

ILLINOIS COMMERCE COMMISSION

Docket No. 12-0598 (R)

DIRECT TESTIMONY

OF

BOB DOAN

Submitted on behalf of the Coalition of Property Owners and Interested Parties in Piatt, Douglas
and Moultrie Counties, and the Channon Family Trust

November 13, 2013

1 **Q. Please state your name and the subject of your testimony.**

2 A. My name is Bob Doan, and I am the Community Development Coordinator for the
3 Arthur Area Economic Development Corporation, based in Arthur, Illinois. The subject
4 of my testimony is the negative effect on tourism that the proposed 345kV transmission line will
5 have if it is located in proximity to the Amish community.

6

7 **Q. What are your tourism-related duties as the Community Development**
8 **Coordinator?**

9 A. A portion of my duties as the Community Development Coordinator for the Arthur Area
10 Economic Development Corporation is to manage our local Arthur Amish Country Welcome
11 Center located in Arthur, IL. We have visitors from all over the world, including from over 50
12 different countries. Visitors come here from all over the United States, and from throughout
13 Illinois.

14

15 **Q. What attracts tourism to this area?**

16 A. Visitors enjoy coming to our pristine and quiet portion of God's wonderful creation, and
17 they come to see the beauty and cleanliness of the Arthur Area which is free of modern,
18 industrial blight so typical of the environments in which they may live. Our area is free of
19 interstates, power lines, skyscrapers, and industrial plants. The skyline and landscape views of
20 our area are tremendous draws for people from around the globe. Our air is clean, brisk and
21 refreshing and visitors come to recall a time in history when lives were simpler and less
22 dependent upon technology. Visitors also come to experience many of the crafts of local
23 tradesmen whose handcrafted products are world renown. At our Welcome Center, I frequently

24 hear visitors comment on the “beauty” and “pace” of the Arthur area. They indicate they come
25 here to see the Amish and experience the “Amish way of life” as much as possible. This is the
26 draw of the Arthur Amish area, and it brings many of our visitors back again and again.

27

28 **Q. How do most visitors arrive to the Arthur area?**

29 A. Most of the visitors to the Arthur area arrive via Route 36 from the north, coming through
30 Tuscola, and Route 133 from the east, coming through Arcola. Tuscola and Arcola are also
31 communities that have a strong Amish presence. Currently our visitors do not observe or
32 experience any large, obtrusive constructed objects on their approach to the Arthur area. This is
33 important for us to maintain a proper environment for visitors as they enter the “Heart of Illinois
34 Amish Country.” In addition, my experience is that many of the tourists from foreign countries
35 who come to the Arthur area are visitors associated with the University of Illinois, Illinois State
36 University, and Millikin University. These first-time visitors all approach the Arthur area from
37 the north.

38

39 **Q. Would the 345kV transmission line route proposed by MCPO have a negative**
40 **impact on the Arthur Amish area?**

41 A. Yes. The Amish do not use many of the electrical “conveniences” in today’s society for
42 which electrical power transmission is required. The proposed MCPO route, as proposed, will
43 “frame” the north entrance to our beautiful area. Currently, many of our visitors enter our area
44 from the north via Route 36. Having this entrance “framed” by a huge and intrusive high-
45 voltage transmission line would be devastating to the Arthur area from both an aesthetics point
46 of view and from a financial point of view. Tourism is a huge factor in the economy of the

47 Arthur Amish area. To maintain tourism to our area we need to protect the scenic qualities that
48 make the Arthur Amish area so attractive to visitors. The proposed MCPO route cuts directly
49 through the “triangle” of Amish communities – Arthur, Tuscola, and Arcola.

50

51 **Q. Does this conclude your direct testimony?**

52 A. Yes.

