

U.S. Department of Energy
Public Meeting on
Draft National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor Designations
Pittsburgh, PA
June 13, 2007

Meeting Transcript

David Meyer:

Well, thank you for coming to our public meeting. I'm David Meyer. I'm from the Department of Energy and I will be chairing this meeting. Mary Morton from our General Counsel's office will be assisting me, and there are other--several other people from DOE here. Mary and I will be here at the table, hearing your comments, receiving your comments. But if you want to engage some of the other DOE people in sidebar conversations, they will be here for that purpose, and will be happy to talk with you.

Before we get started, I want to thank the people from the National Energy Technology Laboratory--that is this facility--for hosting our meeting. We asked them to assist us in putting this meeting on, and they have been very helpful to us. We appreciate their help very much.

The--let me tell you a little bit about how we're going to operate today. I'm going to make a short presentation about our draft National Corridor--what the effects of designation would be, what the effects would not be, and the rationale for the designation.

Then we will have an opportunity for public officials, elected officials, to make statements. And then, after those statements, then we will hear from individuals. And we're going to ask the individuals to keep their statements short, to two minutes or thereabouts. And that the idea is, give us sort of the headlines of your position, and then if you want to give us supporting detail in written form, that would be fine. We encourage people to submit comments, either orally or in written form, or both.

And then, after everyone has had an opportunity--who wants to speak has had an opportunity to speak for two minutes, if there is additional time available and people want to make some supplementary statements, they will have that opportunity.

So I'll--let me turn now to our draft Corridors. Can we reduce the lights a little bit? Thank you.

The provisions that DOE is implementing in its Congestion Study and in this Corridor proposal--it derives from the Energy Policy Act. And the Energy Policy Act--let me give you a little background to that Act, pertaining to transmission.

The central point is that, for a period of close to 25 years now, there has been persistent underinvestment in transmission. The demand growth has increased; generation capacity has increased greatly over this period. But transmission capacity has not kept pace.

And the effects of this over time are pernicious, severe--potentially severe, at any rate. Now, it's--underinvestment leads to higher electricity prices. It leads to an undue degree of dependence on particular generation sources--generation fuels or generation suppliers. And it also leads to an increased risk of blackouts. If your system is antiquated, all the best will and effort in the world isn't going to reduce the possibility that things--unexpected things, bad things--would happen. And they may accumulate and snowball, and you can have a blackout as the result.

Another new--an important point here, is that much new generation capacity is going to be sited distant from loads. The capacity that you can site close to loads nowadays, for the most part, is gas-fired capacity. But natural gas is expensive. It's--you have to buy it in markets that are very--quite volatile. So when you think about the other alternatives, whether it's coal, or nuclear, or renewables, they are going to be located distant from loads. And there will be an associated transmission requirement needed.

So this thinking was the background to the Energy Policy Act of 2005 by the Congress. These were the considerations they had in mind when they crafted the provisions.

The Act has a number of provisions related to transmission. I'm not going to take time to discuss all of them here, but I do want to point out that the Congress was not simply looking at transmission alone, as something desirable that it wished to support. It wishes--strongly wished to support energy efficiency, demand response, new forms of generation, renewables, and transmission development.

So it requires DOE for that matter--for example, to set efficiency standards for a wider range of consumer products. And it requires FERC to provide financial incentives for new transmission. But the provisions that are of particular interest to us today are the latter two, here. That is, the requirement that DOE publish a national study every three years on transmission congestion. And we published the first such study in August of 2006.

And the Act also authorizes DOE to designate appropriate areas as National Interest Electric Transmission Corridors, if DOE finds that consumers are being adversely affected by transmission constraints or congests.

So let me go to the effects of such designation.

In our view, there are two principal effects. The first one is that designation would signify that the federal government has done the appropriate analysis and has concluded that a significant transmission problem exists in the particular area, and requires timely solution.

And the second effect is that designation would enable the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, under certain conditions, to approve the siting and construction of transmission facilities within the Corridor.

But there are pre-conditions, several pre-conditions, that are required before--not all of these--if any one of these pre-conditions is triggered, then FERC may exercise jurisdiction. But for example, if the state does not have the authority to site the project, now that applies--there are some states, not very many, but there are some states where the state legislature has not given a state agency the authority to site transmission lines. But that doesn't apply, for the most part, in the eastern United States.

There are some other, somewhat similar pre-conditions that could trigger this jurisdictional authority. But the one that has gained the most attention is this one--that is, if the state has withheld approval of the project, the proposed transmission project, for more than one year,

or if the state has conditioned its approval such that the project would not significantly reduce congestion or be economically feasible.

There are other requirements that I didn't try to list on this slide. That is, if FERC were, under one or another of these pre-conditions, were to say, yeah, we will assume jurisdiction, it does not mean that they would necessarily approve the project. They would do a thorough review of the project, but they would not--it's not foreordained, by any means, that they would approve it.

Particularly, if the state has withheld approval of the project, FERC would want to know to know why. If the state has said, the public interest would not be served if this project were approved, and then FERC is going to look at it and say, no, the public interest would be served, FERC would have to have a very strong reason to do that. It would have to have a reason that would hold up under some very intense legal scrutiny.

So now, let me go to some of the things that would not be effects. That is, designation would not determine how the affected area's congestion problem should be resolved. And it would not propose, direct or order anyone to do anything. It would certainly not endorse particular transmission projects. That is not DOE's business. We are not authorized by the Congress to do that. There are other entities, particularly states, and under certain conditions, the FERC, that have that responsibility. And so it's--it would not be at all appropriate for us to get into that business.

Finally, designation of a Corridor would not circumvent compliance with existing federal environmental requirements concerning transmission or other facilities.

So we are here to--not to talk about the particular merits of the Energy Policy Act. And we're not here to talk about the merits of particular transmission projects or alternatives to those projects. We want to hear your views about whether designation of a National Corridor in this area is appropriate, and if it is appropriate, where should the boundaries be drawn? Because drawing the boundaries is one of the tough parts of this problem.

Now this is--this map shows the area that we have proposed. This orange area here is the critical congestion area that we identified in the Congestion Study in August of 2006. What that means is that this whole area, from the--above New York City, south to northern Virginia--this area is densely populated. The electricity demand in this area is, for the most part, growing. In some areas, it's growing more rapidly than others, but there is persistent growth across this area.

And the fact that we say it is highly congested--what we mean is that the transmission system is not able to deliver safely all of the electricity to this area that wholesale buyers and sellers would like to put on it. And another way of characterizing the problem is that--there are several ways to deal with transmission--with congestion, as I've mentioned before. You could build more generation in this area, to serve loads.

But building new generation in a densely populated area is not easy. There are air quality problems; there are water quality issues--water availability issues. Yes, you can do things like rooftop solar in some areas, to some extent, but meeting the needs of densely populated areas through that particular mechanism is--or technology, is not easy.

Distributed generation is another possibility, but there are limitations there too. So there are no easy solutions here, is the point. So you could--in addition to building new generation in this area, you could launch more intensive energy conservation efforts. You could launch

demand management efforts, demand response. And the utilities in this area, with state support, are doing it.

But the people who are responsible for the transmission planning of this broad system are saying, we need all of those things. We need everything we can get. We need new generation in this area, we need energy efficiency in this area, and we're going to need some new transmission to move electricity from these outlying areas into this densely populated area. So the real question is, what's going to be the mix of solutions that's going to be pursued here?

And finally, I want to emphasize that this is--yes, there's a time to talk about these things, and debate the options. But in--there's a calendar to keep--you have to keep your eye on the calendar, here. This isn't a problem that--this problem, without attention, is going to get worse. Prices are going to be affected. But the real risk is reliability itself. There are some real reliability issues here that will not go away.

Again, the people who plan this system and project the trends, the needs, are saying, within five years, there is a need to add more transmission to serve this area reliably. This whole part of New Jersey is facing problems in 2013 and 2014. This part of Pennsylvania is facing problems in roughly that same time period.

Now, yes, there might be--these things might be delayed by a year. They might come sooner by a year. These are projections, so they're not--no, they're not predictions. They are forecasts.

I've gone over most of the points here already, so I won't repeat them. These--I've got several slides here that present supporting data--data that backs up some of the points that I've made. I won't elaborate on them here, but if there are particular aspects here that you want to talk about, we'll find some opportunity to--either here, or later, that you can get in touch with me and we can discuss these things.

I do want to talk about the duration of the draft Corridor--this draft--the duration of the designations, if they were made final. The Act does not specify a time limit, or an assigned period for these designations. But bear in mind that [inaudible] is the solution that I've talked about, whether building new generation, or more effective demand response and energy conservation programs, or building new transmission. These all take time. They take several years to put in place and become effective.

So if a National Corridor is going to be relevant and helpful to solving the problems, it has to last for a considerable number of years. We have proposed a period of twelve years. That's a [default] concept. If, in particular situations, we--on the basis of, particularly on the basis of comments received, we found that it was more appropriate to settle on a different period, we would have those--the opportunity--the latitude to do that.

We've also proposed that even if we do specify a particular period, the designation would be couched in such a way that the designation could be renewed, modified or rescinded by DOE, after notice and comment, consideration of public comments.

I've mentioned the blackout issue. This slide shows two of the more recent blackouts that--of note, that have happened. Now, points I've already made--the next step is, there--the comment period that we are in now closes July 6, and after that, DOE staff will review all comments received, and then we will prepare some recommendations to the Secretary concerning the possible designation of National Corridors.

And if a final designation is issued, there would be an automatic 30-day rehearing period, before it becomes final.

So we appreciate your oral comments here, and if you have questions, now--you can raise them here, or you can get in touch with me at the contact information shown. We have made a great deal of information pertaining to the core Congestion Study and the Federal Register Notice on this website. I'm going to ask Mary to give you some of the details about the--filing written comments. But I do note that there is a timeline on filing those comments.

Mary Morton: I might [inaudible].

David Meyer: Sure.

Mary Morton: Now?

David Meyer: Yes.

Mary Morton: I just wanted to mention--David's done a good job of giving a pretty high-level overview of the DOE thinking about these draft Corridors. But we've also put out an 80-page Federal Register Notice, which gives a great deal of additional detail. This really provides the entire analysis that's supporting the draft Corridors. Many of you, I'm sure, have already seen it. Those who have not, I would urge you, if you're thinking about filing written comments, to take a look at it. It is available on our website. And this is really the document you need to be responding to.

On the very first page of that document, it has some requirements about how to properly file the comments. It's not very complicated, and frankly, the simplest way for you folks to file written comments is to do so through the website, and then you don't have to worry about mailing it to the correct address, or labeling them properly. But if you do choose to mail them, you've just got to make sure that you look at the first page of this, and get the address right, and specify a docket number.

David Meyer: [inaudible]

Mary Morton: The website is, <http://nietc.anl.gov>. Right. And there's some--there's a sheet outside that actually reproduces the first page of this, and so it gives you the detail on how to file comments.

It is 72 Federal Register, page 25838, and it was issued on May 7th. That Register, by the way, also has phone numbers for both me and for David, so as you're going through this, if you have some questions and you need some help.

David Meyer: Okay. We are going to turn now to statements from public officials. But first, I want to introduce Jody Erikson, who is going to be our facilitator for today. Jody is not a DOE employee. She is with an organization called the Keystone Center, and I'll let Jody tell you what the Keystone Center does.

Jody Erikson: Great. Thank you, David. My name is Jody Erikson. I'm with the Keystone Center. The Keystone Center is based in Colorado. We do public involvement for doing public policy. We have sort of two arms.

One arm is to talk about how to improve public engagement and public involvement in public policy. Currently, that's what I do--I'm on the mediations and facilitation side, from

everything from a public meeting like today to consensus building and agreement building in areas of energy, national resources, health, and transportation.

The other arm of the Keystone Center is actually involving future generations. So we have a science school--it's called the Keystone Science School. They do camp for kids. During school, they also do sort of regular summer camp, about science and about collaboration on public policy.

We also have an arm that does curriculum development, and teacher training on curriculum about clients.

So that's what the Keystone Center is. So my job today is just facilitation--helping move the meeting through, keeping it fair and equitable from meeting to meeting.

So what's the process today? Before we do that, one thing--I was asked to ask you all to turn off your cell phones and your Blackberries. There's some kind of interference with the sound, which is the sound I think that you might be hearing on the system. So go ahead and turn those cell phones off.

So, my job for today is to help you move through the process. So what's the process?

Each person who is going to speak today has two minutes. I'll give you a 30-second warning. I don't mean to distract you, and it might--just take a look at it, and know that you have 30 seconds. I'll also give you a little thank you card when you're done. And if you're still talking, I'm going to come sit next to you.

Be respectful. Do keep to your two minutes. If we get done early, we will give you an opportunity for a second two minutes. If not, we'll end on time, but if we have the opportunity, we'd like to give you that, too.

This is also an opportunity to speak--all people to speak. So you--somebody might stand up who has a different opinion than yours. Be respectful--that's what democracy's about, letting them have those differences of opinion.

So, what we will do is, we're going to start with the public elected officials, have--call them up first, and then we're going to move down the list of people who pre-registered, in the order that they registered online. And then we'll move through the list of people who registered here on these green sheets today.

OK? So, Dan Griffiths from the Governor's Office, Department of Environmental Protection in Pennsylvania. And then, following him, Joe Ward from the Governor's Office in West Virginia.

Go ahead. You're Dan Griffiths, right?

Dan Griffiths: Right.

Jody Erikson: One more thing. Public elected officials are given a little more leeway on the time, so if you don't see me giving them exactly two minutes, that's why.

Dan Griffiths: Thank you. I'm Dan Griffiths, Director of the Bureau of Energy [inaudible].

Unidentified Speaker: [inaudible].

Dan Griffiths: Thanks. I'm Dan Griffiths, Director of the Bureau of Energy Innovations and Technology Deployment in the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

No? Let me--I'll just [inaudible].

Okay. Sparing the introduction. On behalf of Governor Rendell and Secretary McGinty, I thank you for giving us the opportunity to speak to you today regarding the designation of the Mid-Atlantic Area of the National Corridor.

This is an important issue, which we feel is being approached in a way that may unnecessarily harm Pennsylvania's interests. I'm going to call your attention to Governor Rendell's recent letter to Secretary Bodman, in which he personally expressed his concern about the designation of the Corridor, and requested that the Department forbear in issuing a final Corridor designation.

Our fundamental concerns are that the proposed Corridor is unnecessary at this time, that it is far too broadly defined, and that this, taken together with FERC's final rules, may lead to the approval of projects that fail to satisfy the national interest while ignoring legitimate critical state concerns.

Pennsylvania has a long history of protecting its energy security by providing for reasonable expansion of both generation and to transmission infrastructure. We are now approaching our energy security within a well-developed strategy, and with the intention of achieving significant goals related to energy independence.

The Commonwealth is a leader in renewable energy and sustainable fuels. We are actively seeking to attract manufacturers who will make us able to supply significant portions of our own energy needs. We are now on track to provide very significant impetus behind demand resources.

In short, we are taking a number of steps to ensure that we have adequate, reasonably priced energy. Unfortunately, the Department's definition of the Mid-Atlantic Corridor is so broad as to be unhelpful to our strategy. A Corridor that includes 50 Pennsylvania counties cannot be realistically related to actual transmission options. In the end, this designation will stimulate enormous controversy, but may fail to advance our national interest.

We believe that the siting process defined by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission may not result in effective projects. FERC's rules permitted to completely reevaluate a state's consideration of a proposed transmission project. This can occur even where the Pennsylvania PUC has established an extensive record, and has fully deliberated before reaching a conclusion.

Nevertheless, it is a fact that given the substantial scope of some proposed transmission lines, a protracted siting process can reasonably last well over one year. Unfortunately, the Commission's final order gives us little hope that we will receive full consideration, and of an appropriate process at the state level.

We are concerned that projects may be imposed on Pennsylvania even where there are far better choices. Our neighboring states have historically followed a policy that discouraged the construction of generation. In contrast, Pennsylvania is a substantial net electricity exporter. This makes us particularly vulnerable to the construction of power lines that will move energy out of Pennsylvania to states with inadequate generating resources. It appears to be a perverse outcome of the designation of such a Corridor, that our adequate generating

resources may lead to the construction of transmission to support our neighbors. This transmission will be on our soil, but may not benefit Pennsylvania's consumers.

We are sensitive to the need for robust interstate commerce, but this siting poses--a situation imposes an unwarranted burden on Pennsylvania. FERC's Final Order does not appear to ensure that alternatives to transmission proposals would be considered, and we are deeply concerned by the statement in paragraph 179 of the Final Order, that a range of reasonable alternatives can best be determined based upon the facts of a specific siting proposal.

This suggests that the proposed project alone will define the Commission's scope of review, and that other alternatives will not be reasonably considered.

We are also concerned that the approval in one state of a multi-state project will prejudice the Commission's review. I point to the fact that only Pennsylvania and West Virginia, in this region, have constructed sufficient generation to provide exports. The easy solution for our neighbors is to do nothing and allow the Corridor process to invite construction, so that they can get electricity.

So we foresee a situation in which a line moving power out of Pennsylvania will be readily approved by neighboring states that have refused to build generation. Will the Commission consider those states' ability to bring new technologies and demand resources online as an alternative to a line? Again, we are unsure that FERC's process will produce a reasonable result.

In conclusion, Governor Rendell requests that the Department reconsider its designation of the Corridor, and at a minimum, defer a decision until it is clear that Pennsylvania and its immediate neighbors can neither site necessary transmission facilities nor identify reasonable alternatives.

And I'll just say, parenthetically, that I've asked around to folks who have been involved as long as I have, almost 30 years, with the regulatory process in Pennsylvania. And nobody can recall the Pennsylvania PUC turning down a transmission line request. Many have been altered, but I think that's an indication of the level of Pennsylvania's ability to do its own business.

Jody Erikson: Thank you. Joe Ward, from the West Virginia Governor's Office and a spokesperson from the House of Representatives, Bill DeWeese's office.

Joe Ward: Thank you. Good afternoon. My name is Joe Ward, again, and I'm a Deputy General Counsel in Governor Joe Manchin's office in West Virginia. Thank you for having us here today. We appreciate the opportunity to address the Department.

Also with me is Caryn Short, with the West Virginia Public Service Commission, who I believe is slated to address the gathering as well, later. And I believe I saw a delegate of Barbara Evans Fleischauer, from the West Virginia Legislature, so I want to make note that she was here as well. I'm sure she'll probably be speaking as well.

First, let me say that we're somewhat disappointed. While we are glad to have the opportunity to speak to you, we are disappointed in the fact that we were not able to locate one of these meetings in West Virginia. As you are well aware, West Virginia is one of the--if not the largest, exporter of surplus power in the country, among the 50 states.

And we've always been proud of the power that we generate, to power the economy of the United States. And as a result of our generating capacity, we'll also, in all likelihood, have a number of these lines, will be sited and going through West Virginia. In fact, what has been identified as the most needed line is slated to go through approximately 114 miles of West Virginia.

So it will have an impact on the people of West Virginia, and we think that it's only fair that they have an opportunity to comment at a location closer to them. So in the future, as FERC and as the Department of Energy proceed, give us a call. You're more than welcome--we'll help you set up a meeting there as well.

With that said, fortunately, we were able to arrange some sites in West Virginia where individuals can view this meeting online via the web cast, so we do appreciate the opportunity to do that.

Very quickly, I'd like to, one, echo some of the remarks made by our colleague from Pennsylvania, with respect to decisions that FERC has made. I understand that this is a Department of Energy event, but when you look at the way the Energy Policy Act was drafted, it's placed part of the responsibility on the Department of Energy, and part of the responsibility with FERC, in deciding how these lines will be sited.

And that separation, we believe, has caused some difficulty in the public getting access to the system, and while there are certain structural impediments inherent in the law, we'd like to encourage FERC and the Department of Energy to bridge that gap, in order to address these in a more comprehensive and consolidated manner.

With that said, though, again--simply some of the components of the FERC order that were recently released trouble us, from the standpoint of, West Virginia and its Public Service Commission have always done an exceptional job of siting lines, and making sure that the people of West Virginia are represented in that process. And they do so in a timely manner.

So the interpretation of that order, so as to say that an outright denial is also grounds for FERC to come in and take over the process, is extremely troubling to Governor Manchin and the state of West Virginia.

Also, as far as the sharing of the cost in this whole process, FERC has come up with another order which we find very troubling, in the sense that we are more than happy to be that resource for energy. We've always been proud to do that, and we understand as a result of that, there will be a cost involved, but responsibility to get that energy to market. With that said, we do not think that it's appropriate that FERC go away from a beneficiary-based model in assessing and allocating the costs involved in these processes.

And we would ask that if there are FERC representatives here this afternoon, that they reconsider that decision as well.

With that, I see we have a very large crowd here, and I want to make sure everyone has the opportunity to comment, so I will wrap up. And again, thank you for the opportunity to come here and speak to you, and hear our voice.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson:

Thank you. A spokesperson from the Representative Bill DeWeese's office, and then Pennsylvania Senator Barry Stout.

Debra Konosky (on behalf of Bill DeWeese):

Thank you. Good afternoon. I'm reading comments from Representative Bill DeWeese, because of ongoing budget discussions in Harrisburg was not able to attend. Representative DeWeese is the Majority Leader of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives.

And his letter reads: "I respectfully proffer these comments in my capacity as both the Majority Leader and as the duly elected State Legislator for the 50th Legislative District, which encompasses all of Greene County and parts of Washington and Fayette Counties in southwestern Pennsylvania.

Accordingly, as the State Legislator for the 50th Legislative District, and a lifelong citizen of Greene County, Pennsylvania, I have a very strong interest in the proceeding.

It is important for you to know that I have long and actively opposed Section 1221 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005, and thereby oppose the draft designation of the Mid-Atlantic Area National Corridor, as a National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor, or an NIETC.

I believe that Section 1221 advances a purported national energy policy, which is void of public benefit for the people of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and nationwide. It ignores environmentally clean, renewable, efficient and cost-effective energy alternatives, and commandeers the rights of states and their political subdivisions to adopt, administer and manage land use policies, if such state or local policies would conflict with the ambitions of profit-seeking corporations desiring to stretch high-voltage transmission lines from my home in Greene County, across parts of West Virginia and the Commonwealth of Virginia, to the energy-challenged urban centers of the Mid-Atlantic.

The draft Mid-Atlantic Area National Corridor covers geographic areas in eight states, including the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. If this draft National Corridor is implemented, 50 of Pennsylvania's 67 counties, the majority of the land mass in the Commonwealth, would be situated in the National Corridor.

Consequently, the states, including Pennsylvania, situated in the Mid-Atlantic Area National Corridor, either in whole or in part, would become the energy hub for the urban centers of the Mid-Atlantic region. If the Mid-Atlantic Area National Corridor is approved by the DOE, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, not unlike the other affected states, would have no control, no say, and no recourse, other than expensive litigation, over transmission planning, location and construction within its geographic borders.

Moreover, the designation of an NIETC in this Commonwealth, and the accompanying Congressionally-conveyed backstop authority granted to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, would diminish or even eliminate the role of several states' administrative agencies. These agencies were expressly established, in statute, to protect Pennsylvania's natural, historic, cultural and recreational resources. And in some cases, to review and comment on transmission line siting applications.

These agencies include the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, the Office of Consumer Advocates, the Office of Small Business Advocates, the Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the Department of Transportation, the Game Commission, and the Historic and Museum Commission.

Although I cannot speak to whether the DOE consulted with any or all of these agencies in its initial proceedings, I can assert that if the DOE designates an NIETC in this

Commonwealth, with little or no consultation with all of the administrative agencies charged with representing the rights and interests of the electric rate payers, protecting natural resources, and assuring that a broad public benefit will result from such designation, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to conclude that the designation of an NIETC would be in the public interest.

There is no doubt that the designation of an NIETC of the magnitude proposed in the draft Mid-Atlantic Area National Corridor, would have a significant negative outcome for the Commonwealth, its people, and political subdivisions. Not only would electric rate payers living within in an NIETC face the possibility of higher electric rates if a transmission facility would be approved for the location and construction, they would also endure the fear of losing their American Dream--the homes and properties that some struggled and sacrificed to buy.

The following is a mere snapshot of Pennsylvania's economic, cultural, historic, natural and scenic resources, whose profitability and sustainability would be jeopardized by a National Corridor designation.

323,366 acres of farmlands have been preserved in 53 counties, under the Commonwealth's Agricultural Land Preservation program. Pennsylvania has 120 state parks, 20 state forests that are located in 48 of the 67 counties, and 300 state game lands. Pennsylvania state forest land is one of the largest expanses of public forest land in the eastern United States--the Allegheny National Forest, Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, Gettysburg National Military Park, Valley Forge National Park, and Fort Necessity National Battlefield, to name a few.

More than 440,000 acres of land in Pennsylvania has been conserved by the state's Land Trust Organization. And there are 158 national historic landmarks in Pennsylvania.

I reiterate that the approval of the Mid-Atlantic Area National Corridor as an NIETC would have a devastating impact, not only on my constituents in southwestern Pennsylvania, but also on people in most regions of this Commonwealth, who may soon discover that their homes, children's schools, businesses, workplaces, and favorite tourist destinations, would be situated in or near a proposed NIETC.

The likelihood of this inevitability juxtaposed with the possibility that my constituents and other Pennsylvanians may face increased electric rates, but receive no economic or quality of life benefits from interstate transmission line projects, makes the rationale for implementing a profit-driven public policy, in the name of national interest or national security, difficult to understand.

I submit that the lives of my constituents and the people of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania should not be disrupted because of an energy policy that ignores their quality of life for the benefit of profit-driven corporations.

With that, I will continue to oppose efforts to designate National Interest Electric Transmission Corridors, and any transmission projects seeking to locate and construct a high-voltage transmission line in the National Corridor, situated geographically in this Commonwealth.

I thank you for your consideration of my comments, and your willingness to consider the consequences that any NIETC would have on the lives of the people in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and nationwide, and on our natural resources.

Thank you.”

Jody Erikson: Senator Barry Stout, followed by Barbara Fleischauer, West Virginia House of Delegates.

Unidentified Speaker: Excuse me. Can you turn that podium so we can see the speakers?

Jody Erikson: This--the speakers are actually speaking to DOE. You are speaking to DOE. So--I mean, we could, but it's really--then you'd have your back to the person you're talking to.

OK. Go ahead. Go ahead, Senator.

Barry Stout: Good afternoon. I am State Senator J. Barry Stout, representing the 46th Senatorial District in southwestern Pennsylvania. I thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today, on behalf of my quarter of a million constituents in Greene, Washington, Beaver, Westmoreland, and Allegheny Counties.

On May 30th of this year, I introduced Pennsylvania State Senate Resolution 129, opposing the designation of National Interest Transmission Corridors, and appealing to the Congress of the United States to repeal or modify certain provisions of the Energy Policy Act.

I decided to take this action because of the announcement of the draft Mid-Atlantic Area National Corridor, and how it would adversely impact Pennsylvania, and my firm belief that the Title 12 of the Energy Act preempts, [and has long been a fundamental powers] of state and local governments.

I testify before you today to voice my opposition to the draft NIETC designation, and respectfully request your consideration of these serious concerns.

It is not possible to discuss my opposition to NIETC designations without talking about this issue that has been brought to the forefront. On April 13th of this year, Trans-Allegheny Interstate Line Company, and Allegheny Energy, an incorporated subsidiary, filed an application with the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, to construct a new 500 kV transmission line. It would pass through Washington and Greene Counties, my senatorial district, and then [transect] down to the Mason-Dixon line and enter West Virginia. And this line would then terminate in northern Virginia.

Thousands of my constituents continue to articulately and passionately question the need for this controversial project, or are expressing opposition, citing health concerns, the lines' possible effects on increased electric rates, devaluation of property, and interference with their quiet, rural lifestyle. They do not believe that this power line is in the best interest of southwestern Pennsylvania, nor do they believe that there is justification for the recent NIETC designation.

The Department of Energy's recent designation of the Mid-Atlantic Corridor of the NIETC, which includes 50 of the 67 counties of Pennsylvania, and consumes over 75% of the lands in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, serves to give the federal government the ability to pass the--bypass the PUC, our state's regulatory authority, over the regional transmission lines.

The PUC authority has over a century of experience in responsibly addressing statewide eminent domain issues, and this designation would usurp Pennsylvania's right to determine what the project is needed, so the best method to site it.

And of course, I fully recognize the energy and environmental challenges that we face as a nation. And I'm certainly aware that an effective energy policy is needed. However, the federal authority granted preempts the traditional and fundamental authority of the states and their local subdivisions to determine land use.

I believe it is our collective responsibility to focus on developing and [inaudible] more comprehensive means of addressing transmission congestion and energy solutions, such as enhanced energy conservation and effective measures, demand response, and more local generation.

For your information, Greene County is the second largest coal-producing county in the United States, second only to Wyoming, and Washington County is one of the leaders. And we would be glad to ship trainloads of coal down to Virginia so they can build their own.

Before we allow additional high-voltage lines to be forced on citizens who are not benefiting from these lines, but yet having to help foot the bill--they build it, and they will bill us.

I also seriously question the wisdom of permitting these high-voltage lines to run through our rural areas that cannot be possibly be protected. I thought this in the interest of national defense, and having these lines in those areas cannot be secured. So this also not--having national security risks, how can it propose to be in the best interests of the nation?

Finally, it seems to me that the NIETC designation will allow utility companies, for a pecuniary interest, unprecedented powers to seek private property by using an existing eminent domain authority. I serve as Chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee--I'm very familiar with eminent domain. And as you said, very cautiously. So I don't think that eminent domain should be placed in the hands of a for-profit company, at the expense of the property owners.

Earlier, we heard that President--that Governor Rendell has gone on record, on June 8th, to the Secretary Bodman, allowing his grave concerns about the FERC's authority to supplement states' signed decision, and requested that the DOE reconsider its designation of the Mid-Atlantic Corridor.

In addition, Deputy Secretary Daniel J. Desmond, of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, testified last week before the public hearing of the Senate Energy and Environmental Committees, in opposition to that designation.

It would be unconscionable to think that NIETC designation would be approved without further review and comments by the affected states and thousands whose lives would be greatly adversely impacted.

I know that the DOE is not required by statute to issue these designations in draft status. I therefore sincerely appreciate that we have an opportunity to review these comments.

And I have two of my senior staff members with me today, who have been actively involved with my over 1,420 constituent inquiries on this issue in the last several months. That's Sharon Russell, my District Office Manager, and next to her is Sharon Wilson, my senior staff person who covers Greene County.

Thank you for your time.

Jody Erikson:

We're going to try to move this mic--see if I can get better sound.

OK. [inaudible]. OK, so--Barbara Fleischauer, and then Pam Snyder, from the Greene County Commission.

Barbara Fleischauer: Thank you very much. My name is Barbara Evans Fleischauer. I am a delegate from the West Virginia Legislature. I represent the 44th District, along with three other delegates-- Delegate Beach, Delegate Marshall, and Delegate Shook--almost all of Monongalia County, which is a very beautiful county in a very beautiful state.

I want to thank the DOE for having--making the decision to having a public hearing in Pittsburgh, and also to register my wish that there could have been, or could be, a hearing in West Virginia. We have--our state will--38 counties of our 55 counties of our state will be affected by this Corridor designation, if it is decided upon. And some of them are very, very, very far from here, and any of the other locations of hearings.

I would also like to thank Governor Manchin for arranging viewings in three locations, and the DOE for assisting in that. And at the same time, say hello to everyone watching this show, in Morgantown, Charleston, and Moorefield, including colleagues of mine from the West Virginia Legislature.

And I particularly want to thank the numerous Monongalia County residents who have bombarded their elected officials with letters and calls and e-mails, many of whom are here today, for educating us about the impact of the proposed transmission lines through Monongalia County, and the proposed National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor through West Virginia.

I'd like to go on record as opposing both the proposed transmission lines through Monongalia County, and also of the NIET Corridor through 38 of our 55 counties in the state of West Virginia. And there are two main reasons, with some subparts, for my opposition.

The first reason is: I believe this designation is premature. And I'd like to say that part of my conclusion on that is based on personal opinion. I've been in the Legislature 11 years, and it was very recently that we were deluged by utility lobbyists, telling us that we had to have energy deregulation. We had to have it--it was essential, it was urgent, it was necessary.

And in West Virginia, we decided that we were going to delay, and I'm very glad we did. We passed a resolution in West Virginia that delayed implementation of energy deregulation. And we--just a few months after that, Enron hit the country. And those predictions, and those promises, all turned out to be false and hollow.

I also have a little bit of skepticism about the claims that are being made about this project, because of the \$50 million rate increase that was requested by Allegheny Power in our state, and that our Public Service Commission said was far in excess of any need that had been demonstrated.

I want to say that one of the main reasons that West Virginia delayed our decision on deregulation, and then eventually scrapped that notion altogether was, because we listened to a person named David Schwartz, who is a former member of the Federal Power Commission. He came and spoke to the Judiciary Committee, where I serve, and he was an economist, and now the Federal Power Commission is FERC. And we found his reasoning to be very, very persuasive.

Much of the same reasoning that he shared with us, I think applies here. As I said, I think this designation is premature, because--well, because of--in large part, it's based on proposals by for-profit utilities. I think that the DOE and FERC should do what West Virginia did, and that is, to delay and slow down this train, so that citizens and elected officials are fully informed about the significant impact on their local community, state and federal parks, cultural resources, wildlife, and their dream home.

Secondly, I don't believe that designation of the Corridor and the allegedly extremely important transmission lines through my County, for 12 years that this Corridor is going to be designated, is in the public interest, and certainly, not in the best interest of the rate payers.

Like electric deregulation, which has been a huge flop, this designation will expedite a big change for consumers and ratepayers. In West Virginia, we will be paying higher rates. Our citizens will be forced to purchase outmoded technology from the last century--not this century, the last century.

Our citizens will have forced giveaways of their--and devaluing of their property, under a new federal eminent domain. And very disturbing to me, as an elected state official, clearly this statute, if the--if FERC decides to exercise its discretionary powers, would have the impact of usurping and preempting state power to make our own decisions about energy.

What I feel is that this will be--the designation of NIETC, as proposed, will have the effect of expediting a solution that has been proposed by, and primarily will benefit, for-profit monopolies. And I do not believe this is in the public interest, which is, after all, the standard here.

I would like to echo Governor Rendell's statement about the perverse effect that energy preparedness that we have had in West Virginia, that we in West Virginia will be penalized, because we have prepared for an energy crisis. We're ready--we have the energy. And the way we're going to get penalized is, we're going to have to carve up our beautiful state, so that people in the Northeast, who are unwilling to generate their own energy, who are unwilling to have their--these giant towers through their homes and beside their homes, we are going to pay the price.

And I urge FERC and the Department of Energy to do what West Virginia did with deregulation. Slow down, and think more carefully.

If you do, I believe you'll conclude that the Allegheny TrAIL proposed line through Monongalia County, and the designation of 38 of West Virginia's 55 counties as being part of this Corridor, is not in the public interest.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

Jody Erikson: After Pam Snyder, we'll have Caryn Short from the Public Service Commission of West Virginia.

Pam Snyder: Good afternoon. My name is Pam Snyder, and I am Chairman of the Board of Greene County Commissioners.

Hatfield's Power Plant--one of the dirtiest in the country. Two 500 kV lines--one running north to south, the other running east to west. A 30-year old right-of-way that property owners have paid taxes and insurance on. A county that does not have an energy shortage.

What do all these things have in common? They are all in Greene County, Pennsylvania. The county I am elected to serve and protect.

While we sympathize with the energy needs of this country, we are not willing to sacrifice the health and safety of our residents to supply it to other areas. Greene County is a small, rural county with beautiful rolling hills and countrysides. This Board of Commissioners has worked hard at creating an economic agenda and comprehensive plans that will attract new home construction and revitalize our economy.

We have spent millions of dollars investing in new water and sewage lines, and recreational opportunities that will encourage people to want to live and raise their families in Greene County.

The route for this 500 kV line as proposed defeats all that we have worked so hard to achieve. This line will cause property values to plummet. Families will not want to live in the school districts affected. Our rolling hills will now be ruined by high voltage towers through our towns, and across our farms.

As a small county, we've struggled to hold the line on taxes. How will we make up the lost revenue as property values decrease?

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 is another example of the federal government being too far removed from the local communities. To take control out of the states' hands is ludicrous. This legislation is detrimental to property owners' rights. It is a travesty that our own government can declare three-quarters of the state of Pennsylvania as a National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor, thus enabling big business such as Allegheny Energy to eminent domain people's property, regardless of what the state says.

Where are the states' rights? Where are the property owners' rights? In a letter to Secretary Bodman, dated April 27th, 2007, the Greene County Board of Commissioners challenged the Secretary's statements that the parochial interests that shaped energy policy in the 20th century will no longer work.

It is our belief that the parochial interests that play today are that of the U.S. Department of Energy supporting public utilities acting as private corporations, for the sake of private profit.

Instead of usurping states right authority in a matter such as this, the U.S. Department of Energy has a responsibility to establish progressive energy policy for the United States that balances the conservation of our resources, advances safe energy technologies, protects the public interest and the quality of life of the residents of this nation.

In the same letter, we also asked, under the Freedom of Information Act, to release the underlying data the Department of Energy relied upon for congestion studies that formed the basis of the proposed NIETC Corridors, and confirmed the congestion studies with the Energy Policy Act of 2005. We have yet to have a response to that request.

The National Institute of Environmental Health Science, in 1998, concluded that low frequency EMFs, like those surrounding transmission lines, should be classified as a Group 2B human carcinogen under the International Agency for Research on Cancer classification scheme.

The same group, in 2002, concluded that there is some evidence that exposure to power frequency EMFs is associated with an increased risk for childhood leukemia. That's a risk that this County Commissioner never wants to take for the children of Greene County.

I, too, am a property owner affected by this line. My husband and I live on a small family farm in Jefferson. My husband is the third generation to operate the family farm. Our daughter and her husband just moved into their new house that they built next door on the farm with our two grandchildren.

My father-in-law sold a right-of-way to Allegheny Power, then known as West Penn Power, some 30 years ago. Never could he have imagined something like this, that would be harmful to his great-grandchildren. We know so much more, and have so much better technology today than we did back then. Had he known what was going to impact his farm, he would never have signed that agreement.

As a mother and grandmother, I do not want this line anywhere near my children and grandchildren. And as a County Commissioner, I do not want it near anyone else's, either.

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 is unfair, unjust, and in my opinion, should be deemed unconstitutional. I listen to our federal government talk about our war against terror around the world, and the necessity to fight to keep us safe here at home.

That may be true, and I believe it is true. But I can assure you, as I stand here today, I stand in terror of what this power line will do to my state, my county, my constituents, and my family. And this terror has been enacted by my own government.

I implore you--please, do not let this occur to the people of Greene County, and the people of Pennsylvania, and do not approve the draft National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson:

Caryn Short, are you here? Okay, great. Here is our last public speaker. So she'll come up, and then I will start with those who pre-registered, and then move into those who did not pre-register, but who registered today.

One thing, as Caryn is walking up here. Just a reminder, DOE isn't a siting organization, so it's not a siting meeting. And I know many of you are here talking about, and have a lot of emotion about a particular line. Help DOE understand the impact of the designation, so help them make that link. Because it's not specific to that line.

Go ahead.

Caryn Short:

Thank you. My name is Caryn Watson Short. I am with the West Virginia Public Service Commission. I am the supervising attorney in the legal division there.

And you have heard from other representatives of West Virginia speaking today, and it is 38 counties out of 55 in West Virginia that are affected by this draft NIETC Corridor.

And I understand what the manager of today's speaking has noted also, but I think it's important--it's important for West Virginians, for the DOE to know that the Public Service Commission of West Virginia does already have an application pending before it. And that was filed by TrAILCo--Trans-Allegheny project, on March 30th of this year. And that project is approximately 240 miles long, 114 miles of which are proposed in West Virginia.

Additionally, what has been released to West Virginia is that Allegheny Power and American Electric Power also have proposed a project, in light of this proposed NIETC Corridor designation, for a project known as the Joint Venture Project. And that project, as we understand it, will be 290 miles long, of which more than 200 miles will be located in West Virginia.

So it goes without saying that the impacts to West Virginia are large.

With that as my backdrop, and having reviewed your slides, I would like to pose a question to the DOE, and that is, if the DOE gives the NIETC designation for this Corridor, and the state--like West Virginia, that has its process ongoing--reviews the project, and denies that project for reasons that it state and find to be for good cause--my question then is, when the application is filed at FERC, do you believe that FERC will entertain the application, and that it can grant under those circumstances?

Jody Erikson: We're working on the mic.

Mary Morton: Let me first say that we don't represent FERC. It is really up to FERC to interpret the extent of its statutory authority.

If your question is simply--if your question is, is FERC's interpretation, which they've already issued, that they retain--they obtain jurisdiction even in the instance where a state has denied a project--

Caryn Short: Yes.

Mary Morton: --I will simply say, that is FERC's interpretation. I just don't have the authority to--it's not the part of the statute that DOE has any business interpreting, but that is FERC's position.

Caryn Short: Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Okay. I'm going to start on the list of people who have pre-registered. Two minutes, please stop--those reminders. I'm going to start with Jim Haney of Allegheny Power, and then Edie Jett of West Virginia.

Jim Haney: Thank you, and good afternoon. I'm Jim Haney, Vice President of Transmission for TrAILCo and Allegheny Power. And we would like to applaud the Department for issuing the draft NIETC designation.

Allegheny, as has been discussed already today, has two projects in our area that are vital to the reliability and the economy of the region served by the PJM Interconnection, and also support national security.

I'll describe it, although it's been described several times today. TrAIL is a 500 kV transmission line that will stretch from southwestern Pennsylvania, continue through northern West Virginia, and into northern Virginia.

This line is required to avoid reliability violations that it--on existing Allegheny Power transmission facilities that are expected to occur in 2011. These potential problems, as identified by PJM and Allegheny, are caused by forecasted load growth, as has been discussed some today.

Now DOE has helped to confirm the need for this line with their Congestion Study. In addition, approximately 35 miles of TrAIL's 500 kV facilities will be constructed in Pennsylvania, and are needed to meet local reliability needs, driven by load growth in the expanding suburban Pittsburgh area. For Allegheny Power customers as well as non-Allegheny customers in the Mid-Atlantic Area, these reliability problems could lead to widespread outages, and/or controlled rotating blackouts.

In late March and early April this year, Allegheny filed applications with state commissions in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Virginia, for authorization to construct the lines. We are working through the process at our commissions to assure that a review allows the views of all interested persons to be heard and considered, when enabling completion of the regulatory review permit, to permit us to place the entire line in service by June of 2011.

Simply stated, we are very confident that our state commissions will act on the applications in a timely manner. Although we do expect those states to authorize TrAIL, a NIETC designation will help us to underscore the importance of the proposed facilities to the PJM region and national interest.

Jody Erikson: Thank you. [inaudible], sit down. Okay, Edie Jett, Mary Jane Balasko? Edie Jett, got my first--

Edie Jett: Edie.

Jody Erikson: Edie Jett.

Edie Jett: Was that a public statement?

In regard to the issue of NIET Mid-Atlantic Area Corridor, in my opinion, there is nothing neat about it. I attended the hearing in Arlington, and was confused when I watched your presentation. I notice that your southern outline, on the Corridor of West Virginia, was nothing like the southern Corridor of my maps, where each of the 38 designated counties is shaded in.

Upon further study, I find that your diagram includes four additional counties-- Kanawha, Boone, Putnam and Mason. Are there additional counties on your Corridor radar screen? Did you simply forget to mention the most populated county in West Virginia, which is home to our state capital? Was that a convenient omission, which could be offered up after a public comment period?

Since Kanawha County has approximately 200,000 residents, it seems likely that it would be best to save that announcement for later.

In February, Governor Manchin's vision for the REAP, the Next Generation Program, was presented. The mission included protect human health and the environment, educate the public's about the merits of pollution prevention, make West Virginia the cleanest state in the nation, assisting in the recruitment of new businesses, and making us a top tourist destination. Cooperate with counties in adopting and enforcing ordinances organizing programs that assist in accomplishing these goals.

It seems to me that the Corridor, and all it represents, is in direct conflict with many of the goals of REAP. The projected high power transmission lines will not protect human health and environment. The public has in no way been educated about potential pollution resulting from the project. The Corridor will not make us the cleanest state in the nation. It will not assist us in the recruitment of new business, or make us a top tourist destination.

There has not seemed to be any cooperation with the county, which will be eventually called upon to make the ultimate sacrifice. To quote A. James Manchin, the original founder of REAP and late uncle of our Governor, we must purge these proud peaks of these jumbled jungles of junkery.

I can't imagine anything junkier than what is being proposed here today.

Jody Erikson: And Edie gets a star today, just because she ended on second.

David Meyer: Jody? Jody? We want to make a--

Jody Erikson: Go ahead.

David Meyer: --an announcement.

Mary Morton: Just to respond to one point. Regrettably, we realized recently that there was simply an error made in the Federal Register Notice, and that the map, which was the correct identification of the counties, did not match up with the narrative listing in the back of the Notice.

We're very sorry about that. It was simply a mistake. We published a Federal Register Notice, I'd say about 10 days ago, announcing that we had made that error and correcting it. It was a bad mistake, and it was simply a typographical error that we didn't catch.

Jody Erikson: Okay. Mary Jane Balasko, Brenda Ward. Brenda--okay, just raise your hand if I call your name, so I know to keep you in the queue.

Mary Jane Balasko: My name is. Mary Jane Balasko. I live in Monongalia County in West Virginia. I am here to speak in opposition to the Mid-Atlantic National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor. West Virginia's not having an energy problem--we do not need more energy. I don't believe it is the job of the federal government to stifle development in the state of West Virginia, laying claim to 63% of the land for maybe someday wanting to build a 15-story tower someplace in 12 years.

Who wants to buy property and build a house, when a 500 kV tower or even a 765 kV tower line can end up in your backyard?

I would like to tell you that this is happening to me, but I'm not supposed to talk about that. West Virginia is a major tourist area, with white water rafting, camping, skiing, biking--I could go on and on. But our mountains lose some of their grandeur with monstrous power lines crisscrossing the state in every direction.

We have a beautiful state, and we would like to keep it that way. Why should we be responsible for providing power for the East Coast, instead of placing power plants nearer to need? Why should we have to breathe the polluted air and have high rates of pulmonary disease? Why should we be expected to give up our land with little compensation for towers and lines, and might I add, electro-magnetic fields?

Why should West Virginia pay increased costs for the AC TrAIL, and then, more than likely, increase costs because of the large 765 kV line coming up the middle of the state? Why is West Virginia expected to give, give, give, until we have nothing left?

That appears to be our state--our fate in the energy arena. Our state motto is "Mountaineers Are Always Free." I would like to keep it that way, and not have the federal government controlling our land.

Thank you. I would also like to have these--

Jody Erikson: Brenda Ward, and then Alicia Neises? Neises? Are you here, Alicia?

Brenda Ward: My name is Brenda Joyce Ward. I am a citizen of the United States, and a lifelong resident of Monongalia County in West Virginia.

My idyllic lifestyle is being threatened by an irresponsible energy policy that chooses to relinquish all accountability by designating National Corridors, and then standing back to see what transpires. By stating that designation would not propose anyone to do anything, you have seemingly washed your hands of any culpability, and handed this energy policy directly to the wolves of corporate greed, also known as power companies.

Instead of letting those who stand to profit the most dictate our energy policy, I feel it is time for this Department of Energy, under this Administration, to step up and do its job. Designating Corridors without a futuristic plan is unimaginable, and will leave us drowning in the same, archaic system that has led us here today, instead of looking and moving ahead to 21st century solutions.

I have no doubt that the wolves are salivating at the lack of structure and forethought in this process. They have no need to concern themselves with the things that should be at the forefront of any energy policy--conservation, increased reliability and security, and local generation of renewable energy. They have no need, because they have been given carte blanche.

I do not believe that West Virginia is an appropriate area for Corridor designation. West Virginia, as the country's top energy producer, has certainly given enough. We have given our coal, we have given our mountaintops, and we have suffered the effects--acid mine drainage, mine subsidence, polluted air and waterways, and most importantly, West Virginia has given countless lives in the name of coal to supply this country with energy.

And now, you want us to give our land as well. I say, enough is enough. West Virginians may choose to live a simple lifestyle, but we are not simple-minded people. We can clearly see that these corridors would be yet another exploitation of our state and its people.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Following Alicia, Frances Cooley. Frances Cooley?

Alicia Neises: Thank you. My name is Alicia Neises. I have traveled from the State of Maine to address this issue today. As a landowner in West Virginia, I would like to voice my concern and outrage over the proposed Corridor of the towers.

In Maine, each community is moving toward self-sufficiency, by using wind towers and photovoltaic panels to operate our government and public buildings. Eventually, this will grow to include our residences, also.

You say--think the state of Maine, well--the State of Maine happens to be the fifth fastest growing state in the nation. And we have taken a lead, as citizens of that state, with an organization called Grow Smart. And we have formed an alliance with our government to

provide safe, efficient, renewable energy that is comfortable for everyone who lives there, and it is not violating our ecology.

My Native American heritage says that, to do no harm to the earth that will affect the next seven generations. My colonist grandfathers, who fought for our freedom, would say, we, the people, have the right to avoid in which we will and will not encounter, and changes in the name of the government that is not to our satisfaction.

We speak for the people.

Jody Erikson: Frances will be coming up. Claudia Kirkpatrick?

Frances Cooley: My name is Frances Cooley, and I live in Washington County, Pennsylvania. I thought that today I would speak for a group [inaudible] self. Today, I speak for the honeybees.

Honeybees are essential for agriculture, which is the number one industry in Pennsylvania. Most of the fruits and vegetables that we eat require pollination, and honeybees are the most common and most efficient pollinators. It takes about ten visits to an apple blossom to make that perfect round apple that we all love.

Pennsylvania rates number four nationally in apple production. Fewer or less efficient honeybees will have an adverse effect on many crops and farmers in our state, and subsequently, the consumer at the grocery store. A 1999 study by Cornell University determined that honeybees add \$14.6 billion to agriculture nationally.

Honeybees have been in the news lately, because of a new, unexplained problem called colony collapse disorder, or CCD. Scientists from many states are frantically trying to determine the cause of this collapse that resulted in the deaths of thousands of hives last fall and winter.

There are academic studies that demonstrate the adverse effects that the low frequency magnetic fields generated by power lines have on honeybees. Because bees use magnetism to orient themselves geographically with their hives, the EMFs interfere with the bees' ability to return home. Hives located under high voltage transmission lines suffer from electric shock within the hives from induced hive currents. The overall effects from these power lines are higher mortality rates and decreased honey production.

Another power line related problem is the herbicides that are used to keep the rights-of-way cleared. There are many herbicides on the market that have an effect on honeybees, to one degree or another. Some kill the bees outright--some change the pollen and nectar that is carried back to the hives, to feed the developing larvae, which in essence, causes birth defects in the new bees.

This affects the ability of the entire colony to operate normally, and compromises the hive's ability to survive. These power lines don't have to be adjacent to the hives to cause problems, because bees will travel several miles for good sources of pollen and nectar. They're also very important for the pollination in wetlands areas.

In closing, I would like to present each of you with some pure southern Washington County honey, produced by my bees. So tonight, [inaudible], thank you. Have some in your tea, or have some on your toast. And when you taste this, please think about the bees. We need them just as much as they need us.

But we have choices, and they don't. The bees are struggling. They need all the help we can give them. We shouldn't be making it more difficult for them to do their job.

I thank you, and my bees thank you.

Jody Erikson: Okay, Claudia Kirkpatrick. Joyce Sabl--is that how you say your name? S-A-B-L, Sabl, Joyce?

Claudia Kirkpatrick: My name is Claudia Kirkpatrick from Pittsburgh. I am here to speak strongly against allowing the U.S. Department of Energy to designate a National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor in southwestern Pennsylvania.

Instead of this plan, we need to provide energy plans that will safeguard our children, our grandchildren, our environment, and our history. According the "Pittsburgh Post Gazette" this past Monday, the proposed Corridor will allow the transfer of power from coal-generated plants in our region to the eastern United States.

Western Pennsylvania's power plants are already among the dirtiest in the nation. For sulfur dioxide emissions, we have four of the nation's ten dirtiest power plants. Our plants also produce among the most dangerous levels of mercury emissions in the United States. We do not need to add to the emissions burden our citizens in western Pennsylvania already face.

On the potential health risks from exposure to high voltage electric or magnetic fields, further scientific study also needs to be done. The National Environmental Policy Act requires that there be an assessment of impact on human health and the environment. And Allegheny Energy absolutely must provide the public with the necessary data to understand these impacts.

The proposed power line has enormous potential to harm human health and the environment, including the extremely important environmental, historic, scenic and cultural resources in the proposed Corridor. As responsible citizens in the 21st century, we must put the welfare of our children and grandchildren first.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Joyce? Calling Joy. And Tina Martin?

Joyce Sabl: Hello. Joy Sabl, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. And I'm going to abandon my prepared remarks, because so many people have spoken well. I want to hit a few points.

First, to all the people from West Virginia and Pennsylvania, if you skim previous comments from other hearings, you will see that the citizens of New York are with you. The citizens of Philadelphia are with you. The citizens of the entire Eastern Seaboard, by and large, agree with you.

We are not divided. This is a U.S. issue. It is not a parochial issue. It is not a regional issue. We all agree that the 21st century answer to the energy problem lies with local power generation.

Secondly, I'd like to address the way the Department has been handling the comments. Again, having skimmed previous comments, in 87 pages, you will see the statement, the summary, that several commenters supported the specification of precise boundaries for

National Corridors, so that landowners would know whether their property may be subject to the federal exercise of eminent domain.

The word eminent domain comes up one more time, showing that this is an issue, that New York State passed a statute to deny the use of eminent domain powers, which is why the City of New York's Power Authority, but not its citizens, spoke in partial support of this. Because they feel that the entire state of New York is being parochial in opposing these Corridors.

So, yes. This is entirely about people usurping your Constitutional rights, by using eminent domain. And there is absolutely no reason you have to stand for it.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson:

Tina Martin? Cheryl Piroch?

Tina Martin:

My name is Tina Martin, and I am opposed to the TrAIL. While my Washington County property is not in the path of the TrAIL, my brother, Carl Burkhardt, who resides at 138 Roberts Road, Eighty Four, is.

Here is a summary of a few of my concerns.

Number one. The "Journal of Real Estate Research," years 1992 and 2002, states, the proximity to high voltage lines is resulting in lower values for properties well in excess of 20%.

With the planning of the TrAIL, and possible eminent domain looming, my brother and many others are worried about the uncertain future of their homes.

Number two. Can the rights-of-way purchased approximately 30 years ago be used for 500 kV lines, when the concept did not exist in the '70s? One would have no--one would have to presume the sellers did not understand the meaning of these transactions, or the impacts on their property for generations to come, and sold the rights to Allegheny Power without receiving benefit of legal counsel.

On March 9th, James Haney, a Vice President of Allegheny Power wrote, the TrAIL will bring jobs to western Pennsylvania. In John [Abonichek's] testimony to the PUC, he stated, Kenney Construction, from Chicago, Illinois, will be the contractor.

In testimony to PUC by John [Abonichek], he was asked, will the use of herbicides to control vegetation pose a danger to livestock or wildlife? His response was, it should not. I emphasize the word should.

He also states, herbicides will be applied using helicopters. Should does not guarantee that diligent care will be taken, so herbicides do not seep into our land, wells, food and watershed.

For every doctor that says this should not be a problem, you can find several which will say, it will be a problem.

In testimony to the PUC by Dr. William Bailey, he was asked if there were any state or federal standards that TrAILCo must meet in regards to EMFs and health. His response was, there are no federal standards and there are no state standards in Pennsylvania.

Jody Erikson: Cheryl Piroch? Arthur Brogley?

Cheryl Piroch: My name is Cheryl Piroch, and I want to beseech you to reconsider the setting aside of so much of Pennsylvania as a Corridor. It's wrong to butcher our land and affect our health for others to have their power.

We don't want it, for the very reasons that you cite--excuse me--as reason that you need to go out of the cities and into the rural areas. Let them make their own power. What qualifies this area around here also to make the electricity for other places? Some of the power is lost in transmit, and the air quality around Pittsburgh is already rated second worst in the nation.

The cost for this proposal is huge, and we will be paying for it, in not only lower property values, higher risk of health problems, and ruination of our beautiful scenery, but we will reap absolutely no benefit. And what about the chemical spraying, through our yards where our young children play, our pastures, hayfields, and over our livestock, gardens, and water sources?

Please consider alternatives to this energy. It's not only for the Allegheny power line, but also for the entire National Interest Energy Corridor, which will allow power companies free rein to force lines on us. We may lose our home and farm that we have poured our blood, sweat and tears, hopes and dreams into, for 25 years, and hope to pass that on to our children.

Excuse me. Coal--our--excuse me, yes. Coal can be shipped from here to there, or how about burying the lines? Think of the energy savings in maintenance, the better health and landscape, no outages because of storms, no spraying in the clearing, no repair of downed power lines.

Or what about harnessing the wind power? It is being done offshore. That is much closer to the need, and much more environmentally friendly.

And what about Columbia Gas's concerns about the high voltage lines going through areas where they have existing gas lines? It could cause a danger of explosion. There are many gas wells and lines running through our area.

I say, let them make their own power. Thank you for listening, and I pray you will be led to the best decision for our state and our people.

Jody Erikson: I think we're done. I'm going to quickly, while Arthur walks up here, I have a couple of people on my pre-registered list that I don't have as being here, but I just want to make sure. Ann McCune? Faith Bjalobok? I slaughtered that one--good thing she's not here. Lisa Palma? Carl Burkhardt?

Art Brogley: Yeah, hello. My name is Art Brogley. I live in Scenery Hill, Pennsylvania. I am opposed to the current process of designating NIETCs by the federal government.

Prior to 2005, each state had the responsibility of regulating and approving projects that involved siting and construction of electric transmission lines within their borders. I believe we need to go back to that process. There are too many unanswered questions pertaining to granting approval to private companies that wish to construct long, huge transmission lines crossing state borders and moving electricity long distances in an inefficient manner.

Concerns of mine include, number one, the federal government granting the power to these private companies to exercise eminent domain on affected property owners. Number two, in an unregulated free market opposed to electricity transmission, I question the true motive of private industry deciding where these lines will be built, where they will originate, and where they will end.

I fear that possibly the first motivation is based on profits, with reliability and addressing congestion problems coming second. Is this truly the best way to solve our energy needs, by producing electricity with old, dirty 1970s technology coal-fired generation plants, and moving it long distances over long, huge transmission lines?

Pittsburgh was recently rated the second dirtiest city in the nation. This plan of increasing the output of the many current generation plants in our area, plus the newer ones being built, will only add to our pollution problems.

It appears that the long-range plan is to make our area a hub of electrical generation, with multiple large transmission lines radiating out to address the needs of those outside our area. From a Homeland Security point of view, this is scary. We become a good, single target for potentially disabling a large portion of the grid in the Eastern portion of the United States.

TrAILCo, a subsidiary of Allegheny Energy, has filed an application with the Pennsylvania PUC to grant them authority to construct a 500 kV line that will pass through Washington and Greene County, Pennsylvania. And additional approval sought is for the construction of another [inaudible] power line to pass through West Virginia and Virginia, to move electricity to the East Coast.

There are other plans in the works by utility companies in our area to possibly construct more transmission lines throughout our area. Everyone in our area needs to be concerned. If the states involved with these proposed projects deny them or fail to [inaudible] them within a year, the companies involved can seek approval from the federal government. I don't feel the federal government should have this authority.

I would just like to thank the elected officials and the many groups and organizations, the concerned citizens who realize that designating these Corridors, under the current process, is not in the best interest of the people of the United States.

I thank all those that publicly oppose this process. I urge everyone out there to contact their elected officials, [inaudible] take the opposing side, and convince them to do what's right for the country.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson:

I'm going to--I will recall those people who pre-registered, but for now, I'm going to move on to the list of folks who registered today. Debra Burnside? George Brucker? Bruckner? I'm sorry.

Debra Burnside:

Good afternoon. My name is Debra Burnside. My husband and I are lifelong residents of West Virginia, specifically, Morgantown, Monongalia County, West Virginia. We both love our land. We strive to be good stewards of the land in the hope of benefiting not only ourselves, but future generations.

We love our neighbors. We know everyone on our road by name. We love our state, West Virginia, because it is wild and wonderful.

We are opposed to the proposed National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor, and accompanying towers. We are concerned about safety risks, possible health issues, environmental damage, deterioration of property values, and higher electrical costs. We view these towers as negative to West Virginia for the sole benefit of other states.

Our dream of a quiet country home in our senior years will be marred by large towers and high voltage power lines. We only have one acre, where our home sits.

We urge you to find alternative ways to supply power to the Mid-Atlantic Area that needs it. Build it there, instead of ruining the lives of those that have worked so hard, for so many years, to have a quiet home.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Following George Bruckner, Robin Dallas. Robin, are you here?

George Bruckner: Keep an eye on me. Hello, my name is George Bruckner. I live on a 213-acre farm near Jefferson, Greene County, PA. I want to ask Mr. Meyer and Ms. Morton to please consider rescinding the Greene and Washington County part of the National Interest power lines for three reasons--I'll give you why, as I see it.

First of all, 30-plus years ago, Allegheny Power was dead wrong when they were going to build this line. It wasn't needed. If they need it now, we don't know.

Second of all--my mind went blank, but let me think. Second of all, I want to point out that when--the Allegheny Power man, I didn't catch his name, said that Washington County is growing--I believe, in the last seven years, the population went up 3,400 people. However, Fayette and Westmoreland County, other major population areas serviced by Allegheny Power, went down by the same population within 100 people. So the net gain for the three counties in seven years is 100 people. Big deal.

Third reason is a little more personal. I'd like to invite both of you and some others to get in some of these minivans and come out and look at a 200-year-old cemetery on my farm. There's a Revolutionary War vet buried there. Now, my theory is, if someone wants to rip out and go right over a cemetery, they have no respect for the dead.

I do not trust people who don't respect the dead. And I don't think you should either. I seriously invite you to come out. I'm in the phonebook.

That's all. Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Following Robin Dallas was Cinda Waldbuesser. Sorry.

Robin Dallas: I don't have a really well planned speech or anything, and I'm just here to express my concern for my fellow citizens of Maysville. Everybody's grossly uninformed. It seems that anybody that I've made aware of recently, that they're unanimously opposed to the Corridor. I think it's sad that we only have two minutes to talk, when it seems that most of the big--you know, companies, have been able to speak as much as they want, and get out as much information as they can, and we have very little time and very little information to go on.

That's about all. Thanks.

Jody Erikson: Then Bonnie Lindley.

Cinda Waldbuesser: Hi. My name is Cinda Waldbuesser, and I'm the Pennsylvania program manager for the National Parks Conservation Association, and also a resident of Philadelphia.

On behalf of our 335,000 members, the National Parks Conservation Association would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment today.

Since 1919, NPCA has been the leading voice for the American people in protecting and enhancing our national park system. The Energy Policy Act of 2005 was not intended to alter existing law with respect to energy related rights of way crossing national park service lands, which can only occur with explicit Congressional approval.

Americans take great pride in our national parks. Siting electricity transmission facilities throughout national parks or within their scenic viewsheds would be unnecessary and ill advised. Simply stated, America's national parks are not blank spots on a map on which to site electricity corridors.

Unfortunately, several companies have proposed electricity corridors that would directly damage national parks and their scenic views. For example, the New York Regional Interconnect would pass through 73 miles of upper Delaware scenic recreational rivers, and impair the very resource that park was established to protect.

Additionally, the construction of new electricity corridors within the scenic viewsheds of many other national parks could seriously damage the park resources experienced by park visitors, and the tourism-based economies of nearby community.

In addition, dozens of national park units within the draft National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor are located in unhealthy air areas. Building what are essentially enormous extension cords would simply add to the pollution burden of those parks and communities.

National parks and other protected lands should be considered off limits, and not included within the boundaries of the National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor.

Thank you for your time.

Jody Erikson: Bonnie Lindley? And Christine Robker? Robker? Christine, are you here?

Bonnie Lindley: My name is Bonnie Lindley. I represent three generations of family who have been dairy farming more than 50 years in Scenery Hill, Washington County, Pennsylvania. We oppose the designation for the following reasons.

The designation sites approximately three-quarters of the state as a Corridor. It ignores critical factories for Pennsylvania industry. We are a leader in renewable and sustainable fuels, a selling point for attracting business and industry to the Commonwealth.

Increasing the cost of energy is counter-productive to PA's interest in attracting future business.

The designation diminishes states' rights. The legislation that proposes the Corridor and the FERC process that accompanies it have virtually superseded any right of states to carefully and deliberately evaluate and determine what is in their best interest.

It would appear that the NIET designations are a back door to avoiding state level approvals. Companies could simply wait out the state filing process, knowing they can eventually appeal to the federal eminent domain.

Section 1221 of the Energy Policy Act should be repealed, and all data and needs studies should be made public.

At a time of heightened national security concerns, development of larger energy systems increases the risk of large-scale security issues. Smaller, more localized energy systems decreases the opportunity for large scale blackouts.

Before areas are designated as Corridors, environmental impact studies should be made, specific needs should be identified, and specific methods for addressing those needs should be developed.

This legislation does not address achieving balance or equity, with regard to considering the needs of one state against the rights of another. It's conceivable that Pennsylvania could be designated to produce almost all of the energy needed for surrounding states, because those states refused to produce their own.

Thanks for this opportunity.

Jody Erikson: [inaudible]? Following, Richard Yanock.

Christine Robker: I didn't check the box to speak, but I won't pass up this opportunity. I've been jotting down some things as I've been sitting there.

Question--what happens when these power plants built in the '70s, these aged power plants. What happens when their time comes and they need replaced? Who will replace them? Will they build new ones and pass that cost on to us as well?

Another thing. We've tried to get the name of the herbicide that they would use. Allegheny Power will not tell us the name of the herbicide. We'd like the MSDS on it, to look up and see what the effects are, and the name of the poison--or, chemicals that they'd like to spray in the air and on our property.

Have any environmental studies been done? How it will affect the wildlife, how it will affect the cattle, the water supply, the air quality?

And also, just in finishing, it seems that--we've had coal. We've been blessed with coal in our land that we live in. Is it right that we not only sell them and give them our coal, devalue our property, lose our property value, lose our lifestyle of living, and have to pay for it also? It seems like we're giving them everything we have, especially the coal--selling it. So why should we have to pay for it, on top of it?

It just doesn't make sense to me. Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Richard Yanock? Following Richard Yanock, James Blockinger. It is Blockinger?

Richard Yanock: Richard Yanock, South Strabane Township. Yesterday, the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, in a bipartisan effort, and recognizing the will of the citizens of Pennsylvania, voted 188 to 11 to support House Resolution 297, requesting repeal of the NIETC Corridor designation process.

Today, we're here to tell you that the failure to properly plan for Eastern Seaboard energy needs has resulted in a ridiculous process for federal intervention to save a planning process that is terribly flawed.

In the future, DOE, FERC and--may violate the principles of self-rule and self-determination by the people of Pennsylvania by providing backstop authority for a utility to proceed to take action on projects that may be expressly denied by the Public Utility Commission of Pennsylvania. The designation of a National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor has no place in legitimate law, and puts the government of the people of this state and others on a slippery slope towards unwanted and unnecessary federal controls.

The siting of power lines is a responsibility of state government, as it has always been. It is absolutely wrong to ignore the state policy--absolutely wrong to ignore the state Public Utility Commission process, and public input. It indicates a complete distrust in the Public Utility Commission and our state government to reach reasonable solutions to this issue.

Alternatives for the power lines in question have been publicly discussed and exposed--have not been publicly discussed or exposed, and may not.

Finally, to the principles of democracy and self-government. The federal government, the Department of Energy and FERC, in this instance, needs to back off, and get out of the affairs of my state.

Jody Erikson: James Blockinger? John Bozlozko?

Unidentified Speaker: Bozlozko

Jody Erikson: Bozlozko?

James Blockinger: Yes, my name is Jim Blockinger. I am from Eighty Four, Pennsylvania. We purchased our farm approximately in the early '90s, at which time we knew that there was a small right-of-way going through to put in a pole-type transmission line.

We end up finding out that there's a 430-foot right-of-way, which brings the power lines basically over our home. Splits our property right down the middle.

Now, I have sent letters to TrAILCo's counsel. They have sent back responses to me as to the chemicals that we had requested information on. They told me it was denied, that the chemicals that they were using would pose no due problems.

They also told me that the devaluation of the property was denied. There's no concrete proof that putting the tower on our property would devalue the property. OK?

I think in person that Allegheny Power is doing an end run. They're trying to pull the wool over people's eyes, and consequently, we're going to suffer from all the aggravation, the nightmare of trying to bring our lives back together to give somebody else power in another area.

Thank you.

John Bozlozko: Sir, I'd like to thank you, Dr. Meyer, and Miss Morton for being here today. My name is John Bozlozko. I'm a resident of Monongalia County. I've been a resident there all my life.

You have requested to hear our views about whether designation of National Transmission Corridors is appropriate. Our emphatic answer is no.

Informed citizens who live in the draft Mid-Atlantic Corridor are infuriated that the federal government would propose to hold their property hostage for an initial period of 12 years, and thereafter as long as transmission applications are pending before state commissions.

If these Corridors are adopted, no longer would landowners within these Corridors be free to make sound land management decisions, because of the hammer of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, and perhaps federal eminent domain, will be looming in the background.

Those in the Department of Energy and state officials who are responsible for this situation should be ashamed of themselves for not encouraging, and even advocating for citizens' participation in the Congestion Study and the concept of Corridor designation.

As evidence of the lack of citizens' knowledge and participation, I submit to you that the Governor of West Virginia was the only West Virginian to write to the Department of Energy during the public comment period for the Congestion Study. He continues to meet with Allegheny Energy representatives, but not with concerned citizens.

Also, at least 75% of the total number of comments received during the Congestion Study were from Virginia and New York citizens. I wonder if that is because Congress, and Wolf, and Hinchey were doing their jobs. Notices of the DOE--notices on the DOE website and in the Federal Register are not enough for working class citizens. These issues still attract very little state and national attention because of lack of public information.

Does government no longer have faith in citizen input? We, as citizens, expect the government officials not to get out of the way of corporate greed, but to represent us as a government of the people, by the people, and for the people.

And one other point that I would like to make that has not been brought to the attention of this group yet is that there is, as I understand it, before the House at the present time, a Bill on coal tax, or carbon tax. I'm sorry--are we going to have to pay a carbon tax on top of the charges that we're going to have to pay for transmission lines?

Jody Erikson: After Bill Pollock, James Kotcon.

Bill Pollock: Good afternoon. My name is Bill Pollock, and I live in Washington County, Pennsylvania. And this month marks my 37th year anniversary in working in the power industry, and I've worked in about every form of the power industry from design of the equipment, to running companies that own power plants, to developing coal-fired power plants, and looking at all of the energy and economic aspects of this.

And I'm strongly opposed to the National Corridor designation, because I understand exactly what this is going to do. It's going to allow the power companies to build many more large transmission lines to the east, which is going to significantly raise the power prices in western Pennsylvania, because in the current constrained state, in an unregulated market, the power constraint reduces our power prices.

So our citizens and our industries are going to greatly suffer, because we are going to be, all be paying much higher power prices, particularly in Pennsylvania, where the power is deregulated.

I've also lived 20 years on the East Coast, and I really understand the mentality of people on the East Coast. And I've led the development of coal-fired power plants with Dominion Electric, and there is no reason for this mentality. You're saying that the basis for the National Security Act is that the people on the East Coast won't allow power plants to be built. And this is not the case.

There is good reason to site and build power plants, and with the re-regulation of power in states like Virginia, Dominion Electric is looking to build power plants again. So there is no reason to build these lines to transmit power to the East Coast, because power plants will be built.

It will also reduce the cost of power on the East Coast, because they're using gas and other high cost fuels. This is going to greatly reduce their adoption of fuel cells and other distributed energy sources that should be playing a key role in meeting the power demands on the East Coast. Fuel cells, I think as you're aware, are commercially available, are highly efficient.

And another significant factor you need to consider is the effect on global warming. Each of these 500 kV lines is going to consume approximately 400 megawatts of power, which is turned into heat, which means that we will negate one 400 watt coal-fired power plant, and heat the atmosphere in transmitting power to the East Coast, which is exactly the last thing we need to do.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson:

John Levin?

James Kotcon:

My name is James Kotcon. I'm president of the West Virginia Environmental Council.

I have three points to make. First, in your presentation, you indicated among the various slides, DOE's designation of the Corridor does not indicate that transmission is the preferred option. Yet, DOE interprets their statute, according to your frequently asked questions, in such a way that an analysis of non-transmission solutions is not required.

FERC's authority is focused on approving transmission lines. If the only tool in your toolbox is a hammer, then the solution to every problem looks like a nail. And without a serious analysis and active plans for non-transmission alternatives, DOE cannot credibly conclude that the Corridor designation is necessary. And your assertions to the contrary are neither credible nor intellectually honest.

Secondly. The designation and the transmission line proposals are based on the assumption that coal-fired electricity in the Ohio Valley is cheaper than the electricity currently being produced on the East Coast. That's the real driver for the designation of these Corridors.

This is true only so long as greenhouse gas controls and a carbon tax are not imposed. Since those controls are inevitable, within the next several years, it appears quite likely that these transmission lines built now will likely not see the use proposed, and that the cost of those will still need to be repaid by the rate payers. The most expensive approach to greenhouse gas control is to build a lot of infrastructure that is never used, but still has to be paid for.

Third. If DOE chooses to designate this Corridor in spite of these reasons, I propose a boundary revision. Not in West Virginia. We do not want it, we do not need it, we do not want to pay for it, and we certainly can't afford it.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson: John Levin? April Ricci?

John Levin: Hi. Good afternoon. My name is John Levin. I'm an assistant counsel with the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission. Welcome to Pennsylvania.

We welcome the opportunity to submit written comments concerning your proposed NIETC designations, and we will do so by the due date of July 6th, or as it may be extended. Please note that nothing in my remarks is intended to relate to any case or matter or factor of law, which may be pending before the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission.

DOE and FERC have been set a difficult task by Congress. Section 1221 of the Energy Policy Act has directed you to study the national transmission grid and issue a report that may designate geographic regions that are, quote, experiencing electric energy transmission capacity constraints, or congestion that adversely affects consumers of the National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor.

Congress has also declared the factors that it considers relevant to your task. Where the economic vitality and development of the Corridor or the end markets served by the Corridor may be constrained by lack of adequate or reasonably priced electricity, where economic growth in the Corridor or the end markets served by the Corridor may be jeopardized by reliance on limited sources of energy, where diversification of supply is warranted, where the energy independence of the United States would be served by the designation, where the designation would be in the interest of the National Energy Policy, and--not or, and--where the designation would enhance national defense and Homeland Security.

In comments submitted to you in 2006, we noted that Section 1221 is a marked departure from prior law. States and state judicial systems have shouldered the principal transmission responsibilities of the nation since the advent of electric grids. Indeed, the existing 500 kV transmission backbone grid that serves Pennsylvania and the region was constructed by private utilities acting under the supervision of state siting authorities.

It is evident that Congress, in drafting Section 1221, did not intend to indiscriminately federalize the entire U.S. transmission grid, and Congress' expressed intent should carefully guide NIETC designation in a way that results in the least intrusion on traditional state siting authority, consistent with Congressional intent.

Unidentified Speaker: Thank you.

John Levin: I also would state that the initial Federal Register Notice lists--which listed each affected county included within the NIETC Corridor, included--it was--also included a somewhat imprecise map of the regions affected. When the designated Pennsylvania counties were subsequently plotted out on a map, the Pennsylvania Commission observed that two counties, Cumberland and Carbon, apparently within the draft NIETC Corridor, were not designated.

Just give me a minute, please.

Unidentified Speaker: [inaudible] Thank you.

John Levin: Thank you.

Jody Erikson: [inaudible], two minutes, [inaudible].

John Levin: You published a supplemental notice, which corrected that designation. It's not clear to us whether the error was clerical or methodological. We'd appreciate a more detailed explanation.

But regardless of the source of the error, we recommend that the written comment deadline of June 8th be extended to permit commenters and residents in those affected counties to review any issues arising out of the newly designated areas, and provide your Department with their views.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson: [inaudible]

April Ricci: Hi. My name is April Ricci. I live in Jefferson, in Greene County.

In addition to the other concerns that were mentioned here today, I am concerned about the health risks. From 1991 to 1994, my husband and I lived in a small town in Georgia.

In 1994, I gave birth to my first child--a beautiful baby girl that my husband and I had to hold in our arms and watch slowly die because of a very rare tumor that was in her heart. A tumor that was so rare that none of my doctors had every seen anything like it before.

They told me that the chances were 1 in 10 million that something like this would happen. Lucky me, huh?

I never drank. I never smoked. I never did any kind of drugs. I never so much as took a Tylenol for a headache while I was pregnant. But I did live and work near high voltage power lines.

After my daughter died, I had a genetic testing done. I also found out that it was not genetic. My neighbor and close friend, who lived two doors up from me, gave birth to a baby boy a week before me. He didn't die, but he had severe kidney and other health problems.

I now have three beautiful, healthy children. Allegheny Power wants to run these high voltage lines near my home, and my children's school. I don't want an apology from Allegheny Power ten years from now when my children develop health problems, and I certainly do not want to bury another child.

I beg you to deny Allegheny Power's proposal.

Jody Erikson: In following, I think that we'll have one more person before our break. Connie Smith?

Matthew Smuts: Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak today. I'll try to be brief.

I was actually, formerly a subcontractor to the Department of Energy for a Building America team, a company called [Ibacus] in Pittsburgh. My name is Matthew Smuts from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

The goal of the Building America program, which is a Department of Energy program, is to--is--the stated goal is towards zero energy homes. And I applaud that goal for--that the Department of Energy is pursuing that goal. And I would go further to say that the building

and extension of large-scale, centralized power plants and transmission lines, as opposed to focus on more localized production of energy and focus on renewable energy sources is a bad direction for the DOE to be going, or supporting such efforts.

I feel that this type of approach is completely outdated, in terms of what we can do and know how to do, in terms of other sort--solutions to solving our energy delivery problems.

I would also propose that alternatives--well, first of all, I guess I'd just say that energy--distributed--renewable energy sources are much more reliable than centralized energy resources, so the point about increasing national security or national energy security or national security is false.

Basically, I guess I'll just close by saying, I think we should target our efforts towards energy efficiency first and foremost, next towards renewable sources of energy, and finally, if it is determined that the transmission capacity needs to be expanded, that this authority be granted to the states as it currently is, through our--for example, the state of Pennsylvania is already working on developing solutions other than the continued expansion of outdated and antiquated energy systems.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson:

Thank you.

Connie Smith:

Hi, my name is Connie Smith, and I'm speaking on behalf of the UMWA. A local mine up in Marianna was governmentally funded as a cleanup site in the amount of \$700,000 grant from the Department of Labor to the United Mine Workers' Association. This project was designed to clean up the old mine dump, create training for jobs using heavy equipment, and creating a community park. Baseball and soccer fields, as well as parking lots, were completely roughed in on December 29, 2006.

Pavilions walk tracks, boat ramps and fishing areas were to be added to the finished site. Twenty-two of the 45 acres are already finished for process, and the remaining 23 acres has been proposed as a motocross track.

You, the DOE, contributed free of charge, maps, drawings and layouts for these fields. This is a project for our children--a constructive place for them to go, and off the streets.

Now, Allegheny Power decides to build power lines to feed other states. And these metal monsters are proposed to run straight through this site. What about our children, and our tax dollars that funded this?

Thank you.

Jody Erikson:

We'll take a quick 15-minute break, and back at 3:30.

(Break)

Jody Erikson:

Okay, folks, if you can take your seats, we've got about 35 more people to go through today. You can go ahead and take your seats. It's like herding cats.

Thank you for listening. Someone's laughing.

Folks, if we can go ahead and take your seats, that would be really great. We've got 35 people to go through, who would like to speak today.

I can yell louder. [inaudible]

Okay, our first speaker, Faith Bjalobok.

Unidentified Speaker: Bjalobok.

Jody Erikson: Bjalobok, Faith Bjalobok. Following Faith, Eric Conklin.

Hold on one second, David's still talking, and he should be listening.

Unidentified Speaker: I'm going to put an extra chair--

Jody Erikson: You ready? Go ahead, Faith.

Faith Bjalobok: My name is Faith Bjalobok, and I'm from [inaudible], and I am opposed to--

Jody Erikson: Oh, hold on one second. [inaudible]?

OK.

Faith Bjalobok: My name is Faith Bjalobok, and I'm from McMurray, Pennsylvania. I'm also a professor of philosophy.

I'm opposed to these lines on both a practical and philosophical level. In terms of the practical considerations, there is no need for southwestern Pennsylvania to generate more electricity, so we are going to suffer all the negative environmental and cultural effects from this, for no benefit to us.

On the more philosophical level, 1221 is anti-democratic. And if you allow these Corridors to go through against the opposition of all the people you see here, of all of our elected officials, you are, in effect, acting as an oligarchy. And if you allow this to happen, you are committing a grave injustice against the people of all the states that are affected.

So I highly, respectfully request that you reconsider this, and consider the interests of the American people. And there is nothing of greater value, or of more interest to us, than the protection of our basic principles of democracy.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Thanks. Before I have Eric Conklin speak, I'm just going to call a couple of people who have pre-registered, just to make sure. Ann McCune? Lisa Palma? Palma?

Unidentified Speaker: [inaudible]

Jody Erikson: Okay. We've seen--Carl Burkhardt? Are you here?

Unidentified Speaker: I'm representing him.

Jody Erikson: Oh, you are? Okay, good. [inaudible]

Jody Erikson: Okay, go ahead.

Unidentified Speaker (representing Carl Burkhardt): Hi. We just bought a place in November of last year, and we'd been looking for seven years, and we found out that they weren't going to do anything with our property at all. We get a phone call in January from Allegheny Power, stating that the major power line is coming through our property.

The lady also told my husband--I mean, my boyfriend, excuse me--that food causes cancer. Now, I thought that was very wrong to do what she did, and I don't want to look at those major power lines staring at me. There's supposed to be three of them staring right at us--one in the front, the side, and 10 acres of our wood line taken away.

And I think it's wrong, for what you guys are doing. We American people should stick together and say, no towers--forget it, because it's bull****. They can put power plants anywhere in this state. They don't need to put power lines and ruin all the farmlands here. You're going to ruin all the crops, the water, and everything else, and I don't think it's right.

And I'm very upset. It took us seven years to find this property, and now my dream is ruined again. And I was planning on having kids. Guess what? Tough--not going to happen, because of this.

And I moved from Boston to be here, and I think it's BS, what you guys are doing.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Thank you. Following Eric Conklin, Letty Butcher.

Eric Conklin: Eric Conklin, resident of Greene County, Pennsylvania, and I'd just like to say, on behalf of myself, my mother and father who can't be here, and countless others, I'm sure, that also can't be here, that I oppose the designation of the said Corridor.

One, because of its size. It seems to be haphazardly designated quickly, by the Department of Energy. And I believe it's their responsibility to explore all options of conservation, and not choose the quick and easy solution, which allow big business to conduct their business.

Also, I wanted to comment on the first slide at the opening of this presentation, relating to the Energy Conservation Act of 2005. I think the first thing says something to the effect of low cost energy, and I would encourage the Department of Energy to reevaluate the--what--define what low cost is, and to who.

And also, this slide here before us, speaks of what the designation would not do. And I, for one, am confused on what it would actually do.

Thanks.

Jody Erikson: Okay. Following Letty Butcher, George Goroncy.

Letty Butcher: Hello. My name is Letty Butcher, and I'm a resident of Preston County in West Virginia.

The International Panel on Climate Control, better known as the IPCC, met earlier this year in Thailand, and published a 36-page summary report utilizing 2,500-plus expert reviewers, 800-plus contributing editors, 450-plus lead authors, from 130-plus countries.

They issued a list of things the world economies could do to stabilize greenhouse gases, among which were rethinking how energy infrastructure is designed and operated, waste

management, and creating national incentives for mitigating energy use. As I understand it, the U.S. State Department endorsed this summary report.

I have been told that the DOE sent a representative to Thailand for this IPCC meeting. My question--does the DOE endorse this IPCC summary report? If not, then why not? If yes, then what has the DOE done to rethink how energy infrastructure is designed and operated, how to deal with waste management, and how to create national incentives to mitigate energy use? How does the DOE reconcile the IPCC findings with that of producing energy from dirty, outdated, coal-fired power plants?

On December 16, 1773, the Boston Tea Party was a protest against the British for taxation without representation. This led to the Revolutionary War and this country's independence.

As I stand here today, I feel transported back in time, 234 years, as my government threatens its people with eminent domain, devaluing their properties, and jeopardizing their financial future. Let us not forget that our country is based on a free society--of the people, for the people, and by the people.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Laurie Nicholl?

George Goroncy: Good afternoon. My name is George Goroncy. I had the privilege of speaking to you in Arlington a few weeks ago.

Since Arlington, my wife and I contacted Allegheny Power and AP TrAILS, asking about the herbicides they use--what's the name of it. So we had the MSDS, the Material Safety Data Sheet on it.

All we got was lies and deception. They claim that they're not sure what the herbicide's called, but they know it won't hurt you. Well, if you don't know what your name of it is, should you really be spraying that stuff?

It's the law that if you request an MSDS, it has to be provided to you. But Allegheny Power--they choose to ignore the law. Perhaps they feel they're above the law.

If they have to use deception just on a herbicide, perhaps this whole project is lies and deceptions. Is it really needed? Is it going to benefit the people of Pennsylvania or this country?

I think the truth of the whole matter is, it will benefit the power company. It will benefit their greed, and that's what they want, is money.

And if the guy here--from Allegheny Power is here, I would like to ask him, in front of the Department of Energy and all these witnesses, will you please send all the property owners a copy of the herbicide or herbicides, the Material Safety Data Sheets, and any subcontractors that will be applying this. So, I'm formally asking you, so you can't say you weren't asked.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Next, James Benchek?

Laurie Nicholl: My name is Laurie Nicholl, and I'm a resident of Eighty Four, Pennsylvania. My previous experience with governmental entities has been that projects develop at a snail's pace. But the NIETC designations are coming at citizens like a freight train, rolling over local and state checks and balances that usually make a democracy work.

State lawmakers enacted legislation asking federal lawmakers to repeal the portion of the Energy Act that gave this unprecedented power to the federal government, and ultimately, to for-profit power companies. But the freight train keeps moving forward.

Experts have asked why alternatives haven't been fully explored, like conservation, energy efficiency, and demand side management. But the freight train keeps moving forward.

States without congestion problems are being sacrificed for the benefit of other states, in order for cheap coal energy to be carried in, rather than having the cities and states with need generate the power near where it is needed. But the freight train keeps moving forward.

Mainstream scientists agree that carbon emissions are a chief culprit in spewing greenhouse gases into the air, worsening global warming. But the freight train keeps moving forward.

Historical, cultural and environmental treasures are standing in the path of the lines, but other than federal interests, these treasures are in jeopardy, to be lost forever. But the freight train keeps moving forward.

Children's health is being sacrificed with a wave of the hand and a quick, those studies aren't conclusive. And even if our children don't develop childhood leukemia, the world we are leaving them is heading closer and closer to ruin, with global warming threatening their very existence. But the freight train keeps moving forward.

Let's put the brakes on these destructive designations, until every alternative has been explored. Otherwise, I fear we are sending our country screaming off the tracks.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson: [inaudible]? Pat Morrow?

Jim Benchek: Hello, I'm Jim Benchek. I'm a manager in the policy department at FirstEnergy. We're a utility with area in parts of Ohio, Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

I'd like to thank the DOE for the opportunity to comment on the draft National Interest Electric Transmission Corridors. The reality of the situation is that we recognize that investment in transmission infrastructure has not been sufficient in the recent past, and as the economy expands and electric loads grow in areas that are affected by transmission congestion, the reliability of the electric system becomes increasingly at risk. And for a healthy economy, reliable electric power is a necessary ingredient.

We at FirstEnergy support the DOE's efforts in determining the draft NIETCs. We believe the methodology--that is, the study, the Congestion Study, and the conclusions were valid, and we support them. We support the overall effort.

We also support the reevaluation of the Congestion Studies every three years, as set forth by Congress and the Energy Policy Act of 2005. We believe the Department of Energy should make every endeavor to include the states in these efforts, because the states have

the ultimate siting authority. The Corridor designations provide a backstop, and that backstop's only there when the state siting processes fail.

We agree with the Department of Energy that infrastructure projects are needed to enhance reliability, and in the draft Mid-Atlantic Corridor designation, reliability fixes are needed very soon. The DOE should give strong consideration to regional transmission organizations and RTO recommended solutions. The DOE should rely on the RTO organization and transmission owner processes, to identify well-suited, cost-effective projects, and the DOE should encourage RTO involvement in concert with the states.

Well, finally, in interest of sustaining electric reliability, investment in necessary transmission projects that are needed to ensure electric reliability--these are all necessary to sustain the health of our economy.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Well, okay. Pat Morrow? Following Mr. Morrow, Edward Kensic. Did I get that right?

Pat Morrow: Hi. My name is Pat Morrow. I'm a resident of Greene County, Pennsylvania.

I was in Arlington at the DOE public input meeting, and I heard the speakers there overwhelmingly inform you that they did not want or need a National Corridor designation. It was clearly stated over and over that they, the citizens of northern Virginia, wanted to solve their own power problem needs by various 21st century solutions, i.e., conservation, efficiency, and spot intermittent generation, along with clean technologies now available and that will be available if need and demand force them to be developed or perfected.

Unfortunately, I and we are here today to also inform you, as they have done in northern Virginia, that we do not want or need this designation of National Interest Corridor for exactly the same reasons. We, the citizens, believe that 100 year old technology of coal generation and mass transmission of power is going to add to--how is it going to add to the national interest of effective and efficient energy policy?

The only interest this serves is Allegheny Power's profit margin, by allowing and depending on old, outdated technology. You are enabling Allegheny Power to take private citizens' property unchecked, to transmit dirty produced power over hundreds of miles. You will be giving the power companies the right-of-way and the right to site wherever they feel fit, usually the cheapest route, over the greater part of Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Maryland, and Virginia.

This robs us all differently, but in the same manner. It robs us of land, land use, the standard of living, property values, and private property rights. And most importantly, it robs us of the demand for alternative energy measures, because as we all know, without the demand for these measures, they will never fully be developed.

After all, the development and implementation of the new technologies is in the greatest public interest. Deny this designation and allow the 21st century solutions to develop and become reality.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson: [inaudible]? Ridout--Cynthia Ridout?

Ed Kensic: I'm Ed Kensic, from Carmichael's, the home of the bituminous coal festival, and a firm believer, if East Coast New Jersey, New York, Maryland, Virginia needs power plants, we need jobs in West Virginia and Pennsylvania. Why don't those power companies make coal mines and--you know, make--so we get more coal.

One thing I've never heard yet. Nothing's cheap in America--I mean, so is [inaudible]. If somebody wants to pull power--I mean, towers and all that--no wonder they said, are they going to pay something for the--to the property owners? If I want something on your property, I have to pay. I didn't see anything about that.

And I am a firm believer that the power companies should put a survey--not a survey, but for the farmers, for honeybees, like they could--they have a--they pay for--they should pay for like a--well, for a West Virginia and Pennsylvania, for a--like the Department--for a--agriculture, for a--if the power lines are killing the honeybees.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Cynthia Ridout? Dan Forney?

Cynthia Ridout: Hello, my name is Cynthia Ridout, and I'm from Waynesburg, Pennsylvania. I've come here today because of an issue that's a very emotional one for me. My home is directly in the path of a proposed electric transmission line in southwestern Pennsylvania.

I speak to defend that home. As you have heard today, the Public Utility Commission is currently examining the proposal for this line, and may indeed deny the proposal. This careful investigation by the PUC is the protection offered me as a citizen of Pennsylvania.

However, the looming danger of the NIETC designation is becoming my greatest fear. This fear is that private, for-profit companies view the NIETC as a carte blanche to quickly place transmission lines and reap huge profits.

I don't doubt that it is imperative to improve the transmission grid for energy in this country. I ask you to protect the rights of U.S. citizens whose lives will be adversely affected by these Corridors. I urge the DOE to find alternatives to the NIETC solution to the Eastern Seaboard's electricity needs. Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Dan Forney? Barbara Zalar? Not here? Okay, Barbara Zalar is not here. Hold on one sec, please. Rebecca Farley?

Unidentified Speaker: Foley.

Jody Erikson: Foley? Foley. Sorry.

Dan Forney: Good day. My name is Dan Forney, and I live near Marianna, Pennsylvania. This proposed line is going to go right--not over my, directly over my property, but it would be right next to it. We'll have to face one of those ugly towers in the back field.

So my great interest is, is the ugly tower sight, which will be there evidently forever, and also, health risks. Now, I've heard several mention health risks today, and I believe it's exactly so, that these--it does, electro-magnetic field will create a hazard.

And I definitely object to that. And also, it's going to devalue our land. I heard one put out a 20% figure, to how much it would devalue it. And we moved there several years ago, and

we've spent a lot of money and a lot of time improving our property, and I just don't like the idea of that line going through, and I think it should be stopped.

Also, I've mentioned the value of the land and the lifestyle, then there's going to be a cost involved. And I'm hearing that the citizens of the area will have to pay a lot on that, and I don't believe that should be so. If these people on the East Coast need electric, they should build a power plant down there, or else pay all the costs of putting it in.

So--and I haven't heard--one suggestion that I have come up with. If this line is inevitable and it's going to happen anyhow, what's the problem with burying these lines? And then, they'll deface--they'll deface the landscape, but in a short time, the grass will grow and you won't even know it's in there. And I'm quite sure, if a buried line--it won't create that electro-magnetic field quite as bad. The ground will absorb a lot of it.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Thank you. Rebecca Foley? You're Rebecca Foley? Okay, Rick Layton?

Rebecca Foley: Hello, Mr. Meyer. I talked to you last in Arlington--I took a bus down there, and twelve hours' round trip. And I'm glad you accepted our invitation to come here, to Pennsylvania, to listen to us as well. Thank you very much.

I'm a registered nurse. Back in the early 1980s, I worked in Washington D.C., and I did data collection for Agent Orange for a law firm, Ashcraft and Gerel, which is still there. And we all know what the defoliant of Agent Orange did.

I did ask AP, as other people did, to disclose their defoliant to me, and basically, I have a letter that I can show you, that in essence, tells me to kiss their butt. I'm not kissing your butt.

And I want you to know that--now I'm a registered nurse, and as a humanitarian and a conservationist, you know, I dreamed of a home in the country, a gathering place, and I got it. And I didn't get it by being rich, but by learning how to conserve. And I was forced to watch them plug my gas well on my land--that was CONSOL Coal Company--with Act 54, in 1994--allowed them to do that.

And I watched them plug the natural gas well on my land, and not only did my house, but other homes, in helpless fear--I watched as they destroyed my forest for access roads. And as each of one of the hundreds of structural cracks appeared on the [inaudible] walls of my historic home, which I put on tours that benefit college scholarships for children--you can hold your card down, please. Be generous enough to have respect for people.

Lastly, the addition to my home tilted away, and they just--they raped my land of its resources. And they spit on the face of my historic home. But they ran around laughing, with pockets filled with the gold of greed.

Now that I hear that Allegheny Power is coming across my property, where those little girls are standing--that picture right there, can we hold it up, please? They don't own an easement to my property. And I called Mr. Roberto to confirm, and I said, you do not own an easement. The attorney that owned my home before me worked very hard in fighting them 30 some years ago, when their intent was like a telephone type of pole.

And when I talked to Mr. Roberto, and I said, my easement is not for sale, he said to me, in an arrogant tone, we will just take it by eminent domain.

Now I have to watch the faces of all these people that are around you, that you don't see their pain and suffering that I, as a nurse, do have to look at. I do hear their voices. I do see their faces. None of you are seeing that.

And I feel that, in short, part of what you are doing is, it's almost like crimes against humanity. And I really feel that, as a registered nurse. They can say their defoliants, and their electro-magnetic radiation causes no harm--that they have their studies and their experts. But I'll tell you, we all know better than that.

And I have to be the one to sit and tell the people about their harm, and things that were done with Agent Orange, cigarette companies, and everything else.

Unidentified Speaker: [inaudible]

Rebecca Foley: Well, no--I just want to show you this. This is part of the pain and suffering that people deal with. Allegheny Power sent me this--471 pages, as part of their response to me, on things that I've asked about.

And I want to know, are you going to tell the people--you are part of the link of the chain that is going to allow this to happen. Are you going to stand in the faces of the people that I've shared my home with, as girls' camps and everything else, and tell them, it will be no more? Are you going to tell all the people here that you see, people that cry before you, that are begging you to please listen to them, not to allow this to happen?

Will you tell them that you were part of this, that allowed it to be?

Jody Erikson: Rick Layton?

Rebecca Foley: Will you do me one more favor, and just look at the little girls? That's my neighbor. Her name is Nicola Bella Sunshine Nicoloff. Right here. And AP, will you look at her as well? And I want you to see the tears of these people that you see here today, and please listen to them. Please.

Jody Erikson: Rick Layton? John Yesenosky? Thank you.

Rick Layton: Thank you for coming here today. We appreciate this opportunity to speak. Unfortunately, two minutes doesn't give me nearly enough time to say all the things that I would like to say up here today, so therefore, I will submit most of my issues and comments to you online.

I would ask that those questions that I submit to you, please be answered when you post them on your website.

I want to begin by talking about the process briefly. I believe it's been demonstrated here today that there absolutely is a need for additional meetings. We had someone who had to travel here all the way from Maine. There's 200,000 West Virginians who found out ten days ago that, yes, they are included in this NIET Corridor designation, and had no clue. And ten days' time isn't enough time to prepare to come here.

There's 15 million residents included in these NIET Corridor designations. I know also, the Department of Energy received a letter from 30 or 40, 50--I'm not sure how many federal Congressmen, asking you to please extend the deadline to give these people an opportunity to speak. So I am asking you formally here today that that be the first thing that you consider.

Please have additional meetings, and I would also suggest that you please--although I love this facility, it's beautiful--please site it in a location that does not require a GPS to find.

My second comment would be that, if you're truly interested in the public input, it appears to me that, based on what I've read from the previous public meetings and from what I've heard here today, from the residents and from the elected officials who represent those residents--million of those residents--they are very much opposed to this NIET Corridor designations for multiple reasons.

Those who have been speaking in favor, as you noticed, have been the for-profit utility companies. They have a job to do, there's no question. However, ultimately, what drives any business--it's the bottom line profit.

Two more comments. I have put in a Freedom of Information Act request for all the information and data used to come up with this concept, that there is a congestion issue. I've put it in over four weeks ago--I spoke to a man named Chris Morris, and I've yet to receive anything. So if there's anything that you guys can do on that, I'd appreciate your help there.

And finally, it is my stance that, of all the alternative solutions that you showed up there earlier, the one that's being considered and being pushed, it seems, is building these transmission powers, and of all those, it appears to me that that's the most damaging and also destructive of all of those.

I live 300 or 400 miles away from that area that has a problem, and I have faith that the residents, the utility commission and the power companies that live in those regions can find solutions, that doesn't require me and my family and my friends and my neighbors to have their lives completely disrupted.

So I would ask that we consider giving those people their opportunities to do what needs to be done. Thank you.

John Yesenosky:

My name is John Yesenosky. I'm from Gerard's Fort, Greene County, Pennsylvania.

Four hundred years ago, more or less, a country building up its empire called Britain issued a charter for a colony called Virginia. The land where I live, where my mother lives in Washington County, and my neighbors in West Virginia--it was all part of that colony, once upon a time. It took a little while before we became known as western Virginia, and then finally, they extended the Mason-Dixon line and gave us an identity in Pennsylvania.

But I feel kinship with all of my neighbors in West Virginia. Thank you for standing with me in opposition to this NIETC Corridor.

Four hundred years ago, again--they created a thing called the British East India Company, to exploit this new continent called North America. I view the Federal Energy Resources Commission--is that it?--I view it the same way. It's set up to exploit us. I feel like a colony--you're going to rip the energy out of our area, and ship it out east. We're going to be left with not only the spoiled banks and the coal mines, the subsidence from the long balling, the spoiled water, the spoiled air--we're now going to be spoiled in our landscape.

I urge you, please, to reconsider the alternatives to these NIETC Corridors. Conservation has the effects, conserving--we spend less electricity, we need to generate less. Put the transmission, if it's needed--relieve the congestion by putting the transmission next to the

loads. We don't have load here in southwestern Pennsylvania--the load that's here is more than adequately served.

But we can ship coal everywhere, and the railroads are already there. We're using them every day.

I hope you'll consider these factors. Thank you for your time. Goodbye.

Jody Erikson: [inaudible]. Okay.

John Hollowood: Profit-based public policy. It's not a good way to go. It sounds like we're going to let the foxes guard the chicken coop.

I don't think we're going to have any chickens left.

That's all I have to say. Thank you.

Jody Erikson: [inaudible].

Kenneth Gayman: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Kenneth Gayman. I'm highly opposed to these power lines, because it's--simply, it's going to affect me, and my way of life, and my property value.

I don't believe this should be shoved down our throats for all--profit, and everything like that, and I think there should be more people here, to acknowledge about what's going on. And when I see that--you're not very well represented. I think we are, and I think you should know what we're talking about.

If you listened to the preamble of the Constitution, We, the People--we have people that are here today speaking about these power lines, and what effect it's going to have on our lives and everything--and everything. It's the quality of our lives.

I am a veteran of the Vietnam War. I fought for the freedoms for this country, the hopes and dreams to keep these people--the hopes and dreams alive in America. And as the way it is right now, this thing, with power--shove this--profits down our throats, and for us to pay for Allegheny Power is ridiculous. It's ludicrous. And that's not counting the ecology you're destroying. The forests you're destroying. The types of chemical they use, which I know some of the chemicals they use. It's devastating. It gets in your watershed.

And they can't--none of them can sit back there and tell me it doesn't affect the human body, it doesn't affect the human animal--which it does. The transmission lines affect insects, insects vital to pollinate our crops and our vegetation, plus our fruit trees.

We are the people. I am an American. I am here--we are all--30 seconds? Thank you very much. We are all the people. We are the people. We are the America. So I think you should take into consideration and vote this down, and listen to the people.

Thank you very much.

Unidentified Speaker: Good afternoon. I'm a property owner who will be affected by this line, a concerned citizen, and a physician.

I am aware of the forum that this meeting is to discuss this NIET designation--it's not to address some of the other concerns of this line, including health concerns. And we know that those can be significant.

We know the power companies will spray toxic herbicides that will blow in our air for us to breathe, and we know that all these herbicides could pollute our water as well. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the designation, and the current proposed lines.

After researching this issue, the problem I see is that the Washington D.C. area needs more electricity. Despite what is being stated by the power companies, I don't believe that western Pennsylvania needs this line to meet its electrical needs.

I read recently that we're actually losing people here in western Pennsylvania, that the population in western Pennsylvania is declining. The fact people are leaving here, instead of moving here, to me is an indicator that our future needs may actually be less.

It's my understanding that this NIET legislation is currently under scrutiny in the House of Representatives, due in large part because it violates states' rights. Why consider us living in the state, when this legislation would allow the federal government to take over as many as 50 out of 67 counties? Where does that leave the state of Pennsylvania? With 17 counties?

The justification for this is under the guise of national interest and ultimately national security. My patients, and other citizens I talk to about this issue, react as if this is a done deal. That's because people feel powerless when it comes to big business and big money--money talks.

It unfortunately also indicates the general mistrust and cynicism in this system. Many people believe this meeting is inconsequential, that it means nothing, that you're just here to listen to us, and that you will end up doing what you want.

I hope and pray that our comments today will make a difference, that you will listen, and that you will reconsider this plan.

Thank you.

Allison Hanham: Good afternoon. My name is Allison Hanham, and I live in Greene County, Pennsylvania.

And I'm here today to express my extreme opposition to the NIETC Transmission Corridors. I've had a chance to briefly read through your National Electric Transmission Congestion Study, and it's my opinion that the proposed Mid-Atlantic Corridor is just not appropriate for this area, and that the whole idea is biased.

Your Congestion Study argues that the transmission congestion should be solved almost entirely by expanding transmission capacity from central station generation systems. In other words, our old form of electricity generation, from central power stations or power plants.

And as we know, these use coal, and are typically located hundreds of miles from where the power is needed. What concerns me most is that, it appears as though the DOE has made no effort to formulate a national energy policy that would mandate energy solutions to promote sustainability and environmental stewardship.

Instead, the proposed NIETC designation is biased towards the continued use of the power plants and the high voltage transmission lines. This is outdated, and a dirty technology. At a time when the rest of the world is working towards reducing greenhouse gases, a policy that focuses on increasing transmission capacity simply adds to the problem of global warming.

And let's face it. We are, after all, the world's biggest contributor to the greenhouse gases responsible for global warming.

So I would urge you that this draft proposal needs to be put off for at least a year, so that more study can be done. Elected officials and local residents can be educated, and have an equal say--as equal as the power companies, in such an important decision, that is--so that it will be in everyone's best interests, not just the power company.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson:

[inaudible]

Wade Smith:

Mr. Meyer and Ms. Morton, thank you for visiting us here today, listening to our comments and concerns. My name is Wade Smith. I'm a resident of Marianna, Pennsylvania, Washington County. I'm also a member of the Board of Directors of the Energy Conservation Council of Pennsylvania, a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization, helping to educate folks on energy conservation. One of our particular projects of interest is the NIETC designation, as well as the TrAIL project of Allegheny Energy.

I understand that energy policy is a complex matter. I've--and I also understand the challenges that you folks face with implementing Act--I'm sorry, Section 1221 of the 2005 Energy Policy Act. As a school board director, I was faced with implementing bad law myself, so I can sympathize with the fact that you are stuck with implementing bad law.

I had prepared some comments, but have pushed them aside, because you've asked us to limit our comments to the particular designation of a National Corridor in this general area, and its appropriateness, and where the boundaries should be drawn.

And what I'd like to hopefully convince you of, is that these particular--the concept of a large land mass corridor is a bad idea, as far as energy policy. One of the particular reasons that that's a bad idea is, it encourages--wow, that went fast.

It encourages things like the Allegheny Energy's TrAIL project, which not--does not--at least, the section in Pennsylvania, has no intention of benefiting the national interest. But because they have this concept of this corridor, they can try and get federal authority instead of relying on the Pennsylvania PUC.

Just two more things in closing. Transmission of energy through a power line is more costly than moving coal via a rail car, per BTU, per megawatt hour. It's just a bad energy policy. Energy companies pay for power plants, but utility ratepayers pay for transmission lines. And to base our energy policy on something that's paid for by the consumers and not the energy companies is also bad policy.

Thank you.

Robert Hanham:

My name is Dr. Robert Hanham, and I live in Greene County. I work in West Virginia. I'm a university professor of 34 years, and my specialty is regional economic development. So I'm coming at this primarily from a professional point of view.

I've read your Congestion Study, from start to finish, and to be honest with you, as someone who's supervised many doctoral students and Masters' students, I'm sorry to have to say, it's very shallow and intellectually lazy.

The reason I say that is, it is basically entirely premised on the past. The solution to the problem, according to this study, is to look to the past--not to the future. Now, lots of people have talked about it in different ways, but I can't believe that this study didn't put a lot more effort into investigating ways in which distributed generation systems would go a long way, if not all the way, to solving this problem.

I just cannot understand that. Because if you look at the literature, the academic literature, journals like--for example, "Electric Power Systems Research", if you look at industry journals like for example, "Power Engineering", they're all about distributed generation.

Which means, for the people back here, making generation, power generation, in places where the demand is. It's just decentralizing generation.

I don't understand how much that has been ignored in this study. It doesn't make any sense to me. Distributed generation is cheaper, it's more reliable, it's more efficient, and the list just goes on and on. If you look at the literature, you'll know that that's the case.

Finally, finally--it's fascinating, it's intriguing that if someone wants to get your attention about--if you're, let's say, Allegheny Power person, you want to get your attention of someone, he says, well, what about the blackouts, OK? What do we do about that? We have to do something drastic.

Let me quote you, from the Congressional Budget Office. The Congressional Budget Office, 2003--this is what they said.

DG facilities offer potential advantages for improving the transmission of power. Because they produce power locally for users, they aid the entire grid by reducing demand during peak times, and by minimizing congestion of power on the network, one of the causes of the 2003 blackout.

DG is the way to go.

Jody Erikson: [inaudible]. Robbie Matesic?

Donnis Headley: Hello. My name is Donnis Headley. I am resident of [Florefe] Township in Allegheny County, but a property owner in Greene County.

I think it sounds to me a little like the proverb where we all define the elephant by which part we're holding onto, so I want to give you my context very briefly.

I sympathize and I share the strong emotional opinions that have been expressed in opposition to the power lines. In addition to that, I would like--but I have a rather different, specific request of you.

That is, based on my recent degree--I'm a Masters' in Library & Information Science, in--concentrating in archives, from the University of Pittsburgh--in the course of that, pursuit of that degree, I learned that when a private company is doing the work formerly done by government operatives--in other words, when a private company is hired to, say, take a survey that formerly would have been done within the government itself--this is a technique

that has been lauded as saving the government money--the records of that private entity's work remain private property, and are not available to citizens to see.

I think that what I have heard as an undercurrent of many of these comments today is requests for more transparency. I appreciate your being here today, and having given me, among others, a chance to speak.

And my specific request of you is that you further increase the transparency of this proceeding by writing into the contract for any private contractors that are held to--that are hired to do surveys or whatever other information is gathered, please include that those--that the--all of the records should be made available to the public, that they not remain private property.

Is that clear? Thank you.

Jody Erikson: [inaudible]? Ed Legge, are you still here? Yeah.

Robbie Matesic: Good afternoon. I'm an appointed official of Greene County. I'm the Director of Economic Development.

Because the announcement of today's meeting did not state this, today I understood for the first time your rules of content for today's meeting, and our comments were to be limited to the designation of the National Corridor, and not--not to debate the merits of proposed transmission projects or non-transmission solutions to congestion problems.

But Mr. [Meyers] and Ms. Morton, please understand that the very designation of the draft NIETC has opened the door to precisely the matters that are not necessarily in the public's interest, rather, in private interest. Those comments that have been brought forth here today.

I ask that you please not dismiss any of these comments that you've heard here today, because of that. It leads us back to questioning the merits of proposed transmission projects, and wondering when non-transmission solutions to congestion problems do become the order of discussion. We do need to discuss this with you. There are far better choices.

Our comments about the AP TrAIL project are directly linked to the draft NIETC. And just a little bit ago, you heard Mr. Haney from Allegheny Power and TrAIL make that connection. He made that direct link. Please don't dismiss that, either.

I'll acknowledge that this is not perfectly black and white--that in the federal action that designates the NIETC, and in its secondary impacts, the items that are on your screen are precisely the items that are triggered. The draft NIETC has, in part, opened the door to this unless you do something to prevent it.

There's a terrible gap, and Allegheny Energy moved forward to fill that gap with the TrAIL project. The Energy Policy Act, the congestion studies that you published, the draft NIETC fail to prevent this from taking place, yet has a provision for eminent domain.

Please connect the dots, fill these gaps, require the full compliance of a National Environmental Policy Act for any federal action, which is only fair to the citizens of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and all of the United States. It's the precisely the thing an electric company would dread, if in fact the construction of new transmission would be their plan A for profits.

You have been placed in a role of significant responsibility, for you advise the Secretary of Energy, who advises the President and the Congress. And you advise on an incredibly complicated environmental and economic and global issue. And with all due respect to you, your knowledge, experience and position in electricity--for you to advise that the federal government should be promoting incentives to aggressively build transmission lines across Pennsylvania as a solution in U.S. energy policy has caused you, the Department of Energy, the Vice President, and the President a significant loss of credibility in the eyes of thousands.

We have their petitions, and the numbers across the country are growing and growing. It's just simply that you're not on bull's-eye. You may not even be on target.

I ask that you, the Secretary of Energy and the Department, rewrite the U.S. energy policy to provide hefty financial incentives that effectively reduce energy consumption, promote cleaner and more efficient technologies and energy transmission and generation, and the upgrade of those existing facilities. This is needed from you now--commanding leadership from you now, and on bull's-eye. It's essential.

And thank you for coming to southwestern Pennsylvania.

Jody Erikson: George Ratliff? George Ratliff, are you still here? Yes? No? Well, with no, I'll call you in a second. Margaret Passmore?

Ed Legge: Good afternoon. I'm Ed Legge, and I'm with the Edison Electric Institute, which represents the nation's investor-owned utilities--they generate and deliver about 75% of the electricity used by Americans today.

EEI strongly supports to the DOE's proposal to designate two National Interest Electric Transmission Corridors. The geographic areas encompassed by the designation are experiencing persistent transmission congestion. They are of long-standing concern, having been previously been identified in DOE's 2002 National Grid Study, the 2006 Congestion Study, and in other analyses completed to support state, regional and utility planning efforts.

The proposed designation served notice to all stakeholders, states and utilities, that it is well past time for them to settle on appropriate solutions to resolve the identified congestion, whether through new generation, new transmission, conservation or a combination thereof.

EEI appreciates the challenges that state siting authorities face when addressing transmission problems, whose impacts are both local and regional in nature. We support the state siting authorities, and believe that the states, typically, are the best place for decisions to be made regarding new transmission infrastructure.

However, the National Interest Corridor designations are essential for encouraging states to make timely decisions, inasmuch as the backstop siting authority of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission is available to an applicant if a state cannot or will not act, to resolve critical congestion problems identified by DOE.

EEI believes that the national needs a robust electricity grid that is reliable, efficient, and capable of delivering as much reasonably priced electricity as is needed to meet existing and future demands for electricity. The National Interest Corridor designations are important for assuring that this can be accomplished.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Thank you. Margaret Passmore? Wil Burns?

Margaret Passmore: Hi. My name is Margaret Passmore, and I live in Marianna, Pennsylvania. The Mid-Atlantic Corridor as proposed, and the very first power line proposed in Pennsylvania, will ruin the neighborhood I love and the home my husband and I have worked so hard to build.

And if you don't think this is real right now, this Corridor, I'll tell you, I passed the surveyors for the power line on my way to this meeting, even though the PUC has not yet approved this project. Clearly, Allegheny Energy is pretty confident that it will be approved one way or the other.

However, I would like to discuss the broader air quality and human health impacts of the Mid-Atlantic Corridor, and why the DOE is required by federal law to address them.

Many of the generating plants which will feed electricity to the Mid-Atlantic Corridor are the oldest and dirtiest plants in the nation. They have been in violation of the Clean Air Act for many years, and in fact, the four largest plants of Allegheny Energy are considered high priority violators of the Clean Air Act. You don't see them spending money to clean those up and fix them, do you?

These power plants emit pollutants, which cause serious and life-threatening diseases. These plants emit mercury, and mercury is a neuro-toxin. It accumulates in fish tissue. Currently Pennsylvania, like many, many other states, has a statewide fishing consumption advisory for mercury. Women and children are most vulnerable.

Another major pollutant from these power plants is particulate matter. Small particles can be inhaled and cause lung cancer, emphysema, heart disease, and other life-threatening illnesses. The American Lung Association recently found that the increased particulate pollution in the East can not only take years off your life, it can threaten your life immediately.

You are ignoring these serious and widespread human health impacts in the designations of these Corridors. This is not only dangerous--it is illegal. You are not complying with federal law. Federal law requires the DOE and other federal agencies, such as FERC, complete a programmatic environmental impact study concerning this policy. So it's the designation of these Corridors, and many federal acts like federal eminent domain, which will take some of our property, would follow up federal actions.

So like others, I'd like to thank you for coming to Pittsburgh. But I'd ask that when you guys go to bed each night, you think about our health. You think about the fact that our air is unsafe to breathe, our fish are unsafe to eat, our climate may be changing forever.

And if you don't care about the health of the people here in western PA and West Virginia, maybe consider that these acts--these impacts are regional, national and global and in nature, and they'll affect the health of you and your loved ones as well.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Wil Burns? Greg Bandel?

Wil Burns: Hi. Thanks for coming. My name is Wil Burns. I'm an attorney that represents the Energy Conservation Council of Pennsylvania.

That's a group that is made up of about 700 affected individuals and businesses that oppose the AP TrAIL. Now, the AP TrAIL is the first of four proposed lines that are going to cross over in this Mid-Atlantic Corridor that you've designated, none of which, I believe, will benefit Pennsylvania.

My client, the Energy Conservation Council, filed a protest against the first line in Pennsylvania with the PUC. Well, Pennsylvania's PUC has been around since 1937. It has a rigorous review process for these types of transmission lines.

Now, I don't think that the AP TrAIL project is going to survive that intense scrutiny that the PUC is going to give it. But now, the DOE comes and proposes this Mid-Atlantic Corridor that gives FERC the right to override our state's long and detailed and vigorous process.

Now, here's what I think might be of interest to you. This is why I think your designation is flawed, and should not proceed.

One, states historically decide eminent domain issues. I think you are overriding state's authority by issuing these Corridors that will override states' authorities.

Another thing, as Mr. Meyer said earlier today--all of these Corridors are based upon your August 2006 Congestion Study. Your August 2006 Congestion Study is legally flawed. You cannot rely upon it to designate these Corridors. If you go forward with these Corridors, you are going to be putting yourself in a position--and let me tell you what's wrong with the Congestion Study.

It didn't look at actual congestion--just financial congestion. Contrary to law, it wasn't done in conjunction with the states. It does not enhance national security. For all of those reasons, the Congestion Study is flawed, and you cannot go forward with these Corridors. It's legally unsupportable, and I'll point you to the written testimony of Maine's Kurt Adams, the Chairman of their PUC, the Pennsylvania PUC's written comments, and others that have commented.

Again, you're trying to designate a Corridor that includes 50 million people. I think that's legally unsupportable. You also--I would encourage you to comply with the FOIA requests that are before you before this comment period is over. How can you not provide the information supporting the Congestion Study that underlies all of this and then expect people to give meaningful comments?

Thank you for coming. Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Thank you. Greg Bandel? Going once--okay, we'll call you at the end. Lisa Palma? Lisa Palma? Margaret Moran? Margaret Moran? She's here? Okay, I'll call her in. Kathleen Smith? Kathleen Smith? Rachel Martin? I'm trying to get someone to follow him. Rachel Martin? James Kleissler? James Kleissler? Joe Kirk? Joe Kirk? Judith Johnsrud? Thank you. Okay.

Greg Bandel: Good afternoon. My name is Greg Bandel. And I reside in Eighty Four, Pennsylvania on a 134-acre farm that my father purchased in 1960. Our family farm is affected by these power lines, should they be put in.

I would also like to thank the DOE for giving us this opportunity to speak now.

I've seen a lot of changes in our community since then, some good and some not. When it comes to the 500 kV power lines proposed by Allegheny Energy, we do not want or need these power lines. We oppose these lines.

All we need is just a little common sense, and an immense amount of common decency, for the well-being of the many hard-working people that are opposed to these power lines, and also opposed to the NIETC designation by the federal government.

I believe that the use of the National Corridor designations are not in the best interest of the American public. If the federal government is allowed to override our state and use NIETC designations, this would allow large corporations such as Allegheny Energy to freely use eminent domain whenever and wherever they choose. And the constant mix of greed and power over money would supersede over people's lives when important decisions, such as these, are made today.

I would like everyone here to look at your neighbor sitting next to you. Someone you know--some you know. Most you don't know. It doesn't matter where you've come from, because we're here for the same reason, and that's to preserve our homes and our homeland.

No doubt, the greatest country on earth is the good old USA. We know why people from other countries die just trying to get here. It's because we are a free country.

I'm sure that there are many here today who have already fought overseas, and many who have sons and daughters fighting the war on terror, just as we speak. May God bless them.

No one should have to be fighting a war here, in their own homeland, to preserve the very homes they live in, just because of big corporations and their terror and greed. Justified Americans should not have to protect themselves while big corporation stalk them.

Americans know the price for freedom isn't cheap. However, big government should not intervene in certain important state level issues such as these. I certainly hope the respected state and federal officials, along with the people's input and help, can make an amicable decision for all.

If we don't make a difference now in our communities, what will be left for our children's children? Will they tell their children someday that their forefathers took it all away from them? Or will they proudly say their forefathers thought of them, and stood up for what is right, and stopped the madness before it was too late?

I most certainly hope it's the latter. This is our God-given homeland. Let's use it wisely. Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Thank you. [inaudible] Cliff Fordyce?

Judith Johnsrud: Thank you. Good afternoon. I am Dr. Judith Johnsrud. I am Energy Co-Chair of the Pennsylvania chapter of the Sierra Club, formerly the Chair of the Sierra Club's national energy committee.

In the merely two minutes allowed to the Pennsylvanians and the West Virginians who will be most affected by the National Corridor designation proposal, the Sierra Club urges DOE instead to abandon this entire so-called reliability project, including the ill-conceived, unnecessary, and environmentally damaging transmission corridors.

As the world, and especially the United States, barely starts to address the climate consequences of our wasteful uses of energy, DOE's proposal is based on the assumption of ongoing, endless, endless growth in electricity consumption, even though it's accompanied by increasing releases of greenhouse gases from coal-fired plants to the west of us, or radiation releases from nuclear reactors that also enter the transmission system.

Moreover, DOE proposes to expand federal government use of eminent domain to gain access to public lands as well as private takings, thereby expanding federal preemption at the expense of the sovereign states. It is wrong.

Sierra Club, instead, supports a rational energy policy based on, first, reduced reliance on fossil fuels, to reduce both CO2 emissions and coal's damage--you've heard a great deal about today, damage to human health and the environment.

Secondly, maximizing the energy efficiency of all the equipment we use. Third, rigorous energy conservation by all--industries, businesses, governments, each of us, as a societal and moral conservation ethic. We really can minimize our arrogantly wasteful uses of power if we choose to do so.

Fourth, rapidly increasing reliance on renewable energy resources, and fifth, we strongly urge decentralization of energy production, so that localities generate the amounts of electricity actually required in their communities.

I want to add that we also are supportive of our Governor's comments to Secretary Bodman on this issue.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Margaret Moran, did you come back in? Nope? Okay. And you're Cliff Fordyce, right? Fred Eames? Okay.

Cliff Fordyce: Good afternoon. My name is Cliff Fordyce. I'm a resident of Carmichael, Pennsylvania--Greene County. And I'm also president of the Energy Conservation Council of Pennsylvania.

The Energy Conservation Council is a group of thousands of citizens that are voicing their opposition to the NIETC designation, and to the Trans-Allegheny Interstate line. Pennsylvania has a strong foundation in its energy future. We have invested in generation, exploration of alternate energy resources, research, and conservation.

So why do we have 50 counties in Pennsylvania designated in this Energy Corridor? It's not for the interest of Pennsylvania. It's not for the interests of our citizens. It's not for the interest of the nation.

It is for the interest of Big Power. My fear is that Pennsylvania, especially the coal-producing power generating southwestern portion, is going to become the energy exporting capital of the nation. NIETC Corridors are not the fix for our energy problems. It is only a band-aid over a deep wound.

Research into alternate energy sources, local generation plants in the area of demand, and last but not least--serious conservation efforts by every individual, business and citizen. That is the solution to our problems. That will heal our wounds.

I have read in some of the literature and the publications--some by our government officials--that this movement is termed the "Not In My Back Yard" movement, and that we must all give in order to help national security.

Well, I am willing to give. But yes--not in my back yard, when all that stands to gain is the back pockets of Big Power.

Thank you for this opportunity.

Jody Erikson: [inaudible]? Richard Nicoloff? Richard Nicoloff? One moment--okay, great.

Fred Eames: My name is Fred Eames, and I'm here on behalf of Pepco Holdings, Inc., the parent of utility operating companies serving 1.8 million customers in Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, Virginia, and the District of Columbia.

The Department of Energy requested comment on two draft National Interest Electric Transmission Corridors. PHI comments in support of the proposed Mid-Atlantic Area National Corridor, which completely encompasses all of our service territories.

We provide electricity to the U.S. Capitol, the White House, the State Department, the FBI, and other federal entities responsible for our country's security. But whether we're serving critical federal buildings or our millions of other commercial, industrial and residential customers, one simple fact remains. At every second of every day, we must be able to provide sufficient electricity to meet demand.

We and the grid operator, PJM, plan years in advance to put energy facilities in place by the time they are needed, but some transmission lines have taken well more than a decade to build. PJM predicts reliability violations in our area as early as 2011 without major new transmission facilities. We support NIETC designation so the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission may exercise transmission siting authority if state siting approvals are withheld.

The health and safety consequences of reliability disruptions can be severe. Finding critical transmission congestion stretching from upstate New York to Washington, DC, DOE made the rational choice of proposing broad corridors, making federal siting authority available to multiple projects that are in the public interest.

As a Corridor designation is not a major federal action significantly impacting the human environment, NEPA compliance is not appropriate now, but will be if FERC's siting authority is tested.

PHI has proposed a major transmission facility to serve to Mid-Atlantic Area. While we fully intend to work with our states, designation of the Mid-Atlantic Area National Corridor ultimately may make the difference in having facilities in place in time.

PHI supports the Mid-Atlantic Corridor, and thanks the Department for its work.

Jody Erikson: Richard Nicoloff? Bryan Snyder? Brian Snyder?

Richard Nicoloff: Hi. Nice to see you again. Richard Nicoloff. I [inaudible]. I'm a property and farm owner in Greene County, Pennsylvania, along with my wife back there.

First of all, I'd like to thank you for coming to Pennsylvania, and hearing us out, if you will.

I'd like to first address the comments that were just made by the representative there, that the health and reliability results could be severe if this is not put in. Let me take you through the National Infrastructure Protection Plan, and what it involves.

In 2002, after 9/11, the National Infrastructure Protection Plan identified 17 critical infrastructures in the United States, one of them being power--or energy, if you will. Two main agencies head that particular infrastructure. One is the Department of Homeland Security; the other is the Department of Energy. And I thank you for your comments--actually, the Department of Homeland Security benefits from power also, not just the FBI. And they are responsible for the security of this nation as well.

As a critical infrastructure, energy--there's going to be 240 miles of line from here all the way to the D.C. area. Okay, that's one line. If you have five lines, then you can compound that times five. How are you going to be able to secure 240 miles of line? You're not going to be able to.

I spoke on May 1st with Alan Fleischner--he's a representative of Allegheny Power. I asked him, why don't you just bury these lines, because it will be more secure? He said, we can't bury lines--it's not feasible, and it's not cost-efficient.

Well, since that time, I've done a little studying, and I beg to differ. If you would like to look up United States Patent No. 4032708--if you want me to repeat that again, I will--it's Patent No. 4032708, which was initiated in 1975, which was originally patented in 1963, to encompass power lines in a conduit from 35,000--or, from 350,000, all the way up to 100,000 kV, to encompass these lines in conduit and be able to bury them, which dramatically reduces anything that they give off.

And also, it's more beneficial for landowners, farm owners--but it's a cost thing, once again. If you designate these areas, and you let them do what they want to do, it's not in any way going to help the security of this nation. If at any time, somebody could take out one of these towers, it's--you're going to have rolling brownouts and blackouts, and like the fellow before me, there would be serious health reliability issues that are involved.

And once again, I'd like to thank you for coming to western Pennsylvania, and thank you for the time to speak in front of you all. Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Thank you. Richard McCoy? Richard McCoy? Wade Smith, we already talked. Wade Smith, did you already speak?

Unidentified Speaker: [inaudible]

Jody Erikson: Well, I'll you guys have a second shot--I think the [inaudible] registered twice. Charles Grese? Grese? Kevin Eggleston?

Brian Snyder: I'm from Greene County, Pennsylvania. And I don't have anything written down. I work two jobs--my wife works. We have children. We have a beautiful home--great neighbors.

And this designation--the power line's going right through our properties. Right over one neighbor's house, right through our yards, the rest of us. And it's not only an inconvenience--it's a disgrace that they can just come in and do this. Well, they said, we've owned the rights-of-way for 30 years, or whatever the time is.

But when people build new homes in an area, they should come out and tell you, hey, you know what? We got--we're going to put this great big power line in. Because they sit there

and said that the--it takes years to put this into progress. So if they already knew, they should have told us. It disrupts our whole lives--every one of us in the counties, in the state, and the government.

And the guy back there that said, you know, they supply power to the FBI, CIA, whoever, you guys--it comes out of our pockets. It comes off our back. And that's what I'm saying.

This is us, and we hope that you listen to every one of us here today. I come late, and I just hope that everything that everyone's said, that you'd take everything into consideration, both sides, and we have to go with what you say.

And that's all I have to say. Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Kevin Eggleston? And then, I'm going to go through the list of folks that I called once, and see if they're--if they've re-showed up, were taking a quick break and came back. And then we'll see if people want a second round.

Kevin Eggleston: Thank you, and thanks for hearing our comments this afternoon. The main point I have is, I'm in opposition to an NIETC designation for these power lines, for one very simple reason, and we're seeing it in Greene County now.

This designation just gives free rein to Big Power to do whatever they can to turn a quick buck. And this is exactly what's happening right now. Allegheny Power has done nothing but act irresponsibly in their transactions and their dealings with the citizens of Greene and Washington County, and anywhere else that this line affects.

According to the EPA website, Allegheny Power has been non-compliant with EPA standards for the last 12 quarters, at the Hatfield's Ferry Power Station, dumping millions of pounds of pollution into the air with no regard to the health and welfare and safety of the citizens of the surrounding area.

This power line represents the same kind of policy and process. And quite frankly, this should be a decision that's left in the hands of the state, and should be judged based on how well Allegheny Power has been performing, and been a neighbor to the folks that they serve. And thus far, they've been very poor neighbors.

I'm a landowner on the TrAIL path. My wife and I just built a brand-new home, moved into it three days prior to the announcement of this power line. We have two small children. The electro-magnetic field poses a danger to my two small children, and it's one that, if this power line goes through, we're going to have to sell what we consider our American Dream and move on.

I understand the needs and the benefits of people around the country in terms of energy. But this isn't the right way to go about this, so--thank you very much for your time.

Jody Erikson: Barbara Zalar? I think you said she wasn't here anymore, right? George Ratliff? And if you know they're not here, let me know. George Ratliff? Margaret Moran? Gone? Salo Alto?

Unidentified Speaker: Salo Alto

Jody Erikson: Salo Alto? They re-wrote it.

Salo Alto: Most of the things that I wanted to talk today have been covered real well, and I marked down a few notes as I heard these things. I was an EE with AP, so I know a little bit about this.

And the first question that I ask is, what was the hurry? And another thing is, make AP prove their case. They haven't proven the case at all, when they talk about we're needing more power. If they want more power, take [Lake Glen] one and two, from [inaudible] to Lake Glen, and double the voltage on that. And we'll have all the power we need in this area.

And another question. Why does somebody from Australia own Duquesne Light?

And another question. Why have there been three owners of the power stations in AP?

Thank you for your time.

Jody Erikson: Kathleen Smith? Kathleen Smith? Rachel Martin? Rachel Martin? James Kleissler, Kleissler?

Unidentified Speaker: Gone.

Jody Erikson: Gone? Thank you. Joe Kirk? Joe Kirk? Richard McCoy? Okay--oh, one more. Charles Grese? Grese? Okay.

So those folks who'd like--would like to offer a second two minutes, for folks who are interested. So it's sort of a first-come, first-serve. So come on, and then--over there. And then just say--say your name again.

Robert Hanham: Robert Hanham. Let's get--I don't know why we just don't get right down to it. That this is all basically--I kind of know how this works for you people. You're required to do it--you've been asked to do it, because this legislation passed, OK? Energy Policy Act 2005.

Now--and I'm not a Democrat, and I'm not a Republican, so I can safely say this. Let's face it--that legislation was passed by a Republican Congress, and signed off by a Republic executive, who are very, very closely tied at the hip to the fossil fuel energy industry. It's as simple as that. And you have to do your job.

That's it.

Jody Erikson: Thank you.

Margaret Passmore: I can't understand how Allegheny Energy or--I guess it was another utility from Virginia, can think that these federal actions would not trigger an environmental policy--NEPA, National Environmental Policy Act, programmatic environmental impact study. And I think the only answer is, they're afraid of one. They're afraid for you guys to actually take a comprehensive look at the impacts of this sweeping, Mid-Atlantic Corridor, and locking us in to some of the oldest, dirtiest, power plants, for how long now? It's been 30 years--what, another 30 years until the coal runs out?

You know, and I--it just makes me angry that something that--like possible powers of federal eminent domain are not going to trigger NEPA. What's it going to take?

Jody Erikson: And was that Margaret Passmore? Is that you? OK.

Wade Smith: I'm Wade Smith, again. I was talking about the designation of the large, land-mass based Corridor, and no real requirement that the projects that apply under NIETC align themselves closely with the 2006 Congestion Study. You can have a project apply for coverage under NIETC, just like the section of Allegheny TrAIL, from 502 to Prexy, through Washington and Greene County, Pennsylvania, which has absolutely nothing to do with the demand--with the needs that were established in the 2006 study, has absolutely nothing to do with national energy policy, because it's all energy within the state of Pennsylvania.

It's not a matter of interstate commerce, because they've said that the need for that section of the line is all within the state of Pennsylvania, it's all local need, and that you can have someone like Allegheny Energy, because you have this huge, massive, land-based Corridor, you can have someone say, let's try and sneak this in, because if PUC doesn't pass it, then we also have a chance for you guys to let it go through.

And that's the problem with the huge, land-mass Corridor. If you have to have a big Corridor, which I totally disagree with, you have to closely align the projects with the needs within the Corridor, and this project clearly is not being done for a national energy need. It's being done for a profit motive for Allegheny Energy. It's clear to the layperson.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Go ahead, and just say your name again.

John Levin: John Levin, Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission. This is the part I had to leave out.

The methodology employed by your Department in designation of the Corridor, as it's been said before, it's resulted in the designation of more than three-quarters of the counties in Pennsylvania. Your methodology was to identify generation sources, identify load [sinks], and draw a box around them. And every county that was within that box was designated.

We told you on October 10th that political subdivisions have no impact on the physical flow of electricity, or the physical limitations of conductors, transformers, substations, or other infrastructure. Congress' intent here would be best carried out by making conservatively determined designations, based--targeted at actual national interest congestion, consistent with the physical laws of electric transmission. That means, not designating a geographic area, but designating a congestion interface between load and--between generation and load. That actually carries out the intent of Congress.

It's not sufficient merely to establish that transmission congestion exists. There's congestion in every grid. What Congress intended to do was to address only that serious congestion that directly affected the national interest in the interstate grid.

So we would ask that you modify your designation, to take into account actual flows. We also are concerned that you did not include in your requirement for the project being in the Corridor, that it actually crossed that boundary. That means that every project, whether it relieves any congestion or not, is--has a right to go to FERC, and you're relying on FERC's ability to separate out the wheat from the chaff.

That burdens Pennsylvania. That burdens FERC. It's not good policy. We'd ask that you reconsider it.

Thank you.

John Bozlozko: Hello again, I'm John Bozlozko. I read that one of the energy company executives indicated that this would foster head to head competition, and our state generation and transmission will be owned primarily by three corporations--American Electric Power, Allegheny Energy, and Dominion--and Virginia Power.

This is certainly, perhaps, an anti-trust situation whereby we have a monopolistic or perhaps a legal ballistic situation. One of the things that concerns me is, that there are cooperative agreements among these three companies to do what they're doing, and if that isn't collusion, then I don't know what is.

Thank you very much.

Jody Erikson: Anyone else want a second? Or does somebody want to jump up, that has something to say, that didn't get their first shot? Sir, state your name again.

Art Brogley: My name is Art Brogley--I spoke earlier. But I have a little bit of a problem from representatives from Allegheny Power, PJM, or whoever was here today speaking in this forum. I have no problem that they spoke--if they were willing to speak as a private citizen like the rest of us, that's fine. But when they come here representing their company, I feel it's inappropriate.

I asked Mr. David Meyer earlier if--during the break, and he didn't have a chance to answer my question, but I asked him, how many hours or how many meetings were held with public utility companies since this Act was created? And again, he didn't have a chance to answer the question.

I've heard figures as possibly 60-some meetings. My problem is that none of the general public was invited to these meetings, and I feel that when they have future meetings concerning public input, I think it should be left to public input. Those that want to speak as a representative of a company is fine, as long as they represent themselves as a citizen of the United States like the rest of us.

And that's basically all I wanted to make comments on. Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Great.

Wil Burns: Thanks for staying and listening to all of us. One of the things I would like you to consider--again, my name is Wil Burns--is, you should go back and look at the comments about the DOE Congestion Study, and think about fixing the Congestion Study first, before you go forward with these National Corridor designations.

Again, if the Congestion Study that underlies all of this doesn't follow the law, then you can't designate the Corridors. And I would urge you to read the written comments about your Congestion Study. Read them, and think about them seriously. Did you--did the DOE comply with the law when it came out with that Congestion Study? If it did not, you should go back and fix the Congestion Study first, then consider whether some narrowly drawn Corridors will be needed.

But if you go back and look at those comments, I think you'll see that under a legal challenge, all of this is likely to be stricken eventually, because the Congestion Study is legally flawed, so--

Again, too, I would also--since you've had this up all day, and I happen to have a laser pointer, this--I don't know that I disagree with the middle two. But unless you guys

designate at the DOE these Corridors, none of these other things can happen. So you're really setting up the first domino that can allow everything to happen.

So I think, with all due respect, this is a little disingenuous. Now, two of these bullet items, though, I want to specifically talk about.

First of all, you're not--you're saying you're not determining how the affected areas' congestion problems should be resolved. But you're designating these Corridors covering the entire [inaudible] of huge portions of states. So you are making a decision on that.

Most importantly is the fourth bullet item. You, yourself, are not complying with the federal law, NEPA, by designating these Corridors. I agree with the other speakers who have said, this is a federal action, and you need to do a programmatic EIS before these Corridors are designated. Otherwise, the designation itself does not comply with federal law.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Thank you. Before I let--I have Richard Nicoloff going second, I have Terry Simmons--hold on one second, Mr. Nicoloff. I have Terry Simmons, who [inaudible] jumped in. Terry Simmons, are you here? Come on up.

Terry Simmons: Hello, my name is Terry Simmons. I am here to ask you to reconsider the National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor designation assigned to the Allegheny TrAIL project. I am only one of the thousands of people's lives and properties that will be changed forever if this project is allowed to proceed.

I own three properties, totaling almost 13 acres, bordering the proposed Prexy substation site. If the project is allowed to be built, Allegheny Power will surround my properties on three sides with high voltage transmission lines. Some of these lines will come as close as 200 feet from some of the dwellings.

They are proposing a 500,000 and a 138,000 volt power line on the north side of my property, 238,000 volt power lines on the south side of my property, and the substation and all the 500 and 138 kV lines entering or exiting the substation on the east side of my property.

I am very concerned with the health risks, aesthetics, and property values. Two of these properties have rental houses on them, and one a commercial rental property in addition to my homestead. I fear these power lines will have a negative impact on my ability to rent these properties, thus endangering my livelihood.

No one should have to live surrounded on three sides by high voltage power lines. I ask that all other options be considered before allowing this project to go forward. Some of the questions to consider are, is the power really needed for Washington County, or is the beginning of a larger picture?

Is the Prexy substation eventually going to be a distribution center for many more high voltage lines to the northeast and beyond? Why can't power plants be built where the power is needed, instead of destroying thousands of people's lives and properties with miles of new high voltage transmission lines?

Can the existing grid be updated or added to, to supply Washington County, rather than add five new high voltage lines? It is mine, and many other people's opinion, that the states and

local governments should determine what is best for their states. I don't think the federal government should override the will of the people and/or states in determining what should be built in our back yard.

Thank you for your time, and the opportunity to speak.

Jody Erikson: [inaudible], Mr. Nicoloff [inaudible].

Richard Nicoloff : Thank you. Nice to see you again. First of all, I'd like to say thanks again for allowing me to speak for an additional two minutes, and address this young man's question here about, what is the hurry? I think the hurry is probably a year and six months of the current Administration, and they want to get this thing pushed through.

Well, I'd like to touch again on the Homeland Security issue, because that's--I'm--I have a very basic knowledge of a lot of things, but a pretty commanding knowledge of security, physical security, from being in the military.

The--I don't think that a threat assessment has ever been performed on this, on these National Corridors, or the way that the lines are going to be designed and put out. If a threat assessment has been done, has it been done by an agency that's unbiased and unaffiliated?

And I've come up with these ideas of mine of, what should the main goal of the power companies be? They should safely, securely and reliably produce electricity with undue risks propagated by the power companies. The power companies are going to force all Americans to pay for the construction of the TrAIL mines that will ultimately be the responsibility of the government to secure. And yes, we will pay again.

Are the power companies thinking ahead for the good of the people, or thinking ahead for the good of themselves, with a very lucrative return on the money citizens will invest? A full threat assessment does need to be conducted. A true estimated cost for continuous physical security of nearly 200 miles of line needs to be established, and conducted by an unbiased, unaffiliated agency.

What is the cost of alternate forms of energy being produced where it is needed, or the cost of constructing power generating facilities at the areas where the power is truly needed?

And once again, thank you for your time. And I don't know where you're going to be next, but maybe I'll be there.

Jody Erikson: Judith Johnsrud is going to speak a second time, and then Randy Francisco, and Ben Moyer.

Judith Johnsrud: Thank you. I just want to speak a moment directly to Miss Morton and Dr. Meyer. You have a very difficult job, and I believe that you have had an exceptional reception, a positive reception, from everyone who has spoken here today. They've all been very polite, even though many of them have reason to be extremely angry.

They've given you information--they have given you feeling that truly comes from the heart of all that's best in Americans. And I know that your job is to take back a summation of what you have heard. I hope that you will infuse your comments to Secretary Bodman or whoever beneath him, you will be talking to, and that you will convey the strength, the passion of the people here today, who want to protect, who want to advance the well-being of not only their own community, but the entire nation.

You have a heavy burden, and I want to hope that you will carry it out in a way that is responsible, first and foremost, to everyone who has spoken here today, and who has sat and listened and applauded.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Randy Francisco?

Randy Francisco: Hi. As both a native citizen of Pennsylvania and a member of the Sierra Club, I'm horrified about what the Department of Energy is proposing.

As a large energy generator and exporter, Pennsylvania has been making big strides towards using alternative energy sources, such as wind and solar power. These power alternatives have the capacity to produce our electricity with minimal impact on the environment.

Under these--this new proposed federal policy, states who aren't reaching capacity will be allowed to push electricity generating projects that ignore Pennsylvania's improvements. The Department of Energy will allow new electricity projects to be executed that are powered solely by burning fossil fuels.

Instead of continuing with our improvements and working with power supplies that come from clean, sustainable sources, the proposed power lines will run electricity harvested from burning dirty coal. The emissions produced from coal-fired power plants represent the largest source of carbon dioxide emissions in the world, which have been called out as the number one source of global warming.

Dirty coal plants also release heavy metals such as mercury. By burning more coal into our atmosphere, we are quite literally adding fuel to the fire, and ensuring that global warming will continue at an even more rapid pace.

As an alternative to coal, I call on the DOE to implement alternative sources, and instead, harvest wind and solar power. These alternatives will ensure that we stop blatantly destroying our planet, and instead, work towards conserving it.

In addition to the problems arising from the source of this power, I am extremely concerned and upset by the proposed locations of these new corridors. The Department of Energy has vaguely designated 50 out of Pennsylvania's 67 counties, in which to construct these power lines. These counties include locations that house wilderness reserves, private farms, and communities of people.

The passing of this proposal will allow the DOE to implant their power lines in any of these places, and seize private lands, regardless of the negative effects that that may have on people's lives, livelihood, or health.

If the Corridors run through Pennsylvania's pristine wilderness reserves, they will disrupt a unique and tranquil ecosystem that deserves to be preserved. This land, although it has been previously designated as a reserve, is just as subject to the DOE's desires as any other private land in Pennsylvania.

By allowing these dirty coal fuel powered Corridors to be implanted within our countryside, towns and national parks, we are doing a great disservice not only to the past, but to the future generations to whom we are leaving our waste. These power lines fail to abide by Pennsylvania's improved energy production sources, and don't provide any incentives for

conservation, cleaner energy, generation technologies, or reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

By imposing such Corridors, we are encouraging an outdated, dirty technology, when we should instead be replacing them with newer, smaller, green technology solutions with smaller ecological footprints.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Ben Moyer? Ben Moyer? Oh, he just signed up to speak, too. Are you back there? Okay.

Ben Moyer: Thank you. I'd like to thank the Department of Energy for the opportunity to speak about this important issue.

My name is Ben Moyer, and my family owns property along the proposed route through Greene County. We use the property primarily for recreation, admittedly--I do not live there.

I've hunted and fished on the property with my grandfather, my father, my son, for 30 years. And I will not pretend that my loss, if the line goes over our property, compares to the many people here whose families and homes and businesses lie in the path. So I'll confine my brief comments to implications for the state, and national energy policy.

I believe we are really at a critical point in history, in the choices and the decisions we make about energy in this country. The approaches we take will affect individuals, the state, the nation, and the whole globe from now on.

I don't believe that an approach that concentrates so much combustion in one region of the country, in western Pennsylvania and the Ohio Valley, and then ships it long distances to the point of demand, is a good idea. And I don't believe it's the way that it's going to benefit the future.

And once we embark on that path to that degree, it's going to be hard to back off from that. And I'm sure that many people have spoken about that, about the shortfalls of this decentralized way of doing it.

I'd like you to consider this. Pennsylvanians right now are being asked to accept wind towers on our most ecologically and aesthetically significant places, on our high ridges throughout the state. And that is going to have to be something we do. We all know the benefits of wind power.

But does it make sense to sacrifice those places, those unique and significant places, while at the same time, concentrating on this NIETC strategy that's going to ship power right past wind towers, to get to the East Coast? We're going to be sacrificing some of our most significant places, while at the same time, not gaining anything in our net use of fossil fuels and emissions. There are alternatives to this--I'm sure you've heard many of them.

I don't know if we've thought about--I don't think we should--I'm not saying we should not mine coal. I know people who make their living mining coal. They're good people, and it's important to them.

But have we thought about our targets? Can we put this coal and ship it--can we ship it by rail to the East Coast, and burn it there? At least, then, the emissions would be downwind of people, and sensitive streams, and sensitive ecological areas. It's hard for me to--I'm not

saying we should abuse the oceans, but it's hard for me to believe that the Atlantic Ocean is as sensitive as headwater streams in the Allegheny Mountains, which have had significant effects from acidification.

So I'd ask you to consider alternatives that are more decentralized, and--well, I oppose the Corridors as suggested. Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Thank you.

Rebecca Foley: Mr. Meyer and Miss Morton, I hope that the Corridor won't be designated, so that we can stop meeting like this, but--as a registered nurse, and a nurse that has worked in open heart surgeries, and also with the cigarette companies, stood before Congress and swore how their products did not cause any harm, and we all know that that's not true.

I worked in surgery, repairing the hearts, and watching patients cough up parts of their diseased lungs and everything, as the cigarette companies swore about this. With Three Mile Island, we know how--what came about that.

With Agent Orange, it is very well [document] what that defoliant has caused and the birth defects. And not only--if you go onto the Department of Veteran Affairs' website, you will see all the published literature regarding Agent Orange and the birth defects and stuff caused by that defoliant. And the ingredient in that was Dioxin. And that's one reason why I wanted AP to disclose all the defoliants they use, and everything that's in it.

There is controversy over the electro-magnetic radiation, and one thing that I haven't heard anyone speak about that is also part of that is what's called--it's what is called, positive static electricity. And there has been substantial documented research on that, and some of the studies on EMF associated with high energy transmission lines have been linked to health problems such as cancer, heart diseases, Alzheimer's disease, Lou Gehrig's disease, depression, miscarriages, stunted growth, birth defects.

And that's just in reference to humans. There are other people such as R.O. Becker and A.A. Marino, found that after a month of exposure to 60 Hz electric fields, rats exhibited hormonal and biochemical changes similar to those caused by stress. And I can go on and on with the list.

But there are documentations such--there's a horse farm in the Pocono Mountains in Pennsylvania, where--and I'm just about done--where they had a great deal of miscarriages with their horses. And this is--there is document literature on this. And after a lot of research and studies, it was found it was because of the high voltage transmission lines that went across them.

And now that I have your e-mail, Mr. Meyers, I'll send you some of this published literature on it, for you to look at. But one thing that you can't see is the psychological stress that this puts on people that are in the area. As a nurse, they talk to me often and call me, they talk to me about their jaws being so tense from the stress, that their jaws ache, and how they can't sleep at night just worrying about all of this that is about to happen to them.

And the coal companies that have taken land by eminent domain, and have put people through a great deal of stress, and the same with these towers. They're not--these people have never been compensated for psychological stress and pain and suffering, because you can't document it as well as an injury. And AP, and companies like that, are--they're just free to do what they want, and they're not held accountable for that.

So please take that in consideration with the decisions that you're making about this line this time, and we not make the same mistakes that we have many times in the past, where we don't take that into consideration.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Say your name?

Rebecca Foley: Rebecca Foley. Thank you.

Jody Erikson: [inaudible]

Pat Morrow: Hi, my name is Pat Morrow. I'm speaking to you again, and I just want to--I hope that you take everything into consideration in your decision-making. I know that you're painting with a wide brush, versus a narrow one that most people spoke about today, with the AP TrAIL, and the line that's going through Greene and Washington County.

Except that you need to bear in mind that Allegheny Power has already put it into writing and on their website that they've already applied to you for federal backstop. They're already using you. They feel they already have you in their back pocket. And they're going to go through with this line that everybody seems--is addressing to you.

That's why we keep referring to that, because it's already there. They placed it in writing, that they have applied to you, for federal backstop authority. And what everyone's afraid of, what everyone keeps talking about, and the line that we keep referring to--they're already counting on you sweeping the broad brush across the map, so that they can run this line through.

Because they know--as quite a few people have already told you, including the attorney and stuff, they'll never make it through the PUC. They'll never make it.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Thanks.

Unidentified Speaker: [inaudible] again. I want to bring up a subject that hasn't been covered, and that is ground current. That was one of my jobs, to minimize the resistance at the substation. We wanted to keep that at a minimum, because we did not want to let--electrocute anybody. We wanted to have multi-grounds, so if any one ground got opened, you might not get electrocuted.

So that's a big subject, there--ground currents. It does exist--ask dairy farmers. Ask the gas companies. It is there, and when you start talking about 550 kV, you're really talking about ground current.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Go ahead. Why don't you stop--and start, and then she'll join this [inaudible].

John Yesenosky: Oh, okay. John Yesenosky from Greene County, again. I wanted to say that the land that we all love, and particularly the region I live in and come from, has never held anything back from the country if we perceive the need to be genuine. We have given of our capital, our crops, our animals, our sons and daughters. We have given when we perceive the need to be genuine.

We do not perceive this need to be genuine, in the first place. And the second place is, I think that most of us in the room probably have an over abiding sense of cynicism after Katrina, and after the performance of federal FEMA with regard to that, as to how this process is going to work, and how open and impartial and balance it's going to be in its decision making.

Thanks again for your attention. And thanks again for coming this way.

Cheryl Piroch: Hi, Cheryl Piroch again. I have to admit that I don't know near as much about the National Corridor designation details as I could tell you about the AP line, because it directly affects my home.

But from what little I've seen, I've been jotting down some questions, and I just want to beg you to please, boil it down to common sense, and consider some of the questions that we've brought before you today.

This is so vague, that I think it's just opening a can of worms. Who's going to regulate this? Who's going to decide who's--what company is allowed to go through here? And how are we going to be compensated people if indeed this National Corridor designation goes through and companies want to use it?

How will it be protected by the government? Who will oversee the buildings of it? And--like I said, who is going to get the ability to go through with that? The company with the most power?

Jody Erikson: Thank you. Just say your name.

Mark Piroch: Oh, Mark Piroch. Like my mom said before me--

Unidentified Speaker: I can't hear you. Speak up a little.

Mark Piroch: Like my mom said before me, I don't know much about the Corridor, or anything. I just know a little bit about the line itself.

But I think that one thing that's being ruled out with this is, even though we're mentioning all of these kinds of power like windmills, and solar power, and all these things, I feel that nuclear power is still a fully viable option. I've heard people before mention the Three Mile Island incident, and I think it should be brought to their attention that that disaster, so-called, was completely contained. Nobody got hurt. It is still a viable option.

And these new technologies such as fusion, that are coming about and are being developed, cold fusion, [inaudible], by more power--it's not as clean as, say, windmills or solar power. But it is still efficient, and the waste reduced is still much less than a coal burning plant.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Thank you.

Karen Grubb: My name is Karen Grubb, and I'm on the executive committee of the Sierra Club in West Virginia. I've just been reading over the papers that I picked up outside, and it says that, the DOE emphasizes that transmission expansion is not the only possible solution, yet they do not believe that part of their role is to consider alternatives to transmission, such as non-transmission solutions, that they believe that would step on the role of the states and other entities.

So who is not--who would consider these other solutions, if not the DOE? It seems to me that DOE is promoting these electric transmission lines. There's a comment here, remarks by Secretary Bodman, that demand for electricity is growing, and will continue to do so, and that's a good thing. So I feel like the process is biased.

And I don't have a lot of--I guess, confidence in our comments being really heard, because on other issues, such as the Roadless Rule, the national forests, most of the country was in favor of the Roadless Rule, but then the government and the people in charge decided to go ahead and leave it up to the states.

Jody Erikson: Thank you. Thank you.

Pam Snyder: Pam Snyder, Greene County Commissioner, and I too want to thank you for being here today.

I think what you've heard, and what I've heard, is pretty crystal clear. The people that came forward in support of your designation are the power companies. And the people that came out in opposition today are just that--the people.

You have a unique and wonderful opportunity, as I see it as a local elected official. You have the opportunity to go back and not designate this Corridor, and restore the people's faith in their government. That is a unique opportunity that I hope you take.

And I believe Allegheny Power has a unique opportunity here today, too. To show the people in Pennsylvania and southwestern Pennsylvania that they're ready to be good neighbors, and that they're going to go back to the drawing board and do better.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson: [inaudible] Anyone want to comment [inaudible] shot at it?

What we're going to do is, we're going to take a quick five-minute break. That way [inaudible], wanted to speak, so we'll stick around. But we're going to take just a quick five-minute break, and then pop back in.

So if you want to go, thank you all so much for coming, [inaudible]. So [inaudible].

Thank you very much. We'll still be here until 6:30, so stay if you like. Otherwise we're going to hang out with you.

Jody Erikson: Okay, folks, we just had a little weather report, and it looks like there's a thunderstorm rolling in, so if you want to get to your cars, and you're thinking of taking off, they're thinking maybe now would be good. Otherwise you might get caught in the rain. A little FYI.