines along property borders or straight across fields, but
14 instead run diagonally across open fields. Farm equipment commonly uses GPS systems
15 to avoid the overuse of pesticides and other chemicals. Even when power poles are
16 placed in straight lines, they limit the effectiveness of modern farming equipment. And
17 particularly when run diagonally, they affect every pass across the field, markedly
18 reduced their use and worth.

19 Q. Please describe what you disagree with in the testimony from Mr.
20 Tregnago?

21 A. There are a number of areas where I disagree with Mr. Tregnago. I will
22 generally describe them in the order that they were presented in his testimony.

1 First, Mr. Tregnago talks about the meetings held by GBE officials about the
2 proposed line. They did hold a public meeting in Monroe City when they started this
3 project. However, from what I understand few people actually affected by the line
4 received notification that this meeting was going to take place. Monroe City is in the
5 opposite side of the county that will be affected by the mega power line and not even in
6 Ralls County. I was one of the few people in the county I am aware of to get an original
7 mailer card from GBE. None of my neighbors received a card. At the meeting, the young
8 people there from Grain Belt were polite, but they were uninformed. All I saw
9 accomplished was they would help landowners locate their homes on aerial maps and
10 draw a circle around it. The rest was an assembly line type of process that promised
11 money for towers and promised answers later.

12 Q. Do you have any concerns with Mr. Tregnago' discussion of property taxes?

13 A. Yes, I do. The amount of taxes promised to the Counties seems to have
14 varied over the years, so I will limit my comments to GBE latest estimates. After many
15 attempts to receive in writing how much tax money Ralls County would receive from
16 GBE during the first year and each year after that, I finally received an email from Amy
17 Kurt on December 7th, 2016. A copy of that email is attached as Schedule WH-2. She
18 did not specify any tax money Ralls County would receive during the construction phase
19 of the project. However she did state that Ralls County would receive \$1,040,000 the
20 first year of operation. She advised that she or other GBE employees would not be able to
21 tell me what we could expect during years 2, 3, 4 or 5. The email states that the type of
22 taxing approach will determine the amount of tax money the counties will actually
23 receive. The examples used by Mr. Tregnago in his testimony are based on amounts that

1 have not been provided to me as an elected official of Ralls County. In fact, except for
2 press releases and holiday greetings, the Ralls County Commission has not been
3 contacted by GBE personal while I have been in office. Nothing! I have gone to
4 meetings they have called where they circle your home on maps, but no official contact.

5 Q. Does this lack of communication concern you?

6 A. Yes, it does. As an Elected Official of Ralls County, and taking my oath of
7 office very seriously, I am trying to ask questions that GBE officials should be able to
8 answer. For example, GBE has stated in a news release that Ralls County will receive a
9 total of \$1,037,917 in property taxes the first year. They also state that neighboring
10 Monroe County will receive \$1,116,558 in property taxes during the same time period.
11 However, the expensive GBE converter station is supposed to be located here in Ralls
12 County, and yet it is estimated to get less property tax than will be paid to Monroe
13 County. To me this does not seem logical. I have always been concerned that GBE is
14 not serious about building a converter in Missouri. This apparent discrepancy in the tax
15 benefits reinforces that opinion. If nothing else, the Commission should make sure that
16 the converter station will actually be built before they even consider granting them
17 permission to build the line.

18 Q. Do you have any other disagreements with Mr. Tregnago?

19 A. Yes, I do. Mr. Tregnago states that this mega power line will not diminish
20 property values. I would strongly disagree with that statement. Farmland that has a
21 power pole angling across the field is worth less than one with no power poles at all. It
22 is ridiculous to state otherwise. It may not affect how he assesses the property to tax it
23 for the county, but it will affect its value. To my knowledge there has never been a

1 transmission line this big constructed in the United States of America. How can anyone
2 say what it would do to property values?

3 Q. If property owners on the right-of-way are actually paid for the decrease in the
4 value of their property, does that eliminate your concerns?

5 A. No, it does not. One important factor that Mr. Tregnago did not mention is
6 the impact on property value that a person will experience when a 150 foot tower is built
7 near but not on his property. The property owner on the right-of-way will receive some
8 compensation, but the nearby residents will receive nothing. To say the value of their
9 property will not be reduced is absurd. I have received reports that people have not been
10 able to sell homes along the proposed routes. In one case there is a lawsuit filed because
11 the proposed line was not disclosed before the purchase. How can anyone say that a home
12 with a 100 foot tall tower just across the street is worth the same as an identical home
13 nowhere near the line? If indeed GBE pays anything like they say they will for property
14 taxes, in the future the Counties will lose a significant portion of that or more in
15 decreased values of existing homes and reduced construction of new ones near the line.

16 In my opinion, this whole project is an attempt by a small group of investors to
17 make a large amount of profit from the wind energy generation from Kansas. They have
18 offered the proverbial 30 pieces of silver to local governments. Some have apparently
19 taken it. I for one will not choose to do so. They promise Ralls County a whole million
20 dollars (they must think this is 1960) to sell out our future. It is asking a lot of us to have
21 our land taken by force to enable a few to get rich. I believe that other elected office
22 holders should think beyond just today.

1 If our county taxing authorities need additional funds I have full confidence that
2 the voters of Ralls County will make the right decision to raise taxes by a vote of the
3 people. They have done so three times in the past four years. GBE plans to place a
4 financial burden on a select few landowners to fill County tax coffers is unfair and
5 undemocratic. If their plan is economically feasible then GBE should be able to afford to
6 purchase the easements outright and not need the power to take the land by force.

7 Q. Please describe what you disagree with in the testimony from Mr. Wilcox.

8 A. First and foremost, I do not believe it is a vocal minority that opposes this
9 mega powerline project. Based on my discussions with people in Ralls County, an
10 overwhelming majority oppose GBE's mega power line. When I was elected in
11 November of 2014, I was the only Democrat to unseat an incumbent Republican
12 Presiding Commissioner. My opponent voted to grant the right-of-way agreement with
13 GBE. He then voted to rescind the agreement. I opposed it even before I decided to file
14 for office. There are similar elections results which show proof that a majority of people
15 oppose the mega power line. Two that come to mind are elections in Monroe County and
16 another in Randolph County

17 I am willing to put the citizens' position to a vote during the next election in Ralls
18 County, if Commissioner Wilcox would agree to do the same in Randolph County.

19 Q. What do you think of Mr. Wilcox's accusation that the opponents of the
20 proposed line have resorted to half-truths and total falsehoods in their statements about
21 the line?

1 A. I believe there is room for differences of opinion about this project. However,
2 I do not think the citizens of Ralls County would resort to half-truths or total falsehood,
3 as Commissioner Wilcox apparently feels that the citizens of Randolph County have
4 done. I have unwavering belief in the honesty and integrity of the people living in Ralls
5 County.

6 Q. What is your opinion about GBE's plan to deliver wind energy to the
7 converter station in Ralls County?

8 A. The converter station proposed for Ralls County is supposed to convert up to
9 500 Megawatts. In my opinion, this is not enough wind energy to fulfill the promises
10 made by GBE to all the people that testified in behalf of the mega powerline. Why would
11 anyone elected to serve people in Missouri be in favor of a plan to transmit the remaining
12 3,500 megawatts of renewable energy away from this state? Many people testified in
13 favor of wind energy for Missouri, but no one explained how transmitting low cost wind
14 energy to the east coast will be beneficial to our state.

15 Q. What is the present position of the Ralls County Commission with respect to
16 the Grain Belt project?

17 A. The Ralls County Commission voted to rescind the original consent they gave
18 to GBE because they felt the project was not presented to them in a correct manner.
19 After I was sworn into office we approved and sent another letter rescinding the
20 agreement. All three of the present Commissioners are strongly opposed to allowing
21 GBE to use our county roads to build its line in Ralls County. I have explained this to
22 GBE personal, and they advise that they would use them anyway.

1 Q. As a County Commissioner, do the citizens of Ralls County ever discuss with
2 you their feelings about the GBE line running through their county?

3 A. Yes. When I last checked in early January of this year, only three people had
4 recorded GBE easement agreements with the Recorder's office in Ralls County. On the
5 other hand, I have not had anyone voice their support to me for the mega powerline. No
6 one at all. No one wants it or needs it, and they feel it is just a scam from a small group
7 of investors to make a large amount of money by allowing a private company to take our
8 land by force. I wholeheartedly agree!

9 Q. Is there anything further you would like to tell the Commission about Grain
10 Belt's proposed line?

11 A. Yes, I want the Commissioners to know that people of Ralls County have had
12 their lives put on hold going on five years now. Families that had children in Jr. High
13 School when this started will see them graduate High School this year. They have lived
14 in turmoil and tension during their whole high school experience waiting and watching
15 their parents fight to keep their land from being taken from them. Enough is enough.
16 We are tired of a few short sighted elected officials with visions of dollar signs in their
17 heads trying to prostitute our land and way of life for tax dollars which will be
18 outweighed by the damage done from the proposed line.

19 Some may fall for the sell-out of their neighbors approach, but not most of the
20 people of Ralls County. We see this for what it is: a land grab by a few to make money.
21 The PSC turned this down before. In my opinion, nothing of significance has changed
22 except that families have used their hard earned money to continue the fight against the

1 GBE proposal. This is money they could have spent on their children, family vacations
2 or many other needs.

3 We have been fighting a long time, our plans have been on hold, farms not sold or
4 purchased, irrigation equipment not purchased, houses neither built, sold or bought. We
5 all have the right to support what we think is right, but using eminent domain and putting
6 this world's biggest transmission line across our counties would be disaster for the people
7 of northern Missouri.

8 Q. Does this complete your testimony?

9 A. Yes, it does.

Schedule WH-1

NAME:

ADDRESS:

I own _____; operate ; both _____


To Whom It May Concern,

Please know that the placing of any type of power pole in an agricultural field will cause problems when using this equipment.

Towers the size that are proposed by the Grain Belt Express Transmission Line will have a very large and lasting impact.

In many areas they are planning to cross fields diagonally. This is worse and is more concerning.

Additional comments:

Signed: 

NAME: Jake Moss

ADDRESS: 1782 DOG RUN ROAD
NEW LONDON MD 20689

I own _____; operate ; both _____

To Whom It May Concern,

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Additional comments:

Signed: Jake Moss

NAME: *Tim Flowerree*

ADDRESS: *19067 De Ruw Rd*

New London MO

I own _____; operate _____; both

Tim Flowerree

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Additional comments:

Signed: *Tim Flowerree*

NAME:

ADDRESS:

I own _____; operate _____; both X

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Additional comments:

Signed: _____

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Kyle Paul", written over a horizontal line.

NAME:

ADDRESS:

I own X; operate _____; both _____

To Whom It May Concern,

Please know that the placing of any type of power pole in an agricultural field will cause problems when using this equipment.

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Additional comments:

Signed: *A. Deane Lesole*

NAME:

ADDRESS:

I own Farm; operate _____; both _____

To Whom It May Concern,

Please know that the placing of any type of power pole in an agricultural field will cause problems when using this equipment.

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In many areas they are planning to cross fields diagonally. This is worse and is more concerning.

Additional comments:

Signed: Thomas J. Caldwell

NAME:

ADDRESS:

I own X; operate _____; both X

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Additional comments:

Signed: Russell Dean Baker

NAME:

ADDRESS:

I own 47 ; operate 390 ; both 237

To Whom It May Concern,

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In many areas they are planning to cross fields diagonally. This is worse and is more concerning.

Additional comments:

Quit your lying!

Signed: *Gay L. Windmann*

NAME:

ADDRESS:

I own Partner; operate _____; both _____

To Whom It May Concern,

Please know that the placing of any type of power pole in an agricultural field will cause problems when using this equipment.

Towers the size that are proposed by the Grain Belt Express Transmission Line will have a very large and lasting impact.

In many areas they are planning to cross fields diagonally. This is worse and is more concerning.

Additional comments:

Signed: _____

Anna Windman

NAME:

ADDRESS:

I own _____; operate _____; both 1400-Ac

To Whom It May Concern,

Please know that the placing of any type of power pole in an agricultural field will cause problems when using this equipment.

Towers the size that are proposed by the Grain Belt Express Transmission Line will have a very large and lasting impact.

In many areas they are planning to cross fields diagonally. This is worse and is more concerning.

Additional comments:

Signed: John Roy Chapman

41619 Hwy D

Perry MO 63462

NAME: Jonathan Chipman

ADDRESS: 34746 Hwy B Ladonia, MO

I own _____; operate _____; both 60' sprayer

To Whom It May Concern,

Please know that the placing of any type of power pole in an agricultural field will cause problems when using this equipment.

Towers the size that are proposed by the Grain Belt Express Transmission Line will have a very large and lasting impact.

In many areas they are planning to cross fields diagonally. This is worse and is more concerning.

Additional comments:

Signed: Jonathan Chipman

NAME:

ADDRESS:

I own _____; operate _____; both X John Deere Sprayer
100 ft Boom

To Whom It May Concern,

Please know that the placing of any type of power pole in an agricultural field will cause problems when using this equipment.

Towers the size that are proposed by the Grain Belt Express Transmission Line will have a very large and lasting impact.

In many areas they are planning to cross fields diagonally. This is worse and is more concerning.

Additional comments:

Signed: _____

Mark Hodges
43082 Hwy D
Perry MO 63462

Schedule WH-2

Ralls County Clerk

From: Amy Kurt <AKurt@cleanlineenergy.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 12, 2016 3:15 PM
To: whibbard@hotmail.com
Cc: rcclerk@missouricom.com
Subject: Requested information about the Grain Belt Express Clean Line
Attachments: GBX-Whats in it for Missouri-RALLS-7.12.16.pdf

Hello Commissioner Hibbard,

Thank you for reaching out to me for more information about the tax revenue that the Grain Belt Express will provide to Ralls County. Here is the information we discussed for you to share with your fellow commissioners.

The State Tax Commission used the cost approach to estimate that the Grain Belt Express Clean Line will contribute more than \$1,040,000 in tax revenue to Ralls County in the first year that the project is in operation. This revenue will support the Ralls County School Districts, Health Department, Public Library, Road and Bridge, General Revenue Fund, Ambulance District #3, and Hannibal Rural Fire Protection District. The tax contribution to each taxing district will be determined based on the mileage of the project and the tax level in each of those districts. The revenue to the specific school districts will be based on the per pupil count at each of the schools in the County.

We anticipate that Grain Belt will continue to provide a substantial tax base for many, many years. The exact amount of the tax contribution will depend on how the asset's value is determined. Three methods are commonly used to value utilities by the Missouri State Tax Commission: a cost approach, a market approach and an income approach.

The cost approach looks at the original cost less depreciation of the asset. Because the Grain Belt Express Clean Line is a very long-lived asset (decades), it will retain a large portion of its value well into the future.

The market approach is based on what a buyer would pay for the company. This value should also remain substantial given the ongoing revenues and long useful life of the Grain Belt Express Clean Line.

The income approach is based on current profitability. The Grain Belt Express Clean Line, as a long-lived asset with long-term transmission service contracts, should retain profitability for a long period of time.

All of this points to the Grain Belt Express Clean Line providing a substantial tax base for many, many years.

Please let me know if you need any additional information. I have also attached our general fact sheet about the impact of the Grain Belt Express in Ralls County.

Best regards,

Amy

Amy Kurt

CLEAN LINE ENERGY PARTNERS LLC
100 N. LaSalle, Suite 2600
Chicago, IL 60602

OFFICE 312-561-9702

CELL 312-405-2337
akurt@cleanlineenergy.com
CLEANLINEENERGY.COM

GRAIN BELT EXPRESS CLEAN LINE

The Grain Belt Express Clean Line is a proposed electric transmission line that will save Missouri customers more than \$10 million annually on their electric bills. The \$500 million wind transmission project will deliver some of our country's lowest-cost energy directly to Missouri's power grid.

BENEFITS TO RALLS COUNTY & SCHOOLS

Energy infrastructure boosts rural communities through significant tax revenues. In the first year of operation, the Grain Belt Express Clean Line is expected to provide more than \$7 million in new tax funding to schools, law enforcement, and other vital public services in northern Missouri.

RALLS COUNTY PUBLIC SERVICES WILL RECEIVE MORE THAN \$1,040,000 IN TAX REVENUE FROM THE GRAIN BELT EXPRESS IN THE FIRST YEAR OF OPERATION:

- Ralls County School Districts
- Ralls County Health Department
- Ralls County Ambulance District #3
- Hannibal Rural Fire Protection District
- Ralls County Public Library
- Ralls County Road and Bridge
- Ralls County General Revenue Fund

Ralls County will receive annual property tax revenue paid by the Grain Belt Express Clean Line. During the construction of the project, schools along the Grain Belt Express route will benefit the most from this increased tax boost. Once the line is operational, all of the schools in Ralls County will benefit from the new tax revenue.

RALLS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS WILL BENEFIT FROM THE GRAIN BELT EXPRESS:

- Community R-VI
- Hannibal 60
- Bowling Green R-I
- Van-Far R-I
- Monroe City R-I
- Ralls County R-II

COMPENSATION FOR RALLS COUNTY LANDOWNERS

Ralls County landowners along the route of the Grain Belt Express Clean Line will be compensated for the easements required to host the transmission line and its supporting structures. Approximately 105 parcels of land in Ralls County will host the Grain Belt Express. Ralls County landowners will receive more than \$5 million for these easements.

CREATING MISSOURI JOBS

Construction of the transmission line will support more than 1,500 Missouri jobs, including high-paying construction jobs. Clean Line Energy has partnered with the nationally renowned Kansas City-based construction company, PAR Electric, to construct the Grain Belt Express Clean Line, as well as several other Missouri businesses that will manufacture components for the project.

