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MISSOURI FINDS GRAIN BELT EXPRESS BRINGS BENEFITS WHILE DENYING PROJECT

Missouri Regulators Send Red Light Signal to Future Infrastructure Investment in the Show Me State

JEFFERSON CITY (Aug. 16, 2017) – Today, the Missouri Public Service Commission (PSC) decided it is unable to grant approval of the Grain Belt Express Clean Line transmission line despite the PSC’s determination that the project is in the public interest and will benefit the State of Missouri. Today’s ruling precludes new linear infrastructure projects from being approved by the PSC without first securing road crossing permission from each county they traverse. While the decision from the PSC is disappointing to Grain Belt Express, it is devastating for Missouri workers who will be deprived of good paying local jobs and Missouri ratepayers who will lose more than \$200 million in energy savings. This decision directly impacts the many Missouri companies who stood ready to construct the line and build the components in Missouri factories.

At today’s meeting, PSC Chairman Daniel Hall stated, “Based on the evidence presented in this case, there was demand for this power in Missouri. A certain number of Missouri cities had signed up for up to 100 MW of the 500 MW, and there was evidence presented that those ratepayers in those cities were going to see significant savings to their electric bills if this line was allowed to proceed. There is substantial evidence in the record that the wind energy crossing this transmission line was going to be the lowest cost resource available. To me, this project would facilitate that worldwide trend that we’re seeing in renewables, in this region and in Missouri, and for that reason it was in the public interest to approve the line. Unfortunately because of the structure of this Commission and the legal structure in this state we were unable to act in the public interest.”

“As the PSC noted today, the Grain Belt Express Clean Line would provide substantial public benefit to Missourians by providing low-cost clean energy, new jobs, and revenues to communities across the state,” stated Michael Skelly, President of Clean Line Energy. “The PSC’s decision to deny approval of the project, despite the clear public benefits, sends a clear message that investors contemplating new infrastructure projects should not come to Missouri. Today’s ruling is inconsistent with good government and sound public policy and it is our hope that moving forward Missouri will work to remove barriers to building new critical infrastructure projects.”

Missouri’s Department of Economic Development estimated the project would create more than 1,500 jobs in the state. Grain Belt Express identified Missouri manufacturers and small businesses who are capable of construction, transportation, providing fuel, equipment and more.

“We are disappointed in the Commission’s decision, particularly with respect to the jobs that would be created for Missourians during the construction of the project. PAR Electrical Contractors was selected to construct the line, which would create opportunity for more than 600 Missouri based PAR employees,” said Steve Adams, President of PAR Electrical Contractors, Inc. “The United States has some of the best wind resources in the world, and electric transmission projects like Grain Belt Express play a critical role in delivering clean energy and economic benefits to Missouri and the rest of the country.”

Lonnie Stephenson, International President of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) said, “I am disappointed that Missouri regulators have blocked this vital infrastructure project, which would have not only created good paying jobs, but helped reduce carbon emissions and move us towards a clean energy economy. It is too important for our nation to continue to let red tape hold back our energy future.”

Grain Belt Express has a contract with more than three dozen Missouri cities to provide access to new low-cost energy, estimated to save Missourians over \$10 million annually. Today’s decision prevents the opportunity for these savings.

“The residents, businesses and industry in Columbia and across the state deserve every opportunity to have access to lower cost electricity,” stated Columbia Mayor Brian Treece. “This new court-created standard is denying our residents low-cost, clean electricity and is giving an unfortunate and clear signal to businesses and private investment to stay away from the Show Me State.”

The following companies and organizations participated in the case in support of the Grain Belt Express:

- Missouri Joint Municipal Electric Utility Commission (MJMEUC)
- Missouri Industrial Energy Consumers
- Missouri Retailers Association
- Missouri Department of Economic Development
- Walmart
- Consumers Council of Missouri
- IBEW
- Missouri AFL-CIO
- Natural Resources Defense Council
- Missouri Sierra Club
- Renew Missouri
- The Wind Coalition
- Wind on the Wires
- Infinity Wind Power

Other Missourians who have demonstrated support of building the transmission line include ratepayers, manufacturers, energy producers, business groups, organized labor, Fortune 500 companies, environmental interests and retailers.

“We will review the order in detail to determine next steps for the project,” stated Skelly. “We are currently assessing all existing authorities available to move the Grain Belt Express project forward, including but not limited to legal appeals.”

About Clean Line Energy Partners: Clean Line’s mission is to connect abundant, low-cost, renewable energy resources to areas that have a high demand for clean, reliable energy. Clean Line is developing a series of transmission projects to move renewable energy to market. For more information, please visit www.CleanLineEnergy.com.