

1 ILLINOIS COMMERCE COMMISSION

2 DOCKET NUMBER 12-0598

3 DIRECT TESTIMONY

4 OF

5 Intervener, Greg Edwards on behalf of the Paul Edwards Jr. Trust and

6 Hi-Blu Dairy Farms

7 Q: Please state your name?

8 A: **Greg Edwards on behalf of the Paul Edwards Jr. Trust (the "Trust") and Hi-Blu**
9 **Dairy Farm.**

10 Q: Please state your current residence?

11 A: **6931 Edwards Road, Payson, IL 62360.**

12 Q: Please identify by street address and parcel number any real property in which you claim
13 an interest that will be affected by the proposed electric transmission line and related facilities
14 that are subject of Ameren Transmission Company of Illinois' ("ATXI) Petition currently before
15 the Illinois Commerce Commission?

16 **PIN: 20-0-1397-00-100 (the "Dairy Facility and Farm") A true, accurate and correct**
17 **map of the parcel consisting of the Dairy Facility and Farm is attached hereto Exhibit 1.**
18 **The Dairy Facility and Farm is owned by Paul Edwards, Jr. Trust (the "Trust")**

19 **PIN: 20-0-1397-000-00 (the "Home") A true, accurate and correct map of the parcel**
20 **consisting of the Home is attached hereto as Exhibit 2. The Home is owned by Gregory and**
21 **Jeanette Edwards (collectively the "Edwards").**

22 **PIN: 20-0-1396-000-06**

23 **PIN: 20-0-1413-000-00**

24 Q: Please identify the nature of your interest in the property?

25 A: **The Home is the primary residence of the Edwards. The Dairy Facility and Farm is**
26 **operated by Hi-Blue Dairy. Hi-Blu Dairy is a family operated dairy barn. A true, correct**
27 **and accurate aerial view of the Home and Dairy Facility and Farm is attached hereto as**
28 **Exhibit 3. The Dairy Facility and Farm have been in the Edwards family for three**
29 **generations.**

30 Q: Are there any building(s) and/or structure(s) on the property?

31 A: Yes. The map attached as Exhibit 3 shows the various structures on the property.

32 Q: Is Hi-Blu a family dairy operation?

33 A: Yes. Hi-Blu has been in my family for 65 to 66 years. We have a son and intend to
34 have Hi-Blu to continue in my family for several generations to follow.

35 Q: Is there any revenue that is earned from the property, if so what is the revenue?

36 A: Hi-Blu earns approximately \$423,000 annually from its dairy operations. The farm
37 produces grain, which is used in the dairy operation.

38 Q: What is the quality of the soil on the property?

39 A: Terra and Muscatine.

40 Q: Is the property encumbered by any existing utility easement(s)?

41 A: There is a local electric cooperative transmission line running along the road in
42 front of the house.

43 Q: Are you in favor of ATXI utilizing existing right of ways for the ATXI transmission line?

44 A: Yes. ATXI proposes to place its Alternative Route in front of the dairy operation.

45 Q: Do you oppose the alternative route proposed by ATXI?

46 A: Yes.

47 Q: Do you oppose the entire length of the alternative route?

48 A: Yes.

49 Q: Have you reviewed any maps provided by ATXI?

50 A: Yes. I reviewed the map attached hereto as Exhibit 4.

51 Q: Does the map at Exhibit 4 show the location of the proposed transmission line?

52 A: Yes.

53 Q: Where does the map as Exhibit 4 show the transmission line crossing your property?

54 A: I have drawn a circle around the property on Exhibit 4. The map shows the
55 transmission line running directly south of the Home and directly over the driveway
56 leading to the Dairy Facility.

57 Q: What is the basis of your opposition to the alternative route?

58 A: I object to the proposed alternate route for the following reasons:

59 1. The proximity to the dairy operations: The proposed alternate route is nearly on
60 top of the Home and the Dairy Facilities. As set forth in the measurements
61 above, the proposed transmission line is approximately 50 to 60 feet from the

62 calf buildings and farm office, which does not include the estimated 150 foot
63 swath of land that the transmission line requires. Given the width, or swath, that
64 the transmission line requires, the lines will be literally on top of several existing
65 structures on the property. Hi-Blu cannot relocate any of its operations away
66 from the proposed line because Hi-Blu already utilizes all of the space on the
67 property for its current operations.

68 **2. Stray Voltage: I object to the proposed alternate route because of the impact of**
69 **stray voltage on cows. Stray voltage will lower the milk production of the cattle**
70 **and effect their dispositions. Loss of use of the driveway: The map of the**
71 **Alternate Route shows the transmission line routed directly over a driveway that**
72 **Hi-Blu uses for ingress and egress.**

73 **3. Impact on Employees: Hi-Blu employs two non-family members. If the**
74 **Commission approved ATXI's construction of the transmission line on the**
75 **Alternate Route, it may require ATXI to condemn the property. Hi-Blu is not**
76 **likely to relocate. Hi-Blu will be forced to terminate the employees of the dairy**
77 **operation.**

78 **Q:** What is the expected financial loss from the use of the property as a result of the
79 alternative route?

80 **A:** Hi-Blu will suffer a total loss if the Alternate Route is constructed where it is
81 currently sited. As I previously stated, the proximity of the transmission line to the dairy
82 barns makes continued operations of the dairy barn impractical, if not impossible.

83 **Q:** What is the proximity of the building(s) and/or structure(s) on the property to the
84 alternative route proposed by ATXI?

85 **A:** I reviewed the map at Exhibit 4, which ATXI produced showing the location of the
86 Alternative Route in relation to the Home and Dairy Facility. I measured the distance from
87 the anticipated centerline to the various structures on the property. The power lines are
88 approximately 52 feet of the dairy calf buildings and lots, 61 feet of a farm office and shop,
89 204 feet from the dairy cow barnyard, and 209 feet from the milking parlor.

90 **Q:** Do you have any other objections to the Alternative Route?

91 **A:** Yes. My wife and I are hard working people. We chose to become dairy farmers
92 because of our commitment to our family's legacy and because of our commitment to

93 maintain the property on which we live and work. ATXI has submitted an Alternative
94 Route that places its transmission line on top of our home and business, purportedly
95 because of the need for greater reliability to electric transmission. With all due respect,
96 ATXI's policy reasons for destroying (at worst) or disrupting (at best) is not greater than
97 Hi-Blu's interests. The United States and the State of Illinois cannot afford to lose more
98 dairy farms In 1992, there were 2662 dairy farms in the state. In 2011, that number had
99 decreased to 810. See National Milk Producers Federation, October 2012, pg. 7. Hi-Blu
100 provides milk to the citizens of Illinois as well as the Midwest. It employees dairy-hands
101 and is an important part of the local economy. Indeed, as a result of Hi-Blu does business
102 with the local feed company, requires milk drivers to haul milk, retains veterinary services
103 to care for the cows, and is involved with numerous other dairy support businesses. If the
104 Commission grants ATXI permission to install transmission lines as proposed, it will
105 devastate my family's business. ATXI does not have enough money to compensate my
106 family for the financial and emotional toll the project will have on my business and family.

107 Q: Does this conclude your testimony?

108 A: Yes.

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GREG EDWARDS ON BEHALF
OF PAUL EDWARDS JR.
TRUST (The "Trust) and HI-BLU
DAIRY FARM

124 STATE OF ILLINOIS)
125) SS
126 COUNTY OF ADAMS)
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128 Signed and Sworn to before me, a Notary in the County and State aforesaid by Greg
129 Edwards on behalf of Paul Edwards Jr. Trust and Hi-Blu Dairy Farm on this
130 27th day of March, 2013

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Nancy C. Greer
NOTARY PUBLIC

