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1	STATE OF MISSOURI
2	PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
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5	TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
6	Oral Argument
7	August 3, 2017
8	Jefferson City, Missouri Volume 20
9	
10	In the Matter of the) Application of Grain Belt)
11	Express Clean Line LLC for a) Certificate of Convenience and)
12	Necessity Authorizing it to) Construct, Own, Operate,) File No.
13 14	Control, Manage and Maintain a) EA-2016-0358 High Voltage, Direct Current) Transmission Line and an)
15	Associated Converter Station) Providing an Interconnection on)
16	the Maywood-Montgomery 345kV) Transmission Line.
17	MICHAEL BUSHMANN, Presiding,
18	REGULATORY LAW JUDGE.
19	DANIEL Y HALL, Chairman
19	STEPHEN M. STOLL,
20	WILLIAM KENNEY, SCOTT T. RUPP,
21	MAIDA J. COLEMAN, COMMISSIONERS.
22	
23	REPORTED BY:
24	KELLENE K. FEDDERSEN, CSR, RPR, CCR NO. 838
25	MIDWEST LITIGATION SERVICES

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1	PROCEEDINGS
2	(WHEREUPON, the oral argument began
3	at 10:03 a.m.)
4	JUDGE BUSHMANN: Good morning. Let's
5	go on the record. Today is August 3rd, 2017. It's
6	a little bit after ten o'clock in the morning. The
7	Commission has set this time for oral arguments in
8	the matter of the application of Grain Belt Express
9	Clean Line, LLC for a certificate of convenience
10	and necessity authorizing it to construct, own,
11	operate, control, manage and maintain the high
12	voltage, direct current transmission line and an
13	associated converter station providing an
14	interconnection on the Maywood-Montgomery 345kv
15	transmission line. That file number is
16	EA-2016-0358.
17	My name is Michael Bushmann. I'm the
18	Regulatory Law Judge today. We're going to have
19	counsel for the parties make their entries of
20	appearance. Only parties that have submitted a
21	supplemental brief are entitled to appear and argue
22	today, so I'll only be calling those parties to
23	save time.
24	Appearing for Grain Belt Express
25	Clean Line, LLC?

MR. ZOBRIST: Karl Zobrist and 1 Jacqueline Whipple, Dentons US LLP, 4520 Main 2 3 Street, Kansas City, Missouri. 4 JUDGE BUSHMANN: For Commission 5 Staff? 6 MR. WILLIAMS: Nathan Williams, 7 Deputy Staff Counsel, P.O. Box 360, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102. 9 JUDGE BUSHMANN: Missouri Landowners Alliance? 10 11 MR. AGATHEN: Paul Agathen, 485 Oak 12. Field Court, Washington, Missouri. 13 JUDGE BUSHMANN: Show-Me Concerned 14 Landowners? 15 MR. LINTON: David Linton, 16 314 Romaine Spring View, Fenton, Missouri 63026. 17 JUDGE BUSHMANN: Missouri Joint Municipal Electric Utility Commission? 18 19 MS. P. WHIPPLE: Peggy Whipple and 20 Doug Healy, Healy Law Offices, 3010 East 21 Battlefield, Springfield, Missouri. 22 JUDGE BUSHMANN: And for convenience 23 I'm going to refer to you by your acronym today. 24 MS. WHIPPLE: We embrace it. 25 JUDGE BUSHMANN: Sierra Club?

1 MR. ROBERTSON: For Sierra Club, NRDC, Renew Missouri, IBEW unions, Wind on the 2 3 Wires and the Wind Coalition, Henry Robertson, 4 Great Rivers Environmental Law Center, 319 North 5 4th Street, Suite 800, St. Louis, Missouri 63102. 6 JUDGE BUSHMANN: You'll be the only 7 one arguing on behalf of those parties today? 8 MR. ROBERTSON: Yes. 9 THE COURT: Thank you. I'd like to 10 remind people in the audience to please silence all 11 cell phones and mobile devices. 12 A quick note about scheduling. The 13 Commission has a public agenda today at noon. 14 if we aren't finished by then, we'll need to break 15 a few minutes before noon so that they can attend 16 their meeting, and then we'll come back afterwards, probably about one o'clock. If we need to finish 17 18 up, we can do it at that time. 19 Also, as a preliminary matter, 20 Mr. Agathen, you had filed a notice of intent that 2.1 you wanted to offer some four additional exhibits; 2.2 is that correct? 23 MR. AGATHEN: That's correct, your 24 Honor. 25 JUDGE BUSHMANN: Could you identify

- 1 those for the record? I assume that you passed out
- 2 copies to counsel?
- 3 MR. AGATHEN: I have passed out
- 4 copies to counsel and a copy also to the court
- 5 reporter.
- 6 JUDGE BUSHMANN: Could you identify
- 7 those for the record, please?
- 8 MR. AGATHEN: Yes. The four
- 9 exhibits, the first one is the Report and Order of
- 10 April 27, 2016 in Case No. EA-2015-0146. That's
- 11 the ATXI case. The second --
- 12 JUDGE BUSHMANN: And that was
- 13 Exhibit 375 you marked?
- MR. AGATHEN: Yes. Thank you, your
- 15 Honor. The second is the cover page, page 2 and
- 16 pages 59 to 74 of ATXI's Initial Post-Hearing Brief
- in that case, in the ATXI case, filed March 4,
- 18 2016, EFIS No. 266, and that is Exhibit -- you
- 19 probably have it up there, your Honor.
- JUDGE BUSHMANN: That's 376.
- 21 MR. AGATHEN: 376. The third one is
- the cover page, page 4 and pages 15 to 25 of the
- 23 Brief of Respondent Ameren Transmission Company,
- 24 that's ATXI, filed on January 6, 2017 in the appeal
- of the ATXI order from the Commission in Case

- 1 No. WD79883 of the Western District of Missouri
- 2 Court of Appeals, and that's been marked as
- 3 Exhibit No. 377.
- 4 And then the last of the four is the
- 5 cover page and pages 16 to 23 of the Brief of
- 6 Respondent Public Service Commission filed on
- 7 January 20 -- January 6, 2017 in the same case
- 8 identified in the previous item, and that would be
- 9 Exhibit 378.
- 10 JUDGE BUSHMANN: There were some
- 11 objections that were filed in writing.
- 12 Mr. Zobrist, you had filed a written objection.
- 13 Did you want to, to save time, incorporate what you
- 14 put in writing into this?
- 15 MR. ZOBRIST: That's fine, Judge.
- 16 Our major objection is that they're not relevant to
- 17 this proceeding. It's another case. The other
- 18 thing I would point out is that the Commission
- 19 actually vacated its Order, the Report and Order on
- 20 July 20th. So I'm not sure what the status of that
- 21 is, but certainly as part of the Commission's
- 22 records, that it has no effect at this point.
- JUDGE BUSHMANN: And Ms. Peggy
- 24 Whipple, you had some written objections also. Did
- 25 you want to incorporate those here?

1 MS. P. WHIPPLE: Yes, please, Judge. We filed written objections last Friday, on the 2 3 28th of July. We would like to incorporate them. 4 The primary objection, of course, is -- the 5 substantive objection is due process. As an intervener in this case, we have had no and will 6 7 never have any opportunity to meet these exhibits, to rebut them as the law of evidence does protect 9 our due process right. 10 Our secondary objection is 11 procedural. The first document, the Report and 12 Order is already a matter, it has to be, a matter 13 of the record of appeal in the ATXI case because it 14 was required to be attached to the notice of 15 appeal, and the other documents are all barred by 16 the rules of procedure in Missouri from being 17 included in a record on appeal. So that would be our procedural objection. 18 19 JUDGE BUSHMANN: Any other parties 20 want to make any objections to these exhibits? 2.1 (No response.) 22 JUDGE BUSHMANN: I'm going to 23 overrule the objections. Under Commission rule 4 CSR 240-2.150, section 1, the record is still 24 25 open because oral arguments have not yet occurred.

The Commission would be entitled to take official 1 notice of the two documents from the Commission 2. 3 case anyway since the Commission can take official 4 notice of its own records. So Exhibits 375 through 5 378 will be received. (MISSOURI LANDOWNERS ALLIANCE 6 7 EXHIBITS 375 - 378 WERE MARKED AND RECEIVED INTO 8 EVIDENCE.) 9 Thank you, Judge. MR. AGATHEN: 10 JUDGE BUSHMANN: Any other 11 preliminary matters that parties would like to 12 bring up before we get started? 13 Hearing none, let's go to oral 14 arguments by the parties. The attorney for each 15 party will be called to come forward and speak to 16 the Commission, with questions to follow. 17 take arguments in the same order as we did in opening statements in the evidentiary hearing. 18 19 First would be Grain Belt Express. 20 Thank you, Judge. MR. ZOBRIST: May 2.1 it please the Commission? 22 We appreciate the opportunity to 23 speak with you this morning about the effect of the Court of Appeals opinion in Neighbors United on 24 25 this case as well as with regard to our motion for

- 1 waiver and MLA's motion to dismiss. I also want to
- 2 thank the Commission for rescheduling the oral
- 3 argument to accommodate my personal family needs,
- 4 and I thank Mr. Agathen and Mr. Linton,
- 5 Mr. Williams and Ms. Whipple and Mr. Healy for
- 6 consenting to that.
- 7 I'm pleased to have this opportunity
- 8 to present the position of Grain Belt Express
- 9 because we believe there is a clear path for you to
- 10 grant the line certificate of convenience and
- 11 necessity, the CCN, as requested by this
- 12 application that is entirely consistent with the
- 13 court's opinion.
- 14 And I've provided to the Bench as
- 15 well as to parties a short slide deck of five
- 16 slides that are going to govern my comments as I go
- 17 through them this morning.
- 18 Your decision in this case is very
- 19 important. It is, of course, critical to Grain
- 20 Belt Express, but it goes beyond that because your
- 21 decision in this case could have far-reaching
- 22 implications for other applicants who seek a line
- 23 CCN. If you agree with our opponents and Staff,
- 24 for example, it would mean the CCN that you granted
- 25 to IES Utilities back in 2002 to build a

transmission line in northeast Missouri is illegal. 1 It would mean that the CCN that you granted to 2. Transource Missouri just five years ago in 2013 to 3 4 build two projects in this state, the Iatan-Sibley 5 project in Clay County and Platte County and the interstate project, the Sibley-Nebraska City 6 7 transmission line, both of which are completed, it would make that CCN illegal. 9 Agreeing with our opponents and with 10 Staff in this case would improperly restrict your 11 jurisdiction over the construction of 12 infrastructure projects under Section 393.170.1, 13 and that's the section that we're going to be 14 focusing on today is subsection 1 of that statute. 15 If their positions were accepted, it 16 would elevate county commissions exercising their 17 proper authority under Chapter 229, which is the chapter relating to provisions relating to all 18 19 roads, so a road chapter and a road crossing statute under 229.100, to a degree never 20 21 contemplated by law. 22 According to Staff and MLA, this 23 would create a Checkpoint Charlie where anyone coming before this Commission would have to obtain 24 25 all these county road crossing consents before you

- 1 could make your jurisdictional determination under
- 2 subsection 1. So an applicant would have to have a
- 3 green light in this case from all eight counties
- 4 before you could even make a decision with regard
- 5 to the CCN. This would mean in this case as few as
- 6 two county commissioners would have the power to
- 7 block you from exercising your authority under
- 8 subsection 1.
- 9 So if you fail to affirm your
- 10 authority to grant a line CCN under 393.170 and you
- 11 fail to declare why your actions are consistent
- 12 with what the Court of Appeals said in Neighbors
- 13 United, you would be giving up, voluntarily
- 14 relinquishing the jurisdiction granted to you by
- 15 the General Assembly, and its ramifications for the
- 16 Commission, for public utilities and for the people
- 17 of Missouri could be significant.
- 18 So there is a path forward, we
- 19 believe, that is consistent with the Neighbors
- 20 United case. And on page 1 of our slide deck I've
- 21 set forth the decision points that we think the
- 22 Commission should undertake, and the first one is
- 23 simply to issue a line CCN to Grain Belt Express
- 24 under subsection 1, and third is to grant a waiver
- 25 of the PSC rule which requires, very broadly, and

- 1 we think beyond the authority under subsection 1,
- 2 that all governmental consents have to be provided
- 3 before you can issue a CCN. And you've got the
- 4 power, you've had the power for years to waive
- 5 those requirements.
- 6 CHAIRMAN HALL: Let me stop you there
- 7 for a second, Mr. Zobrist. Do you believe that our
- 8 rule conflicts with the statute?
- 9 MR. ZOBRIST: I think it goes beyond
- 10 the statute.
- 11 CHAIRMAN HALL: I understand that.
- 12 So you do not believe it conflicts?
- MR. ZOBRIST: Well, it conflicts in
- 14 the sense that there is no prerequisite, as there
- 15 is in subsection 2, to receive the mandatory
- 16 consent of the proper municipal authorities.
- 17 CHAIRMAN HALL: But is there an
- 18 argument that it conflicts with the statute such
- 19 that we should not follow it here?
- 20 MR. ZOBRIST: You have the power to
- 21 waive it, and I think that you should waive it in
- 22 this case because we have presented good cause, and
- 23 I'd be glad to talk about that right now, Chairman,
- 24 or later on.
- 25 CHAIRMAN HALL: I'll let you continue

- 1 your presentation.
- 2 MR. ZOBRIST: It simply is not
- 3 required in this case. It's not required under a
- 4 line CCN. We understand why it may be required
- 5 under subsection 2, area certificates, because we
- 6 have the language about the required consent of the
- 7 proper municipal authorities.
- 8 We do provide an alternative in
- 9 Section 5, I believe it is, of our brief that I'm
- 10 going to talk about at the end of my presentation
- 11 where we think there is a path forward for you. If
- 12 you give an overly broad reading to Neighbors
- 13 United, which we don't think is necessary and we
- 14 actually think is improper, we think there is an
- 15 alternative where you can issue a Report and Order
- 16 with findings of fact and conclusions of law on
- 17 everything but withhold issuing a line CCN until
- 18 the governmental approvals are provided.
- We don't think Neighbors United
- 20 requires that, we don't think subsection 1 requires
- 21 that, but we think that is available to you if you
- 22 give an unduly broad reading to the Neighbors
- 23 United case.
- So if we could move on to slide 2,
- 25 which is simply the statute, and I've got three

- 1 important points that I want to make here. The
- 2 boxed section, subsection 1, is the line authority
- 3 that Grain Belt Express seeks from this Commission.
- 4 That is the only subsection under which we are
- 5 requesting a certificate.
- 6 Subsection 2 is the area certificate.
- 7 This is the subsection that requires the consent of
- 8 the proper municipal authorities, which I've
- 9 underscored or should be underscored in the last
- 10 line of subsection 2.
- 11 Subsection 2 deals with retail
- 12 service serving the public. So it makes absolute
- 13 sense about why you would be required to receive
- 14 before issuing a CCN the proper consent of
- 15 municipal authorities. There is no mandate to
- 16 receive any kind of government approval under
- 17 subsection 1.
- 18 Importantly, in subsection 3, these
- 19 two concepts, the line concept or the construction
- 20 concept under subsection 1 and the area serving the
- 21 public under a franchise in subsection 2 are
- 22 recognized, and our opponents don't want to talk
- 23 about that or at least they don't mention it.
- Let me, if I can, just take a moment
- 25 to read that sentence. It's the first sentence of

- 1 subsection 3. It says, the Commission shall have
- 2 the power to grant the permission and approval
- 3 herein specified whenever it shall after due
- 4 hearing determine that such construction, that's
- 5 subsection 1, or, or in the alternative such
- 6 exercise of the right, privilege or franchise,
- 7 subsection 2, is necessary or convenient for the
- 8 public service.
- 9 Those two concepts, the construction
- 10 under subsection 1 and the exercise of the right,
- 11 privilege or franchise under subsection 2, have
- 12 been in this statute since 1913, although, as we
- 13 pointed out in our brief, in 1949 and '50 the
- 14 statute was broken into these three parts. Those
- 15 two concepts have always been recognized in that
- 16 sentence, construction, which is now point 1, the
- 17 exercise of the right, privilege or franchise under
- 18 subsection 2.
- Now, let's go on, if we might, to the
- 20 language in Neighbors United, and the next three
- 21 slides have what Grain Belt Express believes are
- 22 the two critical paragraphs that give you this path
- 23 forward to issue a line CCN in this case.
- Now, the first paragraph is on
- 25 slide 2, and this is the heart of the Neighbors

- 1 United case. The court there talked about only two
- 2 subsections of 393.170. They talked about the
- 3 general language of subsection 3, which as they
- 4 state in the first sentence in slide 3, it
- 5 authorize PSC to impose reasonable and necessary
- 6 conditions on a CCN.
- 7 It contrasts subsection 3 with
- 8 subsection 2, the area certificate, the certificate
- 9 you have to have if you're going to serve a
- 10 territory and serve the public, and says, however,
- 11 the specific language of 393.170.2 states that
- 12 evidence of the county commission shall be on file
- 13 before the PSC grants a CCN.
- 14 That's not exactly what it says. It
- 15 talks about providing the consent of municipal
- 16 authorities. But the important point is the Court
- of Appeals is referring to subsection 2.
- 18 And then they go on to say, under
- 19 this rule, the general provision of point 3 gives
- 20 way to the more specific and mandatory language of
- 21 point 2, which has the shall language. Neighbors
- 22 United in this case, that court did not talk about
- 23 subsection 1.
- Now, if we could move on to slide 4.
- 25 Slide 4 is the -- are the first three sentences of

- 1 the next paragraph that summarize what the court
- 2 first said about it, and they say, to construe this
- 3 statute otherwise would render the language of
- 4 point 2 meaningless by allowing the Commission to
- 5 grant a CCN without having received the required
- 6 documentation. And they cite a case that talks
- 7 about harmonizing statutes. We all learned that in
- 8 law school.
- 9 And then the last sentence states,
- 10 our harmonization of the statute preserves the
- 11 integrity of both subsections of 393.170. What two
- 12 subsections? Not point 1. Point 1 is never
- discussed in the opinion. It's point 2 and point 3
- 14 which are discussed in the prior paragraph.
- 15 Those critical sentences are omitted
- 16 I know from Staff's brief, and I don't believe that
- 17 MLA or Show-Me want to talk about this either.
- 18 The rest of the paragraph is on
- 19 slide 5, and in the context of those prior two
- 20 slides, that is what must be understood when you
- 21 read that middle paragraph that our opponents put
- that say, accordingly, county commission assents
- 23 required by Section 229.100 and your regulations
- 24 must be submitted to the PSC before the PSC grants
- 25 a CCN. They're not talking about a line CCN and

- 1 they're not talking about subsection 1, and that is
- 2 what gives you the path forward that we summarize
- 3 on page 6 of this slide deck.
- 4 We urge you to issue a Report and
- 5 Order in this case that explains the purpose of a
- 6 line certificate, to offer construction, to approve
- 7 construction of a project, which is what Grain Belt
- 8 Express has requested, and explain the differences
- 9 as you have in other cases and as the Court of
- 10 Appeals have done in numerous cases between
- 11 subsection 1, line certificates, subsection 2, area
- 12 certificates to serve the public, and emphasize
- that subsection 1 doesn't have the language that
- 14 subsection 2 has about providing the required
- 15 consents of municipal authorities.
- Now, we have no problem with the
- 17 Commission noting that there are independent
- 18 statutory and regulatory obligations upon Grain
- 19 Belt Express to comply with. Section 229.100 is
- 20 one of them. We understand that in order to erect
- 21 poles and string wires across county roads --
- 22 that's all it deals with is county roads -- that we
- 23 have to have their permission. But we also
- 24 understand that there are probably permits that we
- 25 need to receive from the Department of Natural

- 1 Resources with regard to watersheds. If we cross
- 2 state highways, there are probably permits we need
- 3 to obtain from MoDOT. But those are independent
- 4 obligations and they don't have anything to do with
- 5 your regulatory authority and your ability to issue
- 6 a line CCN under subsection 1.
- 7 We believe that good cause exists to
- 8 grant a waiver of the regulation that the Chairman
- 9 mentioned for a number of reasons. First of all,
- 10 there's nothing in subsection 1 that tells us we
- 11 have to submit those governmental consents.
- 12 Two, there would be no harm to the
- 13 public because the project can't go forward unless
- 14 we get these regulatory consents from the counties,
- 15 from DNR, from MoDOT, if we cross an interstate
- 16 highway probably U.S. Department of Transportation,
- 17 surely crossing the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers
- 18 from the Corps of Engineers. The public will not
- 19 be harmed by your not incorporating these as a
- 20 filing requirement.
- 21 And Commission precedent for many
- 22 years has allowed the provision of these government
- 23 approvals prior to construction. You did this in
- 24 2016 when you approved Ameren Missouri's solar
- 25 pilot program in 2016. We cite this in our brief.

- 1 You said as long as these approvals are submitted
- 2 prior to construction beginning, there's not a
- 3 problem.
- 4 That was also the attitude taken by
- 5 implication in the Transcourse Missouri case in
- 6 2013 and in the IES Utilities case, 2002. No
- 7 mention of county consents or other governmental
- 8 approvals. Those are independent requirements.
- 9 It's perhaps not most important but
- 10 it's -- it's interesting that the county
- 11 commissions have told you -- and this is in
- 12 Mr. Lowenstein's, I believe it's Schedule 4 to his
- 13 rebuttal testimony, Exhibit 300 -- that when
- 14 several of the county commissions purported to
- 15 rescind or at least advise you that they were
- 16 unsure if they had acted properly, they said we've
- 17 acted prematurely, we think, because we haven't
- 18 heard from you, and so we're either putting our
- 19 permission on hold or we're attempting to rescind
- 20 it because we want to hear from the Public Service
- 21 Commission about what you think are the merits of
- 22 this project.
- 23 And, in fact, if you remember
- 24 Mr. Wilcox' testimony when he was on the stand, he
- 25 talked about -- he was cross-examined, I believe,

- 1 by either Mr. Agathen or perhaps it was Staff, and
- 2 these -- these letters are in your public comments.
- 3 Two of the Randolph County Commissioners have
- 4 stated, if you look at the bottom line, we think
- 5 that our decision to grant such authority was
- 6 premature and that Grain Belt Express cannot be
- 7 granted authority by the Randolph County Commission
- 8 until such time as Grain Belt Express Clean Line,
- 9 LLC has utility status, receiving the official
- 10 approval of the Missouri Public Service Commission.
- 11 So we're caught in a Catch 22 right
- 12 now. We've got our opponents under their
- interpretation of the Neighbors United case saying,
- 14 well, you've got to have all this stuff before you
- and you've got to supply it to the Commission
- 16 before they can grant you a CCN, and then we've got
- 17 the county commissions saying we want to hear from
- 18 the Public Service Commission about whether this
- 19 project is convenient or necessary to the public
- 20 convenience before we issue the 229.100. It can't
- 21 be both.
- 22 And so if you go back to what the
- 23 statute says under subsection 1, it is clear that
- 24 you don't need to require these governmental
- 25 approvals prior to issuing a CCN, and the Neighbors

- 1 United case does not deal with the subsection under
- 2 which we submitted our CCN, and that is the path
- 3 forward.
- 4 Now, let me talk briefly about our
- 5 alternative proposal. If you give the Neighbors
- 6 United case an overly broad reading -- and as I
- 7 said, we don't think that's necessary. We actually
- 8 think it's improper and goes beyond the language of
- 9 the court -- you can still issue a Report and
- 10 Order. Nothing bars you from addressing or
- 11 deciding the issues of public convenience and
- 12 necessity under subsection 1 and subsection 3 of
- 13 393.170.
- 14 There are a number of old PSC cases
- 15 that I think Staff cited and maybe Mr. Agathen
- 16 cited that show that in instances where the
- 17 Commission did not have all the county consents, it
- 18 still went ahead and made findings as to financial
- 19 ability, as to economic feasibility, as to public
- 20 interest, and it withheld the CCN until they were
- 21 provided to the Commission.
- 22 And this would give the county
- 23 commissions an opportunity to see what you think
- 24 about the project and deal with the issues, for
- 25 example, the Randolph County Commission has.

- 1 Chairman, did I interrupt you?
- Okay. And I think -- I think that's
- 3 the important thing, and it would solve this
- 4 Catch 22 in which we find ourselves right now. And
- 5 it's also important, again, if you give Neighbors
- 6 United this overly broad reading, to provide any
- 7 review in court with your thoughts about the public
- 8 convenience and necessity. We don't think you need
- 9 to do that, and we think issuing a line CCN is
- 10 consistent with Neighbors United, but this would at
- 11 least allow the county commissions to find out what
- 12 the Public Service Commission thinks about the
- 13 project.
- I should just say one thing.
- 15 Mr. Agathen I believe in his brief said, how come
- 16 Grain Belt Express hasn't provided you with all
- 17 these things? Remember, we had all eight of these
- 18 county consents, and it was essentially the
- 19 opponents of this project that put political
- 20 pressure on five or six of these counties to
- 21 withdraw their consent.
- We obtained all of these. And it is
- these opponents, it's the opponents that want to
- 24 elevate the county commissions to circumscribe your
- 25 jurisdiction and to prevent you from what we think

- 1 is doing your job under subsection 1 under the
- 2 facts of this case.
- 3 So in conclusion -- and I'm going to
- 4 go back to slide 6 because we think that is the
- 5 path forward -- we believe that neither the
- 6 Neighbors United case nor the law in general
- 7 requires you to dismiss our application. To the
- 8 contrary, we think it supports granting us a line
- 9 CCN.
- 10 There is a clear path forward and it
- 11 is not a stretch. Your hands are not tied. You
- 12 have the authority under subsection 1 to issue a
- 13 line CCN in this case. But the Report and Order
- 14 has to be detailed. You're going to have to
- 15 explain the differences between the line CCN and
- 16 the area CCN. For some reason the Neighbors United
- 17 court either didn't understand or overlooked it
- 18 because they were only looking at point 2 or point
- 19 3. That needs to be in a Report and Order.
- 20 And, of course, your decision should
- 21 contain detailed findings of fact and conclusions
- 22 of law on all of these issues, and you should
- 23 exercise your proper authority under subsection 1
- 24 and point 3 in light of the implications for all
- 25 kinds of infrastructure in the state of Missouri.

1	So we respectfully ask that you grant
2	a line CCN in this case and grant us a waiver of
3	the filing requirements. Thank you.
4	JUDGE BUSHMANN: Questions?
5	CHAIRMAN HALL: Yes, I have a few. I
6	want to start with your alternative argument that
7	the Commission go through the Tartan analysis,
8	determine that Grain Belt has met each of those
9	factors, but then withhold issuing the certificate.
10	Would that be an appealable decision?
11	MR. ZOBRIST: I think it would be
12	because if you construe Neighbors United to say
13	that you cannot issue a CCN, you're making these
14	other findings and you're simply withholding it at
15	that point. To be honest, I really haven't thought
16	through that. It may be it depends on what your
17	language is. I think if you say that this part is
18	final, you view it as appealable, that that might
19	be something for us to take a look at because it
20	may not be an appealable order until either
21	CHAIRMAN HALL: I think that would be
22	your worst-case scenario. Then you're sitting in
23	limbo here and you can't take the order up.
24	MR. ZOBRIST: Well, I'm being the
25	optimist, Chairman. I'm assuming we get favorable
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1 factual findings on the public convenience and necessity. We'd use those to go to the county 2 commissions and say the Public Service Commission 3 4 has weighed in and says the public is not going to 5 be harmed and you should issue your county assents and then we'll be back. 6 7 Now, if you -- if you deny it, if you 8 dismiss it, then I think --CHAIRMAN HALL: Well, that's --9 MR. ZOBRIST: Pardon me. Go ahead. 10 11 CHAIRMAN HALL: That, to be perfectly 12 blunt, seems a little naive to me that this 13 commission's decision on public interest is going 14 to sway the county commissions, and so --15 MR. ZOBRIST: Like I said --16 CHAIRMAN HALL: I think the reality is that that would be almost your worst nightmare 17 because then the case just sits in limbo here and 18 19 you can't take it up on appeal. 20 MR. ZOBRIST: Well, let me put it this way. The nightmare is if you just dismiss it 2.1 22 out of hand because then the project's dead. The 23 problem --24 CHAIRMAN HALL: I would say that's 25 better than this because at least then -- oh, okay.

- 1 I'm sorry. I'm with you now. Keep going. 2 MR. ZOBRIST: The only reason we 3 suggest the alternative is if in your deliberations 4 you want to give this unduly broad ruling. We've 5 got the county commissions out here saying we want to hear from the Public Service Commission, and we 6 7 were trying to think how do we get them to hear from you without, you know, in our view an improper 9 way of expanding the interpretation of Neighbors United. 10 11 That is not a -- Chairman, that is 12 not a preferred alternative. We're just saying that could be an alternative if you want to give 13 14 the case a broad ruling. 15 CHAIRMAN HALL: How about this as an 16 alternative: How about if -- if the Commission 17 were to determine that the ATXI decision is binding
- 21 findings of facts and conclusions of law indicating
- 22 that the Tartan factors are met? Then you can take

violating that decision, but we either in that

Report and Order or in a concurrence include

upon us and we can't issue the certificate without

- 23 that up on appeal and you can take that to Randolph
- 24 County and other counties as well.
- MR. ZOBRIST: Well, that's what we're

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1 trying to say, and maybe we just were not articulate in saying that. When we were saying do 2 3 everything except issue the line CCN, we were 4 saying make those findings under the Tartan 5 factors. So I think I agree with you on that point. It would allow us to be able to go to the 6 7 county commission with your findings. CHAIRMAN HALL: Okay. Let me go next 9 to where you -- where you started in your 10 presentation. 11 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Could I ask a 12. question? 13 CHAIRMAN HALL: Sure. 14 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Are you saying that in the first --15 CHAIRMAN HALL: Are you asking me or 16 17 asking him? 18 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: I'm asking you, 19 because I'm trying to find out his answer. 20 first one -- the second one would be issue an order 2.1 denying it based on the ATXI decision, but the 22 first one was just don't issue an order? 23 CHAIRMAN HALL: The first one, you 2.4 mean --

COMMISSIONER KENNEY: His

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1 alternative. 2. CHAIRMAN HALL: That's what I thought 3 he was proposing, but I don't think that is, in 4 fact, what he was proposing. COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Isn't that 5 6 called an advisory opinion? Are those still legal? 7 CHAIRMAN HALL: And I don't think that he is -- it wouldn't be illegal. I don't 9 think that's --10 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Or not 11 permissible. CHAIRMAN HALL: It wouldn't be -- it 12 13 wouldn't be appropriate. But, I mean, I don't 14 think that's what he was proposing, and that's not 15 what I'm proposing either. 16 MR. ZOBRIST: Well, Chairman, when 17 you said a dismissal, I mean, sure, that might be 18 great for us to take something up on appeal. That delays the project, and I'm sure the county 19 commission would say, well, they dismissed the darn 20 2.1 thing. What are we supposed to be doing? 2.2 we've got to convince them that while we're up on 23 appeal you still need to give us the county assent. 24 We think a better alternative would 25 be, again, with this overly broad view of Neighbors

- 1 United, because we don't see how you can look at
- 2 the language of Neighbors United which doesn't even
- 3 deal with subsection 1 and say it binds your hands.
- 4 But if you come to that conclusion, then we would
- 5 like to have everything except the CCN, like on
- 6 some of these old PSC cases where you withhold the
- 7 certificate and say, well, go get them and come
- 8 back in, and then we've seen a couple cases when
- 9 it's brought in the Commission says, well, here's
- 10 your CCN.
- 11 CHAIRMAN HALL: But by withholding,
- 12 do you mean essentially do what we did in the ATXI
- 13 case?
- 14 MR. ZOBRIST: Absolutely not. This
- 15 is not a contingent. You don't offer an opinion on
- 16 a CCN. You make findings of fact and conclusions
- of law, for example, partial summary judgment.
- 18 CHAIRMAN HALL: Which is frequently
- 19 not appealable either.
- 20 MR. ZOBRIST: And that's fine. We
- 21 can then -- that's my opponent's problem at that
- 22 point. Grain Belt Express can then take -- if you
- 23 give us favorable findings of fact and conclusions
- 24 of law but saying we think we can't issue you a
- 25 CCN, so we haven't run afoul of Neighbors United,

- 1 we can go to Randolph County and Monroe County and
- 2 we can say, we've got these favorable findings.
- 3 Give us your county assents, and then we'll be back
- 4 and then we'll get the certificate. I mean, that's
- 5 our thought.
- 6 Again, that's not the preferred route
- 7 because it creates more delay and uncertainty, and
- 8 we think it goes beyond what the Court of Appeals
- 9 said, but we think that's an option.
- 10 CHAIRMAN HALL: Early in your
- 11 presentation you noted a couple of examples where
- 12 if the Commission were to interpret the ATXI
- decision as tying our hands here, would have the
- 14 effect of making certain prior CCNs illegal, I
- 15 think was the word you used. And so what -- what
- 16 were those again?
- 17 MR. ZOBRIST: Well, it was the
- 18 Transcourse Missouri 2013.
- 19 CHAIRMAN HALL: Let's just do that
- 20 one first. So in that -- what did the Commission
- 21 do in that case?
- MR. ZOBRIST: Well, the Commission
- 23 approved a Stipulation & Agreement, and the
- 24 projects have been built. So I'm not sure how
- 25 anyone can go back and collaterally attack the CCN.

1 CHAIRMAN HALL: Okay. So then illegal is perhaps maybe a tad strong? 2 3 MR. ZOBRIST: It would have been 4 illegal as issued. I mean, subsequently 5 Transcourse Missouri provided the 229.100 assents for all the five or six counties that it went 6 7 through, so it's okay now. But if someone theoretically had appealed that stip or appealed 9 the order in the IES Utilities case back in 2002, 10 these guys don't have their county assents, the 11 court --CHAIRMAN HALL: Is that the situation 12 in all the examples you gave where the assents were 13 14 obtained after the fact and --15 MR. ZOBRIST: Well, I know for a fact 16 in the Transcourse Missouri case because in the 17 period subsequent to the Report and Order they were provided to the Commission. The IES case is before 18 19 we've had everything in EFIS, and I presume that the -- that a 229.100 assent from I think it's 20 2.1 Clark County up there, it's the northeast Missouri 2.2 county, I presume that was provided because the 23 line was built and it's been in existence for 15 24 years. 25 CHAIRMAN HALL: Could you run through

- 1 your legal analysis on the -- on the waiver request
- 2 on 4 CSR 240-3.105?
- 3 MR. ZOBRIST: Sure. Sure. All of
- 4 your regulations can be waived unless it is waiving
- 5 a statutory requirement. As we pointed out,
- 6 subsection 1 has no requirement to provide
- 7 municipal or other governmental consents.
- 8 Subsection 2 does.
- 9 So our first point is that your
- 10 regulation, if anything, is a bit of a regulatory
- 11 overreach because it's requiring something that
- 12 subsection 1 doesn't require. Your regulation
- 13 actually deals with both the earlier parts of the
- 14 regulation --
- 15 CHAIRMAN HALL: What's the standard?
- 16 MR. ZOBRIST: Good cause. Good
- 17 cause.
- 18 CHAIRMAN HALL: And what rule are you
- 19 relying on?
- 20 MR. ZOBRIST: It's in our brief. I
- 21 believe it is -- give me just a minute. The waiver
- is in 2.060(4). It says that a party may apply for
- 23 a waiver from Commission rules, tariff provisions
- 24 and those statutory provisions which may be waived.
- 25 There's also a similar reference to that under the

- 1 application section under which the application was
- 2 submitted. And we are to provide a complete
- 3 justification setting out good cause for granting
- 4 the variance or the waiver.
- 5 And as we said, the good cause is,
- 6 first of all, it's not required by the statute.
- 7 We're not asking for any statutory requirement to
- 8 be waived. We know we have to provide county
- 9 assents, other governmental approvals.
- 10 Subsection 1 doesn't require that.
- Two, there's no harm to the public
- 12 because the project cannot go forward without all
- 13 appropriate governmental consents.
- 14 Three, Commission precedent for many
- 15 years has allowed the provision of government
- 16 approvals after the CCN is issued and prior to
- 17 construction. You did that in the solar CCN that
- 18 Ameren received from you last year, and we cite
- 19 that in our brief. I think maybe not in our brief
- 20 but in your request for a waiver, I believe that's
- 21 where the Ameren Missouri case is set forth.
- 22 And practically that's what happened
- 23 in both the Transcourse Missouri case where the
- 24 county submissions were supplied to you after the
- 25 CCN was issued, and we presume that is the case in

- 1 IES Utilities because the transmission line was
- 2 built across the county. Not aware of any kind of
- 3 litigation, and, in fact, when that CCN was
- 4 transferred to ITC Midwest when they bought the
- 5 transmission assets from Interstate Power and
- 6 Light, now Alliant Energy, you approved that.
- 7 So we didn't have an issue as far as county
- 8 consents.
- 9 And then finally, as we've said,
- 10 several county commissions said we want to hear
- 11 from the Public Service Commission before we issue
- 12 the county consent. So this is the Catch 22. If
- 13 we have to provide these beforehand but they want
- 14 to hear from you, we need some resolution on that.
- 15 So the waiver of that will allow
- 16 us -- the waiver of the filing before you issue a
- 17 CCN will allow us to go to the county commissions
- 18 with your factual findings and say, you know, we're
- 19 going to abide by your county road crossing rules,
- 20 so please give us the county assent.
- 21 CHAIRMAN HALL: The Commission's
- 22 Report and Order in the ATXI case on page 38 states
- 23 that the plain language of 229.100 and its own
- 24 rules require the county assent. The Commission
- 25 did not base its decision that the assents were

- 1 required under anything in 393. It based that
- 2 decision based upon the language of 229.100. Do
- 3 you agree with that?
- 4 MR. ZOBRIST: No, I do not, Chairman.
- 5 That's an independent requirement, and --
- 6 CHAIRMAN HALL: I'm not saying if you
- 7 agree -- my question is, is that your
- 8 interpretation of the Commission's decision, not
- 9 whether it was a correct decision?
- 10 MR. ZOBRIST: Pardon me. Could you
- 11 give me the question again?
- 12 CHAIRMAN HALL: I'm trying to -- to
- 13 me -- I was obviously on the Commission when we
- 14 approved this decision. We placed the county
- 15 assent requirement because of the language in
- 16 229.100 which requires county assent.
- 17 MR. ZOBRIST: Correct.
- 18 CHAIRMAN HALL: We did not -- based
- on my memory, my understanding and my rereading of
- 20 our order, we did not make that condition because
- 21 of anything in 393.
- MR. ZOBRIST: Well, then what was the
- 23 power for you to make that decision?
- 24 CHAIRMAN HALL: Our rule, our rule
- 25 which said that county assents were required.

- 1 Well, if county assents are required, then they
- 2 have to be provided before we grant the authority
- 3 under 393, and 229.100, which seems to require
- 4 county assents.
- 5 MR. ZOBRIST: 229.100 does require
- 6 county consents. It has nothing to do with the
- 7 Commission's jurisdiction. And your source of
- 8 authority is under 393.170. Our application was
- 9 under point 1. There is nothing under point 1 that
- 10 requires that consent.
- 11 Your regulations do require that, we
- 12 think overbroadly. We don't think it's required.
- 13 We think it is required for area certificates
- 14 because that's what the last sentence of point 2
- 15 requires. It was not required in point 1. ATXI
- 16 did not ask you to waive the rule, so we don't have
- 17 a waiver issue being discussed in your Report and
- 18 Order.
- 19 So we think what we're asking here is
- 20 consistent with the statute and it would provide
- 21 good cause for you to grant a waiver of what is
- 22 essentially a filing requirement to receive
- 23 approvals from other entities over which you do not
- 24 have jurisdiction.
- 25 CHAIRMAN HALL: I'll switch gears

- because I'm not sure I followed all of that in
- 2 response to my question. But do you believe that
- 3 ATXI was not requesting a line certificate?
- 4 MR. ZOBRIST: ATXI, as I read their
- 5 application, requested a certificate under 393.170.
- 6 It didn't specify point 1 or point 2. It is a
- 7 transmission only project, and we believe by
- 8 implication it only calls into play subsection 1.
- 9 CHAIRMAN HALL: I would agree with
- 10 that. And then do you believe that the
- 11 Commission's Report and Order granted a line
- 12 certificate?
- MR. ZOBRIST: It did not specify.
- 14 CHAIRMAN HALL: It didn't specify,
- 15 but is that not in effect what it did?
- 16 MR. ZOBRIST: No. It did not
- 17 specify, and I don't think you can read that into
- 18 it, just like you can't read into what the Court of
- 19 Appeals did because nobody talks about
- 20 subsection 1. I think we can all agree it's a
- 21 transmission project, and the authority to
- 22 construct a transmission project is subsection 1.
- 23 But your Report and Order didn't talk about
- 24 subsection 1 and the Court of Appeals never talked
- 25 about subsection 1.

1 In our view, this is not the time to begin to imply or infer or speculate what should 2 3 have been said either in our Report and Order or in 4 the Court of Appeals opinion. You just have to 5 take it as it is. CHAIRMAN HALL: See, I don't know. 6 Ι 7 would disagree with you in terms of whether or not the Commission's Report and Order made the 9 distinction between line and area certificates. think from pages 38 through 40 we go through the 10 case law on line certificates versus area 11 certificates and reached the conclusion that we 12 13 did. 14 MR. ZOBRIST: Chairman, if I can 15 interrupt. If I agree with you to that extent, it 16 doesn't matter when we look at what the Court of 17 Appeals said because they didn't deal with a line certificate or with subsection 1. So even if 18 19 you're right and we agree that you're right and 20 everybody agrees that you're right, that's not what 21 the Court of Appeals did. And that's why your 2.2 hands are not bound in this case and you have a 23 path forward to issue us a line CCN. 24 At the risk of opening the point of 25 confusion, you said you didn't understand what I

1 was saying on the waiver issue with regard to 229.100. Do you want me to go over that again? 2 3 CHAIRMAN HALL: No. I'm with you. 4 have no further questions at this time. Thank you. 5 COMMISSIONER STOLL: No questions. 6 Thank you. 7 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Just a couple. Just getting back to subsection 1 and the courts, 9 the fact that -- could it have been that they considered it but found it not persuasive so they 10 11 just were silent on it? 12 MR. ZOBRIST: Commissioner, I don't 13 know. They did not --14 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: We don't know. 15 Because that's what you're basing your whole case 16 on. 17 MR. ZOBRIST: I would phrase it 18 differently. We're basing our case on what they 19 did say and what we know that they said, and they 20 did not deal with subsection 1. So whether you 2.1 view that as baffling or surprising or mysterious, 22 they --23 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Courts do that occasionally, don't they --24

MR. ZOBRIST: Right.

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1 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: -- some of 2. them? 3 MR. ZOBRIST: Right. But then that 4 does not bind either a lower court or an 5 administrative agency from making determinations 6 that are consistent with the actual language of 7 what the judges say. COMMISSIONER KENNEY: But you're 9 agreeing there's no difference between the two transmission lines? 10 11 MR. ZOBRIST: Factually it is the 12. same. Legally, the Court of Appeals took a 13 different view because they didn't deal with 14 subsection 1. They talked about the mandates in 15 point 2 and the general language in point 3. 16 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Okay. Thank you very much. Oh, wait. One other question. 17 18 do have one other question. You mentioned --19 excuse me. You mentioned Randolph County. You also said that there were several counties that 20 2.1 were waiting. Can you tell me the other counties 22 that have reacted -- that told you that? 23 MR. ZOBRIST: It's in Mr. Lowenstein's Schedule 4, and I believe that 24 those other counties are Chariton, well, Ralls I 25

1 think. Well, I know the two that have not, Buchanan and Carroll, and Caldwell County has been 2. rescinded because --3 4 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: The courts? 5 MR. ZOBRIST: Yeah, the courts, 6 because the county commission blew the open 7 meetings statute. But it's those other counties that have said we believe we acted prematurely, and 9 a couple counties say, here's some questions, Public Service Commission, we want you to answer. 10 11 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Where can I find that? 12 13 MR. ZOBRIST: It's in Schedule 4, 14 LDL-4 of Don Lowenstein's rebuttal testimony, 15 Exhibit 300. Louis Donald Lowenstein, 16 L-o-w-e-n-s-t-e-i-n. 17 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Surrebuttal? MR. ZOBRIST: Rebuttal. And he's a 18 19 witness for Missouri Landowners Alliance. 20 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: I'm sure Rachel 2.1 heard that. Thank you. 22 MR. ZOBRIST: Be glad to repeat it. 23 COMMISSIONER RUPP: If we issued the

the providing government approvals prior to

line CCN under 393.170.1 and we waived our rule for

2.4

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receiving the line CCN, do you still need those 1 approvals prior to construction? 2. 3 MR. ZOBRIST: Yes. 4 JUDGE BUSHMANN: Thank you. 5 MR. ZOBRIST: Thank you. 6 JUDGE BUSHMANN: Next argument is by 7 MJMEUC. MS. P. WHIPPLE: Good morning. I'd 9 like to start this morning with Commissioner Hall's and Commissioner Kenney's questions that were 10 11 premised on the concern about whether or not the 12 ATXI opinion binds this Commission, and my answer 13 to you on that is it does not bind the Commission, 14 but it may well quide the Commission. 15 The binding negative effect of the 16 ATXI opinion that MLA and Staff and Show-Me are all 17 arquing is not grounded in our law that defines what does bind the Commission. The Latin term is 18 19 stare decisis. It means to stand by things 20 decided. That's the key word, decided. 2.1 The ATXI court didn't decide anything 2.2 about Section 393.170.1. It didn't even mention 393.170.1. It didn't even mention a line 23 certificate. There was nothing decided; therefore, 24 25 there's nothing binding.

1 Now, even though Staff and MLA and Show-Me would like to have this Commission believe 2 that it's bound by that decision and that your 3 4 discretion is now taken away from you, I would say 5 you may choose to let that decision guide what you 6 do here today because there is useful language in 7 that opinion. What happened there is the court, the 9 ATXI court specifically declared that the Commission acted unlawfully and outside of its 10 11 authority when it made ATXI's certificate 12. contingent and not effective until after ATXI 13 obtained consents from the counties. That is 14 really the core ruling of the ATXI opinion. 15 not how many county consents do you have or do you 16 don't have. 17 The core ruling, if you look at the language of the opinion, is that this Commission 18 19 cannot defer its authority by issuing a CCN that is 20 not effective until some other entity acts. 2.1 the core ruling of that ATXI opinion, and that's 2.2 what can guide the Commission in ruling on the 23 Grain Belt application. 24 If we look at that core ruling, this 25 Commission is free then to grant a CCN that

- 1 includes reasonable and necessary conditions under
- 2 393.170.3. An effective and lawful CCN here can
- 3 also recognize the independent requirements of
- 4 other regulations or statutes, including 229.100.
- 5 The key that we learned from the ATXI
- 6 decision, though, is that the effectiveness of this
- 7 CCN granted by this Commission cannot depend on the
- 8 fulfillment of those other conditions or
- 9 requirements.
- 10 So MJMEUC suggests, in collaboration
- 11 or alongside Grain Belt, that there are five things
- 12 that this Commission can put in its Report and
- 13 Order to assure that it is lawful and that it is
- 14 consistent with the guidance that can come from the
- 15 ATXI opinion.
- 16 First, one or more findings of fact
- 17 that Grain Belt is seeking only a line certificate,
- only under the authority of 393.170.1, and that
- 19 Grain Belt is not seeking an area certificate, it
- 20 has no desire to serve all of the customers around
- 21 that line. That would be the first thing.
- The second thing a lawful Report and
- 23 Order could include, being guided by the ATXI
- 24 opinion, is one or more conclusions of law. Go
- 25 ahead and recognize the existence of independent

- 1 statutes or regulations such as 229.100 even though
- 2 they're administered by other entities who I trust
- 3 will guard their authority greatly. Those can be
- 4 acknowledged in the conclusions of law.
- 5 The third key thing for a lawful
- 6 Report and Order to include would be a decision by
- 7 this Commission that Grain Belt has met all five of
- 8 the Tartan criteria and that the requested
- 9 transmission line is indeed necessary and
- 10 convenient for the public service.
- 11 The fourth element of a lawful Report
- 12 and Order would be an order that grants Grain Belt
- 13 an effective CCN.
- 14 And the last, the fifth element,
- 15 should this Commission decide that it wants to
- 16 impose reasonable and necessary conditions under
- 17 393.170.3, that's the fifth element of a lawful
- 18 Report and Order.
- 19 Accepting this guidance from the ATXI
- 20 opinion will keep the result of this case, the
- 21 Grain Belt case, entirely consistent with the ATXI
- 22 opinion. Indeed, both applicants will have been
- 23 found to have met all five of the Tartan criteria.
- 24 Both applicants are requesting a transmission line
- 25 that the Commission will have found was necessary

- 1 and convenient for the public service. Both of the
- 2 CCNs will have been issued prior to the time that
- 3 all of the independent other governmental assents
- 4 are issued by other authorities, and the necessary
- 5 difference between the two rulings of this
- 6 Commission will be in the effectiveness of the CCN.
- 7 The ATXI CCN was unlawful because it
- 8 was ineffective when it was issued. The Grain Belt
- 9 CCN if it is effective when it is issued will be
- 10 lawful, and that is the takeaway from the ATXI
- 11 opinion.
- 12 I also would like to reach to more of
- 13 Chairman Hall's question. Chairman Hall asked if
- 14 the Commission's rule, and I think you were
- 15 referring to 4 CSR 240-3.105, Chairman asked if it
- 16 was inconsistent with the statute, and I believe
- 17 you were referring to 393.170.
- 18 My answer is no, it's not. And the
- 19 reason it's not, when you look at the rule,
- 20 240-3.105, when you look at subsections C and D, we
- 21 see that C says, when no evidence of approval of
- 22 the effected governmental bodies is necessary, I
- 23 think that lines up directly with subsection 1 of
- 24 393.170.
- The line certificate, the application

- 1 for a line certificate in that subsection 393.170.1
- 2 makes no reference to any other authority,
- 3 municipal, county, nothing. And so I think your
- 4 rule is consistent. I think subsection 3 is
- 5 referring back to 393.170.1, the line certificate,
- 6 when there is no need to have approval from any
- 7 other governmental entity before you exercise your
- 8 authority and issue a certificate.
- 9 I think subsection D of the rule,
- 10 which starts out when approval of the effected
- 11 governmental bodies is required, I think that lines
- 12 up perfectly with 393.170.2, the area certificate,
- 13 which on its face, and it has for years, on its
- 14 face talks about the approval -- I'm sorry. I've
- 15 got to get to the right rule here. On its face
- 16 talks about the required consent of the proper
- 17 municipal authorities.
- 18 So I think your rule is completely
- 19 consistent with the statute and you've got no
- 20 concern about an inconsistency there.
- 21 CHAIRMAN HALL: So you don't believe
- 22 that we need to waive the rule?
- 23 MS. WHIPPLE: I believe that what
- 24 Mr. Zobrist is asking for is not a waiver of the
- 25 rule itself as in make it go away, but a waiver of

- 1 the timing of the filing requirement so that he may
- 2 go ahead and receive on behalf of Grain Belt a
- 3 fully effective CCN, and then he will take that
- 4 fully effective CCN and go to the various county
- 5 commissions, give them his engineering drawings so
- 6 that their highway engineer can determine that
- 7 Grain Belt is not doing anything unsafe with the
- 8 roads and then obtain those county consents.
- 9 If the commission would like to see
- 10 them at a later time for a full record, that would
- 11 be great. But I don't think he's asking you to
- 12 pretend the rule doesn't exist. I think he's only
- 13 asking for a waiver of the timing of the filing
- 14 requirement, because subsection 2 of your rule
- 15 says, if any of the items required under this rule
- 16 are unavailable at the time the application is
- 17 filed, they shall be furnished prior to the
- 18 granting of the authority sought.
- 19 Well, the key there is if any of the
- 20 items required under this rule. My point to you is
- 21 that they are not required under this rule for the
- 22 line certificate that Grain Belt seeks because that
- 23 falls under subsection C of your rule, which starts
- 24 out, when no evidence of approval of the effective
- 25 governmental bodies is necessary. So I think it's

- 1 consistent with the waiver he's asked for, and I
- 2 think your rule and the statute are consistent.
- 3 CHAIRMAN HALL: So I'm looking at D1
- 4 where it says consent or franchise by a city or
- 5 county.
- MS. WHIPPLE: Yes.
- 7 CHAIRMAN HALL: And the way I've
- 8 always interpreted that is when they talk about a
- 9 county, they're talking about the 229.100
- 10 requirement.
- MS. P. WHIPPLE: That may be.
- 12 CHAIRMAN HALL: And at least -- so to
- 13 me, if we were to be interested in granting a
- 14 certificate and we wanted to -- which of course we
- 15 do want to be consistent with the ATXI decision, we
- 16 would have to grant a waiver. I mean, I completely
- 17 understand Mr. Zobrist's argument. I'm baffled by
- 18 yours.
- 19 MS. P. WHIPPLE: Well, let me back up
- 20 a half a step. You just read to me from D1. D
- 21 starts out, when approval of the effected
- 22 governmental bodies is required.
- 23 CHAIRMAN HALL: Which 229.100 does
- 24 require county assent.
- MS. P. WHIPPLE: It does -- it does

1 not -- it is an independent requirement. 2 CHAIRMAN HALL: It is a requirement. 3 MS. P. WHIPPLE: Yes. As I heard 4 Mr. Zobrist say, as are probably many other 5 requirements. 6 CHAIRMAN HALL: Right. 7 MS. P. WHIPPLE: There's probably 8 federal, there's probably other state. 9 CHAIRMAN HALL: Certainly. MS. P. WHIPPLE: That is not of 10 11 concern to this commission. This commission acts 12 under 393.170, and this commission in this case is 13 acting under 393.170.1, which is a line certificate 14 which on the face of the statute itself does not 15 require this commission to obtain feedback from any 16 other governmental entity before this commission 17 exercises its authority. 18 Now, I happen to trust that the 19 county commission who does have the responsibility 20 to enforce the 229.100 requirements, I happen to 2.1 trust that they will take that responsibility just 2.2 as seriously as this commission takes its 23 responsibility under 393.170. I am confident they will require Mr. Zobrist's client to submit all 24 25 those engineering drawings and they will assure

- 1 themselves that nothing unsafe will be done with
- 2 their roads. But that is not a bar or a binding
- 3 action on this Commission's authority, which is
- 4 separate and distinct.
- 5 Chairman Hall, you also asked, and
- 6 I'd be happy to reach to this question as well, you
- 7 asked Mr. Zobrist if in your ATXI Report and Order,
- 8 EA-2015-0146, if he agreed that the order,
- 9 basically the conclusion of the order was grounded
- 10 on a belief that 229.100 bound this Commission's
- 11 authority to act.
- 12 And I would submit that what grounded
- this Commission's ruling in that order is actually
- 14 found in the conclusions of law numbers 25 and 26
- 15 which are on page 36 of that order. The
- 16 conclusions of law there are referring to the
- 17 Aquila 1 case, a case that is in the history for
- 18 all of us, but a case that presented a very
- 19 different factual background.
- That's a situation where Aquila, who
- 21 had an area certificate already, decided that that
- 22 area certificate allowed it to build a whole power
- 23 plant, and I think a substation, too, without
- 24 coming back to this Commission for any kind of new
- 25 CCN and without going to Cass County for any kind

- of zoning approval. They built a whole plant and
- 2 said, we've got the authority to do this under the
- 3 old area CCN that we got I don't remember how many
- 4 years ago from the Commission.
- 5 The court -- it didn't go well,
- 6 right? I mean, the trial court said tear the plant
- 7 down. They get hammered for that because they
- 8 tried to expand an already existing area
- 9 certificate to allow them to construct the
- 10 brand-new power plant.
- 11 The conclusions of law here are
- 12 focused on that utility's overreach. They are not
- 13 focused on any overreach by this Commission. And
- 14 therefore, I think the impression of these
- 15 conclusions of law is somehow Aquila 1 limited this
- 16 Commission's authority. I submit that Aquila 1
- 17 limited the authority of a regulated utility who
- 18 thought it could act on an old area CCN and build a
- 19 whole new plant.
- You also asked, Chairman, if there
- 21 was anything specific in this Report and Order that
- 22 would have signaled to the ATXI Court of Appeals
- 23 that indeed the only type of CCN being addressed
- 24 there was a line CCN. And, I mean, I wasn't part
- 25 of the ATXI case. I don't know why ATXI/Ameren's

- 1 application was not more specific like the one that
- 2 we see here from Grain Belt.
- 3 But the fact is there are about six
- 4 places in the Report and Order that just refer to
- 5 393.170. And so I think it is possible that the
- 6 Court of Appeals did not believe it had before it
- 7 the actual question that this Commission has before
- 8 it today, and that would be why the Court of
- 9 Appeals made no binding decision about a 393.1 line
- 10 certificate. That would be the answer to that
- 11 question.
- 12 You're thinking. Do you have a
- 13 question?
- 14 MJMEUC's municipal members earnestly
- 15 ask the Commission to go ahead and grant a fully
- 16 effective CCN, the CCN requested by Grain Belt, so
- 17 that its frankly hundreds of thousands of citizens
- 18 can start enjoying the benefits of renewable,
- 19 affordable energy. Thank you.
- JUDGE BUSHMANN: Any questions?
- 21 CHAIRMAN HALL: I do have a question
- 22 or two now.
- 23 MS. P. WHIPPLE: Go right ahead.
- 24 That's why I'm here.
- 25 CHAIRMAN HALL: Help me out on -- on

393.170 sub 2, the area certificate provision. 1 2 MS. P. WHIPPLE: Yes. 3 CHAIRMAN HALL: And there's a 4 requirement there that before the certificate is 5 issued, the applicant has to show the required 6 consent of the proper municipal authorities. 7 MS. P. WHIPPLE: Yes. CHAIRMAN HALL: And I believe it was 9 your brief that pointed out that municipal or at least municipality is a defined term --10 11 MS. P. WHIPPLE: It is. 12 CHAIRMAN HALL: -- for this chapter. 13 MS. P. WHIPPLE: It is. 14 CHAIRMAN HALL: And it says a 15 municipality includes a city, village or town. So 16 your argument, at least my understanding of it, is 17 that if -- if the section 2 area certificate requires municipal assent, which I quess it does, 18 19 that is only the municipal assent that is required 20 of cities, villages or towns, has nothing to do 2.1 with county assent? 2.2 MS. P. WHIPPLE: Yes. That is the 23 plain language of the statute. 24 CHAIRMAN HALL: And that -- and if I 25 understand the landowners' position, they have

1 found three or four cases where a municipal or municipality is read more broadly --2. 3 MS. P. WHIPPLE: Yes. 4 CHAIRMAN HALL: -- to include 5 counties? 6 MS. P. WHIPPLE: Yes. None of those 7 cases, of course, were energy cases, but yes, they 8 did. 9 CHAIRMAN HALL: And your position is 10 that the -- and I assume Randolph's position is 11 that that case law is irrelevant when you have a 12 term defined for Chapter 393? 13 MS. P. WHIPPLE: Yes. Yes. Our 14 legislature, of course, gives all of us our 15 statutes. 16 CHAIRMAN HALL: And that issue, 17 though, I believe raised in the ATXI case is in no way reflected in the Western District's opinion; is 18 19 that correct? 20 MS. P. WHIPPLE: That's my understanding, yes. I do not see it. 2.1 22 CHAIRMAN HALL: I have no further 23 questions. Thank you. 24 MS. WHIPPLE: Thank you. 25 COMMISSIONER STOLL: No questions.

1	COMMISSIONER KENNEY: No questions.
2	COMMISSIONER RUPP: No questions.
3	JUDGE BUSHMANN: I have a question.
4	MS. P. WHIPPLE: Yes.
5	JUDGE BUSHMANN: In your remarks you
6	implied that the Western District Court of Appeals
7	in the ATXI case may not have been aware that ATXI
8	was applying for a line certificate. I know you
9	weren't a participant in that case, but in the
10	order or the opinion that was issued by the court
11	it said that ATXI does not generate, distribute or
12	sell electricity to the general public or serve any
13	retail service territory. Doesn't that statement
14	by definition make ATXI having a line certificate?
15	MS. P. WHIPPLE: I think we all
16	understand that and I hope they're not watching.
17	I mean no disrespect, but I don't know that all
18	judges who deal with the whole spectrum of legal
19	cases understand that kind of detail as well as
20	those of us in this room do. It may not be that
21	they could linked that statement with the
22	existence of 393.170.1 versus point 2.
23	JUDGE BUSHMANN: Thank you.
24	CHAIRMAN HALL: Let me follow that
25	line of questioning. So the way that I read the

1 ATXI decision is that it essentially took a requirement in section 2 and exported it to a 2. 3 subsection 1 application. And whether that was a 4 correct legal analysis or not, aren't we bound by 5 it? 6 MS. P. WHIPPLE: No. And again, back to the Latin, stare decisis. Nothing was decided 7 8 in that --9 CHAIRMAN HALL: See, I don't --10 MS. P. WHIPPLE: There's no way it 11 was decided if it's never mentioned. There's no 12. way. 13 CHAIRMAN HALL: The reality is ATXI 14 was seeking a line certificate. The reality is 15 that the Court of Appeals said before you can issue a line certificate, you have to show county assent. 16 17 MS. P. WHIPPLE: The Court of Appeals said, if you issue -- if you issue a certificate, 18 19 fill in line if you want to, it must be effective. That really is the key. I think the whole business 20 2.1 about whether or not you do or don't have county 22 assents is something of a distraction in the 23 discussion about the ATXI opinion. 24 The heart of that opinion is whether or not this Commission can defer its authority by 25

issuing an ineffective CCN. That is the heart of 1 that opinion, and the business about consents and 2. 3 so is layered on top. But if you go to the heart 4 of that opinion and take that as guidance, this 5 Commission is fully authorized then to issue an 6 effective, very clearly defined CCN here. 7 CHAIRMAN HALL: Thank you. MS. P. WHIPPLE: You're welcome. 9 JUDGE BUSHMANN: No further 10 questions. Next argument by Sierra Club. 11 MR. ROBERTSON: May it please the 12 Commission? We ask you to grant the CCN because 13 Grain Belt has met the Tartan criteria and shown 14 that the line is in the public interest. We ask 15 you to issue the CCN now because that's the only 16 way to break the deadlock that Mr. Zobrist 17 described. 18 The Court of Appeals never confronted 19 the possibility of a single county vetoing a

24 be in conflict with state law, this Commission's

deal with that possibility in the decision.

multi-county, multi-state transmission line.

Whether they thought of it or not, they did not

If a county were to do so, it would

25 power to regulate uniformly in the public interest

20

2.1

22

23

1 without regard to county and municipal lines, and it would probably also violate federal law. 2. result can be avoided by a correct interpretation 3 4 of the CCN statute that takes into account 170.1. 5 170 is divided into three parts, we 6 know, and only No. 2 deals with local and county 7 assents if it deals with the county assents. Part 2 is about area certificates, and that means 9 permission to serve a territory as a retail utility. And that subsection 2 clearly requires 10 that the local consent be obtained before the CCN 11 12 can be issued, and that makes sense because we're 13 talking about if a locality does not want this 14 utility to serve it, then there wouldn't be much 15 point in the Commission granting a CCN. 16 And the Supreme Court held in 1964 17 that the county assent under 229.100 served as the county franchise for an area certificate, and 18 19 regardless that's in spite of the -- they did not discuss the Commission's statute's definition of 20 municipal, which does not include county. 2.1 2.2 said that the county franchise grants permission to 23 serve territory in unincorporated county. And that 24 was an area certificate case, the Burton case. 25 One possible source of confusion

- 1 especially when you consider the Commission's
- 2 earlier cases is that sometimes a transmission line
- 3 can require an area certificate. Like last week
- 4 Staff circulated the Commission's records in a 1914
- 5 case, North Missouri Power & Light, Light & Power.
- 6 I'm anticipating Staff's argument. But that was --
- 7 that company wanted to build transmission lines in
- 8 parts of Ralls and Pike Counties, and that looks
- 9 like a simple line extension.
- 10 But the application says that at that
- 11 time there was no electric service whatsoever in
- 12 that territory except for lighting only service in
- 13 the town of New London. So what the company was
- 14 proposing to do by extending transmission lines was
- 15 to annex new service territory. That's an area
- 16 certificate, not a line certificate.
- 17 But if there's one thing we know for
- 18 sure about this case is it's a line certificate
- 19 case, not an area certificate case. And a county
- 20 can veto a retail utility, but it cannot veto a
- 21 transmission line like this.
- 22 And the Commission's authority is
- 23 laid out in the Crestwood cases, Crestwood 1 and 2,
- 24 Union Electric v Crestwood. Union Electric had a
- 25 franchise to serve Crestwood, but they didn't want

- 1 Union Electric to run a transmission line through
- 2 the city, so they passed an ordinance requiring all
- 3 transmission lines to be underground, and the
- 4 Supreme Court said you can't do that. That invades
- 5 the authority of the Commission to regulate
- 6 statewide uniformly in a manner that transcends
- 7 county and municipal lines. So Crestwood then
- 8 tried to stop the transmission line through zoning,
- 9 and again the Supreme Court said, you can't do
- 10 that.
- Now, I didn't cite those cases in my
- 12 supplemental briefs. I notice they are cited in
- 13 Exhibit 376, the ATXI post-hearing brief that MLA
- 14 just offered. For the record, Crestwood 1 is
- 15 499 SW 2nd 480, and Crestwood 2 is 562 SW 2nd 344.
- In a case like this, county assent
- 17 cannot be regarded as anything more than a siting
- 18 law. They do not need an area certificate. Grain
- 19 Belt does not need an area certificate. They do
- 20 need permission -- and this is what a franchise is
- 21 basically is permission to go over or under county
- 22 roads. That is essentially a siting law, and
- 23 that's the extent of their authority, the county's
- 24 authority in a case like this.
- 25 Grain Belt still needs assent, but

- 1 that is for the purpose of ensuring that they will
- 2 comply with county highway regulation, and that is
- 3 stated in 229.100 itself.
- 4 We've also raised the possibility of
- 5 a county veto being in violation of federal law,
- 6 and this is based solely on my general knowledge,
- 7 but it seems that local interference with
- 8 interstate commerce and electricity would violate
- 9 the Commerce Clause of the Constitution. The
- 10 Federal Power Act gives FERC authority over
- 11 interstate transmission lines. The state still has
- 12 authority to regulate the siting of interstate
- transmission lines, but they're otherwise
- 14 preempted.
- Now, these issues are not for the
- 16 Commission. They're for the courts. These
- 17 statutes we're dealing with are over 100 years old,
- 18 and we have to figure out how they apply in a time
- 19 of RTOs and merchant transmission lines.
- This case is governed by 170.1.
- 21 170.1 simply does not require that the Commission
- 22 receive any consents beforehand. And it seems to
- 23 me that if a county commission were to say we don't
- 24 want -- put up a sign at the county line saying you
- 25 shall not enter, they would have to -- that would

- 1 have to be based upon their highway regulations.
- 2 And if Grain Belt agreed to abide by those
- 3 regulations and give them the engineering drawings
- 4 and everything they need, the county would have no
- 5 basis for denying it, and Grain Belt I would think
- 6 could take them to court and get a court order that
- 7 they grant the assent, as long as Grain Belt is
- 8 willing to abide by their highway regulations. And
- 9 Grain Belt may need to go to federal court if there
- 10 are federal issues raised. Those are not for this
- 11 Commission.
- 12 What the Commission has to do now is
- 13 grant the CCN with a statement that this is done
- 14 under 170.1, and that under that, due to the
- 15 failure of the Court of Appeals to consider 170.1,
- 16 you must point that out and that the literal terms
- of the statute, it's only in the case of an area
- 18 certificate that the county assents need to be
- 19 obtained beforehand.
- 20 And I took a quick look at the
- 21 Commission's regulation. I agree with
- 22 Ms. Whipple's reading. It says that when no
- 23 evidence of approval of effected governmental
- 24 bodies is necessary, a statement to that effect is
- 25 all the Commission needs. That applies to the

- 1 county assents and to any kind of line certificate
- 2 assents. You don't need it under 170.1. It's an
- 3 independent procedure whether the county grants its
- 4 assent or not. It's really not a matter for the
- 5 Commission, in contrast to 170.2 where you really
- 6 do need the local assent to have this utility
- 7 serving territory.
- 8 That's all I have.
- 9 CHAIRMAN HALL: No questions. Thank
- 10 you.
- JUDGE BUSHMANN: Thank you.
- MR. ROBERTSON: Thank you very much.
- 13 JUDGE BUSHMANN: Commission Staff.
- MR. WILLIAMS: May it please the
- 15 Commission? Nathan Williams appearing on behalf of
- 16 the Staff.
- 17 Basically, Staff's position is laid
- 18 out in its supplemental brief, and I'm appearing
- 19 here to address any questions the Commissioners may
- 20 have. And I can tell you some of the topics I've
- 21 already heard discussed I believe I could shed a
- 22 little light on should any Commissioner desire to
- 23 delve back into those.
- 24 CHAIRMAN HALL: I think I'll take you
- 25 up on that. So if the court got it wrong, if the

1 court took a requirement under section 2 and exported it to section 1, are we bound by that 2 3 error, to be perfectly blunt? 4 MR. WILLIAMS: The short answer is 5 yes. 6 CHAIRMAN HALL: And the long answer. 7 MR. WILLIAMS: I don't think there is one. Some party can take up whatever the 9 Commission does and make an argument to the court and say you've gotten it wrong, but when Staff 10 11 looks at the facts and the law applicable in what's 12 been described as the ATXI case, which I would 13 describe as the Mark Twain transmission line case, 14 and this case in front of it now, I don't see a 15 distinction that warrants a different result. 16 CHAIRMAN HALL: So in Staff's view, 17 ATXI sought a -- ATXI's application sought a section 1 line certificate even if it did not 18 19 explicitly say so? 20 MR. WILLIAMS: Frankly, I don't think 2.1 there's -- that distinction is meaningful. 2.2 sought an application under 170. If you want to 23 say it was under 1 because it was a line certificate, fine. But to me it's really -- you're 24 25 asking for a certificate to build a particular

facility. In this case it's a transmission line. 1 2 CHAIRMAN HALL: So it would be your 3 position that for going forward, consistent with 4 the ATXI decision, all area certificates and all 5 line certificates cannot be issued without county 6 assent? 7 MR. WILLIAMS: No. CHAIRMAN HALL: Why not? 9 MR. WILLIAMS: It only depends upon 10 whether or not you're going to be crossing any 11 public roadways. 12 CHAIRMAN HALL: Let's assume that 13 every transmission line is going to cross a county 14 road. So if that's the case, would it be your 15 position that going forward all at least line 16 certificates, all line certificate applications 17 will require county assents before the Commission 18 can approve them? 19 MR. WILLIAMS: Again, with your 20 requirement that or fact that they're going to 2.1 cross county roads --22 CHAIRMAN HALL: Assumption. 23 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes, public roads. 24 Basically if you need 229.100 assent. 25 CHAIRMAN HALL: Okay. Thank you.

1 COMMISSIONER STOLL: I do have a I have one question. In the court 2 question. 3 decision on page 8, and this may be -- I'd like 4 Staff's opinion about this. It talks about how, in 5 the first full paragraph, line 3, all provisions of 6 the statute must be harmonized and every clause 7 must have meaning. Does Staff believe that that statement and some of the language around that 9 means that it creates the meaning of there being no difference between a line certificate and an area 10 11 certificate as far as county assent? 12 The first place I've MR. WILLIAMS: 13 ever seen the distinction made between line and 14 area certificates was a statutory basis was the 15 Harline case from 1960, and in that case there were 16 a number of arguments made about why a utility 17 needed to come in and get an additional certificate to build a transmission line within an area for 18 19 which it was already certificated. 20 Among those arguments was one that 2.1 there was a definition of electrical plant that 2.2 encompassed transmission lines. The court rejected 23 that definition and then came up with a distinction between sub 1 and sub 2 authority as a basis for 24 25 why the utility did not need to come in and get an

1	additional certificate for the transmission line.
2	Even if the primary source for the
3	authority to or requirement of transmission line
4	certification is from sub 1, I don't think that
5	case said that there was no nothing meaningful
6	about subsection 2 with regard to transmission
7	lines.
8	COMMISSIONER STOLL: So does Staff
9	believe that is what they're talking about when
10	they speak of harmonizing a statute?
11	Mr. WILLIAMS: Yes, looking at not
12	only all of 393.170 but also I'd say you'd be
13	looking at the entirety of the Public Service
14	Commission Act as it was originally enacted in
15	1913, plus any amendments that have occurred to it
16	subsequent to then that would affect the
17	interpretation you'd give to granting certificates.
18	COMMISSIONER STOLL: Thank you.
19	COMMISSIONER RUPP: So can I sum up
20	your opening statement as go read our brief?
21	MR. WILLIAMS: Yes.
22	COMMISSIONER RUPP: And when you come
23	before the Commission, you kind of want to bring
24	your A game. Do you feel this is your A game?
25	MR. WILLIAMS: I was given some

- 1 direction as to how I was to approach oral
- 2 argument.
- 3 COMMISSIONER RUPP: That was poor
- 4 direction.
- 5 JUDGE BUSHMANN: No questions. Thank
- 6 you.
- 7 JUDGE BUSHMANN: It's now 11:30.
- 8 Mr. Linton, we will probably need to break in about
- 9 15 minutes. How long do you think your
- 10 presentation will probably take? I don't want to
- 11 have to interrupt your presentation.
- 12 MR. LINTON: Yeah. Could be 15
- 13 minutes, depending on questions. Could be a little
- 14 longer.
- 15 JUDGE BUSHMANN: All right. Why
- 16 don't we go ahead and you may go next.
- 17 MR. LINTON: May it please the
- 18 Commission? My name is David Linton, and I
- 19 represent the Show-Me Concerned Landowners.
- 20 Show-Me was granted intervention in
- 21 this case and has been involved in the evidentiary
- 22 hearings, attended public hearings, submitted
- 23 testimony and briefed the issues in this case. It
- 24 has seen this case to the end.
- We are here today to discuss the

- 1 impact of the Neighbors United case on Grain Belt
- 2 Express' application for a CCN. At this point it
- 3 is Show-Me's position that Grain Belt Express has
- 4 no reasonable or legal pathway to and the
- 5 Commission has no justifiable reason for granting a
- 6 CCN to Grain Belt Express.
- 7 The Neighbors United decision is just
- 8 one more -- the third reason why this is the case.
- 9 The first two reasons Show-Me has outlined in its
- 10 supplemental brief, and it won't go into those
- 11 issues here. Just leave it to be said that
- 12 Neighbors -- the Neighbors United case is the
- 13 capstone on why Show-Me's position is that Grain
- 14 Belt Express has no right to a CCN in this case.
- 15 The issue before this Commission is
- 16 whether the relative authority -- relates to the
- 17 relative authority of three distinct governmental
- 18 units: First the Western District Court of
- 19 Appeals; second, the county commissions; and then
- 20 third, this Commission.
- 21 MJMEUC and Grain Belt Express would
- 22 have this Commission take all authority onto itself
- 23 to declare the law and then run the business of the
- 24 county, but this is not acceptable under the
- 25 present law. Let's consider the hierarchy of the

- 1 three distinct governmental units that are involved
- 2 in this whole case.
- 3 The Western District Court of Appeals
- 4 is part of the judicial department of the State.
- 5 It has the right to interpret and declare the law.
- 6 The eight counties in this -- involved in this case
- 7 are established under Article 6, Section 1 of the
- 8 Missouri Constitution. In that -- in that
- 9 provision it states the existing counties are
- 10 hereby recognized as legal subdivisions of the
- 11 State.
- 12 The Supreme Court in the case of Lane
- 13 versus Pinky observed that while no longer having a
- 14 judicial function, the county commissions do have
- 15 attributes of sovereignty, which includes the right
- 16 of eminent domain. They have the sovereign right
- 17 of eminent domain. Section 229.100 defines and
- 18 protects the county commission's authority over the
- 19 county roads. That is their constitutional
- 20 business.
- 21 By way of contrast, this Commission
- 22 is a department of the executive branch.
- 23 Article 4, Section 36A says that the Department of
- 24 Economic Development administers -- is an
- 25 administrative function. And it's for that reason

- 1 that courts consistently say that the PSC is a
- 2 creature of statute and has no power that goes
- 3 beyond what the statute grants. Its powers are
- 4 limited to those conferred by statute, either
- 5 expressed or by clear implication, as necessary to
- 6 carry out the powers specifically granted.
- 7 Now, while Section 386.610 does
- 8 provide that statutes pertaining to the PSC shall
- 9 be liberally construed to allow it to fulfill its
- 10 function, the courts consistently also say that
- 11 courts can't give the PSC more authority than the
- 12 statutes clearly provide.
- 13 The Harline case also discusses this
- 14 Commission's authority. Certificates of
- 15 convenience and necessity do not grant new power.
- 16 They simply authorize a company to exercise the
- 17 power that the corporate charter, the state charter
- 18 and the county authorities grant them, the
- 19 franchises.
- 20 So courts exercise independent
- 21 judicial authority. The counties run the business
- 22 of the county. The county commissions run the
- 23 business of the county, and they have authority
- 24 over the county roads.
- This Commission must endeavor to

- 1 exercise its purely regulatory authority to assist
- 2 those two branches, to facilitate what those two
- 3 branches want to have happen. It has no authority
- 4 to interpret the law, and it has no authority to
- 5 run the business of the county.
- In this, Show-Me completely disagrees
- 7 with MJMEUC and Grain Belt Express in using
- 8 separation of powers argument to suggest that the
- 9 Commission should take authority unto itself to
- 10 interpret the law and run the business of the
- 11 county. The Commission must do its best to follow
- 12 the law as it is laid down in the Neighbors United
- 13 case.
- 14 The Neighbors United case has laid
- 15 down a harmonized view of the law in
- 16 Section 393.170, and it decided that until such
- 17 time as ATXI received all commission assents, that
- 18 this Commission could not grant ATXI the CCN.
- 19 To be clear, ATXI received a line
- 20 certificate. This Commission knew that and the
- 21 Court of Appeals knew that. It is very clear in
- 22 the recitation of factual and procedural background
- in the court's opinion that it understood it was a
- 24 line certificate.
- Just quoting briefly from that

- 1 opinion, ATXI is an Illinois corporation authorized
- 2 to do business in Missouri and engage in the
- 3 construction, ownership and operation of interstate
- 4 transmission lines. It has -- it does not have any
- 5 retail service territory. It is a 345kv line that
- 6 ATXI received authority for.
- 7 But Grain Belt and MJMEUC claim that
- 8 the harmony that Neighbors United opinion brought
- 9 to 393.170 only relates to subsections 2 and 3, but
- 10 that makes no sense. If you take a careful reading
- of 393.170 -- and I've provided you with a printout
- of that statute and I've made some highlights of
- 13 the language -- you can see that sections 1, 2 and
- 14 3 are unified.
- 15 And it might be interesting to note
- 16 that MLA in their supplemental brief gave a helpful
- 17 footnote 13 on page 4 that says, as originally
- 18 passed, 393.170 was one unified section. So it was
- 19 a Reviser of Statutes that separated out different
- 20 subsections of 393.170. So the very structure as
- 21 it was originally passed was a unified whole.
- So let's take a look at 393.170, and
- 23 whether or not you take it as one complete section
- or three distinct sections, I won't debate that
- 25 right at this moment. But subsection 1 has one

- 1 sentence. Subsection 2 has two sentences.
- 2 Subsection 3 has three sentences.
- Now, you'll notice that subsection 1
- 4 relates to construction projects. This is the
- 5 so-called line certificate authority. And before
- 6 a -- and the authority of the Commission is to
- 7 grant its permission and approval.
- 8 The first sentence in subsection 2
- 9 relates to franchises, and you will also notice
- 10 that the Commission must give its permission and
- 11 approval.
- 12 So then you move down to the second
- 13 sentence of subsection 2 and you find that, before
- 14 such certificate shall be issued, there must be a
- 15 certified copy of the corporate charter and the
- 16 required consent of the proper municipal
- 17 authorities.
- 18 Okay. So the key language here is
- 19 such certificate. What does the such certificate
- 20 refer to? The only thing it can refer to is the
- 21 permission and approval. But how do we distinguish
- the permission and approval in the first sentence
- 23 or the only sentence in subsection 1 from the first
- 24 sentence in subsection 2? I would say that would
- 25 be completely arbitrary to do that. Such

1 certificate has to refer to the permission and approval for both subsection 1 and subsection 2. 2 3 It is also interesting to note that 4 the required consent of proper municipal 5 authorities is not franchise. If the Legislature had wanted to limit the application of the second 6 7 sentence of subsection 2 to subsection 2, it could have said franchise. It didn't. It used a 9 different word, and so we have to conclude that it meant something different by required consent of 10 11 proper municipal authorities. 12 If you move on down then to 13 subsection 3, it makes the arbitrary distinction 14 between subsection 1 and subsection 2 all the more 15 apparent when it says that before the Commission 16 can grant its permission and approval to construction or the franchise, it must hold a due 17 hearing. There again, combining subsection 1 and 18 19 subsection 2. 20 If we remember that the statute, the 2.1 section was originally one unified whole in 2.2 structure as well as intent and language, that 23 makes a whole lot more sense. This shows the flow of the conversation that the Legislature is giving. 24 25 Not to mention that, also how do we

- 1 even refer to the approval of permission and
- 2 approval of a line, construction of a line except
- 3 it's a line certificate? The very fact that it's a
- 4 line certificate causes you to go down into the
- 5 second sentence of subsection 2 to come up with the
- 6 terminology.
- 7 So if the Commission at Grain Belt
- 8 Express' and MJMEUC's suggestion divorces
- 9 subsection 1 from subsection 2 and 3, it now has
- 10 nothing to call the permission and approval for a
- 11 line.
- 12 Not to mention that, if you go on
- down then to the last section or the last sentence
- of subsection 3, there's a provision that says that
- 15 if a certificate is not exercised within two years
- of its being granted, the certificate becomes null
- 17 and void. Well, if you -- again, if you divorce
- 18 subsection 1 from the rest of the section, you
- 19 don't have that applying to a line certificate.
- Now, when we interpret statutes we
- 21 have to interpret the whole of the statute. You're
- 22 trying to obtain the legislative intent, and so you
- 23 have to look at all of the language around what
- 24 you're interpreting.
- 25 And actually MJMEUC in its brief

1 supports that. In its brief at -- supplemental brief at page 7, it cites State ex rel Burns versus 2. 3 Whittington, and it states -- it quotes from that 4 case: The primary rule of statutory interpretation 5 is to give effect to the legislative intent as 6 reflected in the plain language of the statute and 7 by considering the context of the entire statute in which it appears. 9 Neighbors United has given this Commission a unified, harmonized view of 10 11 Section 393.170. Adopting Grain Belt Express's and 12 MJMEUC's interpretation would divorce subsection 2 13 and subsection 3 from subsection 1. That will set 14 the Commission out on a new course of trying to 15 interpret the statute and write new law, which it 16 has no authority to do. It cannot declare now what 17 the line certificate is to be called. It cannot declare how long that line certificate has 18 19 authority or is effective. The only way to interpret 20 2.1 Section 393.170 is interpret it as a whole and to 2.2 make such certificate apply to the permission and 23 approval in both subsection 1 and subsection 2. 24 Now, MJMEUC makes much of the case of 25 Broadwater versus Wabash for the proposition that

1 the Commission is not bound by stare decisis in this case because it says that in this case, the 2. 3 Neighbors United case, there was something that was 4 implied at best. 5 Well, the Broadwater case is not 6 inapposite in this discussion. In Broadwater the 7 case involved a -- it was a case that the Missouri Supreme Court was trying to decide if it was going 9 to follow its own precedent, and the Missouri Supreme Court discusses whether it was going to 10 11 follow its own precedent. Since it was not convinced the facts in the Broadwater case were the 12 13 same as the prior case, it did not follow its own 14 precedent. That is the only thing that that case 15 stands for. However, in our regard, this 16 17 Commission is not bound by stare decisis, but it is bound by the law, and it must apply the law to the 18 19 best of its understanding. And Neighbors United 20 has given this Commission a good understating of 21 the meaning of section 393.170. 22 According to Neighbors United, an 23 applicant for a line certificate must obtain county 24 assents prior to a line certificate being granted. 25 MJMEUC also tries to lock in the

- 1 Commission's observation in its prior case that
- 2 Grain Belt Express is a public utility and not a
- 3 private business. Well, MJMEUC again forgets that
- 4 this Commission is not bound by stare decisis. It
- 5 is not bound by its prior decision. What it is
- 6 bound to is to interpret the facts as presented to
- 7 it in each case. It is required to make its
- 8 decision based upon a reasonable understanding of
- 9 the facts and a reasonable understanding of the
- 10 law.
- 11 Grain Belt Express and MJMEUC in this
- 12 case have clearly shown that Grain Belt Express is
- 13 not holding itself out as a public utility to serve
- 14 all comers. And inasmuch as the Commission has
- 15 denied the last application without prejudice, it
- 16 is bound in this case to decide that case in
- 17 accordance with Danziger.
- 18 Danziger is a Missouri Supreme Court
- 19 case in 1918 that stated that state regulation of
- 20 private property can be had only pursuant to the
- 21 police power, and that police power must be
- 22 bottomed and wholly dependant upon the devotion of
- 23 private property to a public use.
- 24 Both Grain Belt Express and MJMEUC
- 25 have shown in this case that the facilities are not

1 devoted to public use but devoted to a certain select group of customers. 2 3 MJMEUC also claims that the Supreme 4 Court has overturned the case of State ex rel 5 Missouri Pacific Freight Transport in a later case 6 of State ex rel Lee American Freight Systems, Inc. versus Public Service Commission. Nothing can be 7 further from the truth. 9 The Missouri Pacific case, as Show-Me 10 has repeatedly pointed out, shows that the court 11 found that the interests of an applicant have to 12 give way to the prior rights of investors and the public interest, except to the extent that the 13 14 public service is served by the service of the 15 applicant. 16 In the Lee American case, the issue 17 was whether the Commission had the authority to find Lee American in violation of a general rule 18 19 requiring it to have a fire extinguisher on one of 20 its trucks. The question was whether Section 21 390.030, paragraph 9, not 393.170, granted Lee 22 American an exemption from that requirement, which 23 the court found that that paragraph did grant Lee 24 American an exception. 25 The Commission to the contrary argued

- 1 that Missouri Pacific case was precedent and bound
- 2 the Supreme Court in its finding on the issue of
- 3 390.030, and this -- the court simply said, no, the
- 4 Missouri Pacific case was a 393.170 CCN case and
- 5 did not apply in the Chapter 390 case.
- 6 You did overrule it to the extent
- 7 that the implication was that the court's opinion
- 8 had an impact on the 390 case, but it did not
- 9 overrule it as it pertained to a CCN case.
- 10 So in conclusion, Show-Me Concerned
- 11 Landowners are landowners from across the state who
- 12 have made investments in their land and this state
- 13 as farmers, ranchers and residents. They have a
- 14 significant property interest that the Missouri
- 15 Constitution protects.
- 16 Grain Belt Express has prosecuted its
- 17 case to the end. They have failed to show that
- 18 their interest exceeds the interest of the present
- 19 property holders in serving the public interest.
- 20 Indeed, the public interest would be harmed to
- 21 allow this private initiative, not held out for the
- 22 public service, to burden the land of the state of
- 23 Missouri.
- 24 Grain Belt Express is a private
- 25 interest, not holding its service out to all

1 customers. It is not a public utility. 2 Finally, it has failed to obtain all 3 the county assents as required by the Neighbors 4 United opinion. For these reasons, the application 5 should be denied. Thank you. 6 JUDGE BUSHMANN: Hold questions until 7 after lunch? CHAIRMAN HALL: That's fine. 9 JUDGE BUSHMANN: We'll hold questions until after lunch. We'll be in recess until 10 11 one o'clock. 12 (A BREAK WAS TAKEN.) 13 JUDGE BUSHMANN: Let's go back on the 14 record. We left off with Commissioner questions 15 for Mr. Linton from Show-Me Landowners, so we will 16 proceed with that. Commissioner questions? 17 CHAIRMAN HALL: No questions. 18 COMMISSIONER STOLL: No questions. 19 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: No questions. 20 COMMISSIONER RUPP: None. 2.1 MR. LINTON: Thank you. 22 JUDGE BUSHMANN: And the last 23 argument will be from Missouri Landowners Alliance. 24 MR. AGATHEN: Thank you, Judge. May 25 it please the Commission? My name is Paul Agathen,

- 1 and I'm here representing the Missouri Landowners
 2 Alliance today.
- 3 It seems fairly clear from what
- 4 you've heard and read, I'm sure, that this case
- 5 basically hinges on the meaning and application of
- 6 the second sentence of subsection 2 of
- 7 Section 393.170. That sentence, the second
- 8 sentence there states fairly explicitly that the
- 9 Commission may not issue a certificate of
- 10 convenience until and unless the utility has
- 11 provided the necessary municipal consents.
- 12 So how does Grain Belt get around
- 13 this very explicit restriction? You've heard the
- 14 arguments. They basically say that there are two
- 15 separate provisions in 393.170. One deals with
- 16 line certificates, one with area certificates. And
- 17 the provision dealing with area certificates is the
- 18 one that includes that prohibition against granting
- 19 a certificate without municipal consents, and they
- 20 argue, therefore, that it doesn't apply to line
- 21 certificates issued under subsection 1 of that
- 22 statute.
- Now, if we were starting here from
- 24 scratch, that argument might at first blush have
- 25 some merit. It may sound appealing. But we're not

- 1 starting here from scratch. Not at all. As you
- 2 recall, in the ATXI case, ATXI, the subsidiary of
- 3 Ameren, was also applying for a line certificate
- 4 pursuant to the first subsection of 393.170, and
- 5 they made the same arguments in substance that
- 6 Grain Belt and MJMEUC have made to you here today.
- 7 ATXI argued that they are applying
- 8 for a land certificate under subsection 1. The
- 9 language in question is contained in subsection 2.
- 10 Therefore, it doesn't apply to them.
- 11 You'll notice how similar that
- 12 argument sounds to what you've heard from MJMEUC
- 13 and Grain Belt. It's in essence in substance
- 14 identically the same argument. And as you know, in
- 15 your Report and Order in the ATXI case you
- 16 specifically, unequivocally rejected that argument
- 17 that they made, that ATXI made, which is the same
- 18 argument that Grain Belt and MJMEUC are raising
- 19 here.
- Just to remind you, at page 38 the
- 21 Commission said, quote, the Commission understands
- 22 ATXI's argument that county assent is required for
- 23 an area certificate to serve retail customers but
- 24 is not required for a transmission line certificate
- 25 which it seeks.

1 And then you went on to finally conclude your discussion on this issue by saying, 2 quote, the Commission is loathe to allow a utility 3 4 a novel end run around a statutorily required 5 county commission approval simply because the 6 utility would not serve retail customers, end 7 quote. So based on your decision in the ATXI 9 case, the second sentence of subsection 2 of 393.170 does indeed apply to the issuance of line 10 certificates under the first subsection of that 11 12. statute. 13 No disrespect whatsoever to counsel 14 for Grain Belt or MJMEUC and the other intervenors, 15 they have raised no new arguments in this case which ATXI did not already present to you and were 16 17 rejected by you in the ATXI case. 18 So to get around your ATXI decision, 19 Grain Belt must somehow distinguish the ATXI case from the case before you here, and they do that by 20 2.1 arguing that in the ATXI case ATXI wasn't really 2.2 applying for a line certificate and the Commission, well, they didn't really -- you didn't really grant 23 24 them a line certificate. 25 The problem is ATXI did apply for a

- 1 line certificate and you did grant a line
- 2 certificate in that case. That's readily apparent
- 3 if you look beyond the first sentence of the
- 4 application from ATXI which Grain Belt's relying
- 5 on. They say -- ATXI in the first sentence said
- 6 they were applying under 393.170 instead of saying
- 7 we're applying under 393.170.1. Saying they left
- 8 out the point 1, so, therefore, they weren't really
- 9 applying for a line certificate.
- 10 But if you look beyond the first
- 11 sentence of that application, it's very clear that
- 12 ATXI was indeed asking for a line certificate.
- 13 Later in the application, for example, ATXI
- 14 specifically stated that it was not seeking to
- 15 provide retail service to customers. So by
- 16 definition it was not seeking an area certificate,
- 17 and the only thing left is that it was seeking a
- 18 line certificate. Those are the only two
- 19 alternatives under 393.170.
- In addition, if the utility is
- 21 seeking an area certificate, it's required by your
- 22 regulations, your rules to provide a whole host of
- 23 information which is not required if they're simply
- 24 applying for a line certificate.
- 25 For example, if you're applying for

- 1 an area certificate, you have to include the names,
- 2 I think, of ten different customers and their
- 3 addresses who reside within the area and provide a
- 4 legal description of the area you propose to serve,
- 5 and none of that material was included by ATXI in
- 6 its application to you. So clearly they were not
- 7 applying for an area certificate, so they must have
- 8 been applying for a line certificate.
- 9 Further, at the outset of its
- 10 initial brief to the Commission, at page 2, ATXI
- 11 explicitly states that it is seeking a line
- 12 certificate under Section 393.170.1. They also
- 13 repeated that same statement at page 60 of their
- 14 brief to you. In addressing this matter in your
- 15 final order, you specifically recognized that ATXI
- 16 was indeed applying for a line certificate.
- 17 Finally, even MJMEUC agrees at page 3
- 18 of its supplemental brief that ATXI in that case
- 19 was, in fact, applying for a line certificate. So
- 20 despite what Grain Belt says, there's just no way
- 21 of avoiding the fact that in the ATXI case they
- 22 were applying for and were given a line
- 23 certificate. That decision just won't go away for
- 24 them.
- The bottom line is that the ATXI case

- 1 you already rejected the principal argument now
- 2 being raised by Grain Belt here and its supporters.
- 3 That second sentence of subsection 2 does indeed
- 4 apply to applications for line certificates. So if
- 5 you want to be consistent with your decision in the
- 6 ATXI case, you have no choice but to say that, in
- 7 fact, before a certificate may be issued for a line
- 8 certificate, the utility is required to have the
- 9 consent of the municipal authorities.
- 10 Given your decision in the ATXI case,
- 11 the decision by the Western District and the
- 12 Neighbors United decision is basically just icing
- on the cake from our perspective. We can rely in
- 14 good conscience and in good faith on your decision
- 15 in the ATXI case without even resorting at all to
- 16 the decision in the Neighbors United appeal.
- 17 But just let me briefly summarize
- 18 what we said in our supplemental brief about that
- 19 decision. ATXI made it clear to the Western
- 20 District that it was, in fact, seeking a line
- 21 certificate. It said so in its briefs. And ATXI
- 22 made the same argument to the court that it made to
- 23 the Commission about the two different subsections
- of 393.170 and the language in subsection 2 not
- 25 applying to line certificates under subsection 1.

1 Despite these arguments, the Western District ruled specifically that the Commission 2 3 could not under those circumstances grant ATXI a 4 line certificate. Here's the key to that decision, 5 I believe. In finding against ATXI, the Western 6 District must necessarily have rejected the 7 argument that the second sentence of subsection 2 does not apply to line certificates. If the court 9 had not rejected that argument, it would have had no choice but to rule in ATXI's favor. 10 11 So the precedent is clearly on our 12 side here. Just think of the consequences beyond 13 the precedent. If you rule, if you give Grain Belt 14 what it is they're asking for here, ATXI would have 15 been denied a line certificate because it did not 16 have the proper municipal consents, but Grain Belt 17 would be granted a line certificate free and clear 18 even though it also did not have the proper 19 municipal consents. That is what Grain Belt is 20 asking you to do. That seems to make no sense 2.1 either lawfully or from a regulatory policy 22 standpoint. 23 That leaves just a few secondary matters to address. First, both Grain Belt and 24 25 MJMEUC contend that county commissioners do not

- 1 come within the meaning of the term municipal
- 2 authorities as used in 393.170. However, in the
- 3 context of this statute, the term municipal
- 4 authorities has consistently been understood to
- 5 include county commissions. Your own rules require
- 6 when a utility files for a certificate of
- 7 convenience that they provide you with the proper
- 8 municipal consents, and you include county consents
- 9 as well as consents from cities and towns.
- 10 In addition, there's a case cited at
- 11 page 4 and 5 of our motion to dismiss which
- 12 confirms that commissioners are, in fact, included
- 13 within the term proper municipal authorities.
- 14 Finally, the joint supplemental brief
- 15 of the other six parties who joined together here
- 16 also backs us on this issue. At page 6 of their
- 17 brief they refer to a State Supreme Court, Missouri
- 18 State Supreme Court case which includes -- says it
- 19 includes county commissions within that term proper
- 20 municipal authorities.
- 21 In contrast, neither Grain Belt nor
- 22 MJMEUC has been able to cite a single Commission
- 23 case or court case which has said that county
- 24 commissions are not included within that
- 25 definition.

1	Another matter we were invited to		
2	address in our supplemental briefs is the request		
3	for waiver of the Commission rules which Grain Belt		
4	has submitted. If, in fact, the courts and the law		
5	itself requires that they have received the consent		
6	of the proper municipal authorities before you can		
7	issue a line certificate, then there's absolutely		
8	no reason or no effect of granting a waiver of your		
9	own rules. If it's required by the statute, then		
10	granting a waiver is simply a meaningless exercise.		
11	CHAIRMAN HALL: So if it's		
12	meaningless, you're not opposed to it?		
13	MR. AGATHEN: I wouldn't be opposed		
14	to it, your Honor. I mean, I think it's a wasted		
15	exercise, but no, I wouldn't.		
16	If you'll bear with me, I'd like to		
17	address just one other point that we made in our		
18	supplemental brief. The effected landowners in the		
19	area have been suffering financially and in many		
20	other ways for years now. We urge you to get this		
21	case completed as quickly as possible. We ask that		
22	you reject the application on the grounds that		
23	Grain Belt has not submitted all the necessary		
24	information which is required by statute.		
25	If they had neglected, for example,		

- 1 to supply information which proved that there was a
- 2 need for this line in Missouri, I can't imagine
- 3 that the Commission would not have dismissed their
- 4 application by this point. The requirement to
- 5 supply the proper municipal consents stands on the
- 6 same footing as this other criteria, the Tartan
- 7 criteria, for example.
- 8 So there's no reason, if you would be
- 9 dismissing the case for lack of evidence on those
- 10 other criteria, why you shouldn't do the same for
- 11 the lack of evidence of municipal consents. Thank
- 12 you.
- 13 JUDGE BUSHMANN: Questions?
- 14 CHAIRMAN HALL: No questions. Thank
- 15 you.
- 16 COMMISSIONER STOLL: I have no
- 17 questions. Thank you.
- 18 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: No questions.
- 19 Thank you.
- 20 JUDGE BUSHMANN: No questions. Thank
- 21 you, sir.
- MR. ZOBRIST: Judge, I was wondering
- 23 if, as the applicant, I could have just two or
- 24 three minutes to just respond briefly to a couple
- 25 points that were raised that I did not address.

1 JUDGE BUSHMANN: We'll allow it. MR. ZOBRIST: Thank you. Thank you 2 3 very much. May it please the Commission? 4 First of all, just a minor point. We 5 had -- Mr. Linton and I both talked in our 6 presentations about when 393.170 was split into 7 three parts. I just want to ask the Commission to take official notice of what happened in the statutes because I believe Mr. Linton said it was 9 the Reviser of Statutes that did this. 10 11 Actually, it was the Legislature that 12 did this. And I'd like to enter this into -- well, 13 I'll give a copy to the judge. I don't have copies 14 for everybody, but I can give a copy to the major 15 opponents to show you what I ask to take official 16 notice of. It's essentially the Revised Statutes of Missouri, Volume 2, the title page, the second 17 page, which is the Reviser of Statutes which simply 18 19 implicates what the Legislature had to do, and then the new section, which is 393.170. 20 21 Judge, should I hand it to you or to 22 the court reporter? 23 JUDGE BUSHMANN: Have other counsel 24 had a chance to review it? I'd like to look at it. 25 MR. ZOBRIST: Sure. And again, this

- 1 is actually provided for the benefit of the
- 2 Commission. I think you've got the authority under
- 3 your rules and under the law to take official
- 4 notice of Missouri statutes anyway. It's just the
- 5 1949 version that was promulgated in November of
- 6 1950 and then the page from the statute, from the
- 7 statutes, which is Section 393.170.
- 8 JUDGE BUSHMANN: Any parties have an
- 9 objection to taking official notice of the statutes
- 10 of 1949 for that section?
- MR. AGATHEN: I do not, Judge, but on
- 12 the other hand, I think this misrepresents what it
- 13 purports to be showing here.
- JUDGE BUSHMANN: Well, I'm not taking
- 15 official notice of Mr. Zobrist's representations,
- 16 just the statute itself.
- 17 MR. AGATHEN: I have no objection to
- 18 that.
- JUDGE BUSHMANN: In that case, the
- 20 Commission will take official notice of
- 21 Section 393.170, Revised Statutes of Missouri 1949.
- MR. ZOBRIST: Judge, would you prefer
- 23 that I hand this to the court reporter and have it
- 24 marked as an exhibit?
- JUDGE BUSHMANN: I think you can go

- 1 ahead and give it to the court reporter. I'm not
- 2 sure it would be an exhibit at this point.
- 3 MR. ZOBRIST: Thank you. And the
- 4 only point I'm making here is that this was an act
- 5 of the Legislature that occurred. And if you know
- 6 your Missouri history, you look at some of the
- 7 people that were on that committee, there were two
- 8 state senators, Floyd Gibson who was a state
- 9 senator from Independence who became a judge on the
- 10 Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit, and Edward
- 11 Long who became one of our U.S. Senators. So these
- 12 are people who knew what they were doing, and the
- 13 title page of the statutes indicate this is an act
- 14 of the Legislature. It's not just some bureaucrat
- 15 over in the Capitol building.
- 16 Commissioner Stoll asked about
- 17 harmonization, and it was a good question. And the
- 18 point that I would like to emphasize is that the
- 19 harmonization that the Court of Appeals did is
- 20 stated in the previous paragraph.
- 21 In the sentence from the Younger case
- 22 that Commissioner Stoll cited it says, all
- 23 provisions of the statute must be harmonized.
- 24 Every clause must have some meaning. Then the next
- 25 sentence says, our harmonization of the statute

- 1 preserves the integrity of both subdivisions,
- 2 subdivisions of Section 393.170 and effectuates the
- 3 plain meaning of the statute.
- 4 What are the two subsections? Go to
- 5 the previous paragraph, subsection 2 and subsection
- 6 3. What Mr. Agathen would have you do is amend
- 7 subsection 1 to take that last sentence that's in
- 8 subsection 2 for area certificates and essentially
- 9 amend subsection 1 and put that sentence after the
- 10 sole sentence of point 1, which only talks about
- 11 construction, only the construction of
- 12 infrastructure.
- I agree with Mr. Linton that you've
- 14 got to read what the Court of Appeals says, but you
- 15 do not have an obligation and I don't think you
- 16 have the authority to go beyond the exact language
- 17 of what the Court of Appeals says.
- 18 It is true, the judge pointed out at
- 19 the beginning of the opinion, they talk about the
- 20 ATXI project, the Mark Twain project being a
- 21 transmission line. Do they talk about a line
- 22 certificate? Mr. Agathen would suggest to you that
- 23 they do talk about a line certificate, but they
- 24 don't. They talk about area certificates under
- 25 point 2. They don't call them area certificates,

- 1 but it's under subsection 2.
- 2 And if you were to accept that
- 3 reasoning, you would be overruling 60 to 70 years
- 4 of Court of Appeals cases starting with the Harline
- 5 case, a couple of Union Electric Company cases, the
- 6 Aguila cases that make very clear that the Missouri
- 7 appellate courts have distinguished between area
- 8 certificates and line certificates.
- 9 So the way forward again is clear,
- 10 it's page 6, and you have got the authority to
- 11 issue a line certificate. You need to be clear.
- 12 You need to be explicit. That wasn't done in the
- 13 Report and Order in the ATXI case.
- 14 It's difficult to speculate why the
- 15 Court of Appeals didn't understand the distinction
- 16 between construction under point 1 and serving a
- 17 franchised area under point 2. It's difficult to
- 18 understand why the Court of Appeals didn't look at
- 19 that first sentence under point 3 where it clearly
- 20 talks about two types of authority, such
- 21 construction or such exercise of the right,
- 22 privilege or franchise. Construction is building
- 23 stuff. Exercise of the right is serving people.
- We do agree that neither ATXI nor
- 25 Grain Belt Express are going to serve people,

1 retail customers. So let me just simply conclude by 2 3 saying we urge you to read the exact language of 4 the Court of Appeals and not go beyond it, to grant 5 the filing waiver with regard to governmental 6 consents and grant us a line certificate of 7 convenience and necessity. Thank you. 9 JUDGE BUSHMANN: Ouestions? 10 COMMISSIONER STOLL: T have a 11 question. So our harmonization of the statute 12 preserves the integrity of both subdivisions of 13 Section 393.170, what do you think that -- how are 14 you interpreting that? 15 MR. ZOBRIST: You have to go to the 16 paragraph before that, and this is the paragraph that's on slide 3 of my slide deck. It's point 2 17 and point 3. Those are the subdivisions. It's not 18 the line subdivision, which is point 1. 19 20 See, the way I COMMISSIONER STOLL: 2.1 read it is that every clause must -- let's see. 2.2 Our harmonization of the statute preserves both --23 not both -- preserves the integrity of both subdivisions of 396.170 and effectuates the plain 24 25 meaning of the statute. It doesn't mean -- you're

- 1 not saying it just means 2 and 3, are you?
- 2 MR. ZOBRIST: Well, I --
- 3 COMMISSIONER STOLL: I don't read it
- 4 that way. I'm not an English teacher. I'm a
- 5 lawyer.
- 6 MR. ZOBRIST: I would say two things,
- 7 Commissioner. When they talk about both
- 8 subdivisions, they clearly only mean 2 and 3. When
- 9 they talk about harmonization of the statute, okay,
- 10 what do they say about subsection 1? Nothing.
- 11 They said nothing about that.
- 12 COMMISSIONER STOLL: That's why I --
- 13 the way I read it, it's preserving integrity of
- both, both subdivisions of Section 393.170 and
- 15 effectuates the -- I lost my place -- et cetera,
- 16 et cetera.
- 17 MR. ZOBRIST: Effectuates the plain
- 18 meaning of the statute.
- 19 COMMISSIONER STOLL: Anyway, I don't
- 20 need any more explanation.
- 21 MR. ZOBRIST: And I would say that it
- 22 does, at least in our case, because we did not make
- 23 the argument that ATXI did that we don't need to
- 24 get a 229.100 assent. We've always said we
- 25 understand we're obligated under other parts of

- 1 Missouri statutes to get the county assent and that
- 2 we're not relieved from that obligation by getting
- 3 a line -- a line CCN.
- 4 So we're committed to our obligations
- 5 under point 1 and other portions of Missouri law.
- 6 So we never made an argument that said we're
- 7 somehow relieved if you give us a CCN from going to
- 8 the counties, which I think that's the end run that
- 9 you referred to there because Ameren said -- pardon
- 10 me. ATXI I believe said we don't need to get these
- 11 county consents. You said, no, no, you still have
- 12 to get them, but we're going to make your CCN
- 13 conditional. Well, the conditional thing is what
- 14 the Court of Appeals got concerned about.
- 15 And we're saying, no, just issue your
- 16 CCN. We understand we've got independent
- 17 obligations and we will fulfill them.
- 18 JUDGE BUSHMANN: Any further
- 19 questions?
- 20 CHAIRMAN HALL: Yeah. I'm still a
- 21 little confused about your request for a waiver.
- 22 The provision that you cite is in Chapter 4, and
- 23 are you taking the position that that waiver
- 24 provision applies to all Commission rules? Because
- 25 it's always been my understanding that there are

- 1 some rules that can be waived and there are some
- 2 that can't, and you have to go and find a specific
- 3 waiver provision in the chapter that you're in to
- 4 see if a waiver is authorized.
- 5 MR. ZOBRIST: Well, that's probably
- 6 true, but that subsection 4 is in the applications
- 7 and we're filing an application for a CCN, so I
- 8 think it applies squarely.
- 9 As I recall, though, on the other
- 10 rule -- and it's in our brief, Commissioner -- I
- 11 think we also cite that there's a reference in the
- 12 CCN rule that says it can be waived but it directs
- 13 you to go to subsection 4 of 2.060, which applies
- 14 to all applications. So I'm not an expert on other
- 15 things that may not be able to be waived, but this
- 16 clearly can be waived under applications. Of
- 17 course, we submitted an application, and there is a
- 18 reference in our brief to the waiver provision that
- 19 relates specifically to CCNs.
- 20 CHAIRMAN HALL: Thank you.
- 21 COMMISSIONER STOLL: I would ask if
- 22 anybody else, Staff, somebody else have closing
- 23 remarks?
- 24 MR. WILLIAMS: Since the Commission's
- 25 invited it...

1 COMMISSIONER STOLL: I invited you, 2 yes. 3 MR. WILLIAMS: I suggest the 4 Commission look at who the judges were on the 5 panels for the Stop Aquila case, the Cass County 6 case and the ATXI case. You'll find commonality 7 there in Judge Newton. JUDGE BUSHMANN: Any other matter we 9 need to address before we adjourn? The transcript of today's proceeding 10 11 will be available no later than Monday, August 7. 12 Hearing no other matters --13 MR. ZOBRIST: Judge, I'm just 14 perplexed with the status of my revised statutes 15 from 1949. Do you want to mark that as an 16 appellate exhibit, if not a Grain Belt Express 17 exhibit, or does it really matter? I think it might be helpful to have it in the record someplace 18 19 just for identification purposes. 20 I believe you're up JUDGE BUSHMANN: 2.1 to -- just for identification purposes, I believe 2.2 your next number is Exhibit No. 140. So why don't 23 we just mark that as Exhibit No. 140 so we can include it in the record, although it's taken for 24 official notice. 25

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1	MR. ZOBRIST: I understand that.
2	Thank you, Judge.
3	JUDGE BUSHMANN: Hearing nothing
4	further, we are adjourned.
5	(GRAIN BELT EXPRESS EXHIBIT 140 WAS
6	MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION BY THE REPORTER.)
7	(WHEREUPON, the oral arguments
8	concluded at 1:33 p.m.)
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		1 agc 1743
1	GRAIN BELT EXPRESS EXHIBITS MARKED	REC'D
2		REC D
3	EXHIBIT 140 Revised Statutes of Missouri 1949 1744	
4	Revised Statutes of Missoull 1919 1711	
	MLA EXHIBITS	
5	EXHIBIT 375	
6	Report and Order,	
7	File No. EA-2015-0146 1647	1647
	EXHIBIT 376	
8	ATXI's Initial Post-Hearing Brief, File No. EA-2015-0146 1647	1647
9		1047
10	EXHIBIT NO. 377 Brief of Respondent Ameren	
	Transmission Company of Illinois,	
11	Case No. WD79883 1647	1647
12	EXHIBIT 378 Brief of Respondent Public Service	
13	Commission of the State of Missouri	
14	in Response to Brief of Appellant Neighbors United Against Ameren's	
1 1 1	Power Line, Case No. WD79883 1647	1647
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	2	CERTIFICATE
	3	STATE OF MISSOURI)) ss.
	4	COUNTY OF COLE)
	5	I, Kellene K. Feddersen, Certified
	6	Shorthand Reporter with the firm of Midwest
	7	Litigation Services, do hereby certify that I was
	8	personally present at the proceedings had in the
	9	above-entitled cause at the time and place set
	10	forth in the caption sheet thereof; that I then and
	11	there took down in Stenotype the proceedings had;
	12	and that the foregoing is a full, true and correct
	13	transcript of such Stenotype notes so made at such
	14	time and place.
	15	Given at my office in the City of
	16	Jefferson, County of Cole, State of Missouri.
	17	Leller Fedden
	18	Kellene K. Feddersen, RPR, CSR, CCR
	19	
	20	
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