

STATE OF ILLINOIS 2014 FEB 19 A 11: 06

ILLINOIS COMMERCE COMMISSION'S OFFICE

COMMONWEALTH EDISON COMPANY :

No. 13-0657

Application for a Certificate of Public
Convenience and Necessity, pursuant to
Section 8-406.1 of the Illinois Public Utilities
Act, and an Order pursuant to Section 8-503
of Illinois Public Utilities Act, to Construct,
Operate and Maintain a new 345 kilovolt
transmission line in Ogle, DeKalb, Kane and
DuPage Counties, Illinois. :

DIRECT TESTIMONY OF

KIM GOUKER

CHAIRMAN, OGLE COUNTY BOARD

OGLE COUNTY EXHIBIT 1.0

1 **I. INTRODUCTION**

2 **A. Witness Identification**

3 **Q. Please state your name, present position, and business address?**

4 A. My name is Kim Gouker. I am the County Board Chairman of the Ogle County Board.
5 My business address is 105 S. Fifth Street #321, Oregon, Illinois, 61061.

6 **Q. Are you submitting this testimony in your capacity as Chairman of the Ogle County
7 Board?**

8 A. Yes.

9 **B. Background and Qualifications**

10 **Q. What is your educational and professional background?**

11 A. I grew up in Byron, Illinois and am a 1971 graduate of Byron High School. I started
12 college at Rock Valley College in Rockford, Illinois in 1971, and transferred to Illinois
13 State University in 1973. I graduated from Illinois State University in 1976, obtaining a
14 Bachelor's of Science in Mathematics and Business Administration, and a minor in
15 Economics. I hold several certifications from The American College in Bryn Mawr,
16 Pennsylvania, including: Chartered Life Underwriter (1981), Advanced Estate Planning
17 (1982), Business Tax Planning (1983), and Chartered Financial Consultant (1983).

18 In total, I have spent nearly four decades running my own financial advising
19 business in Ogle County, Illinois. This began after graduating from Illinois State
20 University in 1976, when I started working as a life insurance and annuity advisor. In
21 1985, I became a registered representative investment broker. In 1986, I added income
22 tax preparation services to my practice.

23 Q. **What is your background in local government?**

24 A. In addition to running my own business, I have been active in local politics for many
25 years. I was elected to the Byron Community Unit School District #226 Board in 1979
26 and served in that role until 1987. In 1996, I ran for the Ogle County Board and, with the
27 exception of one year, have been on the County Board ever since. I spent all but two
28 years on the County Board's finance committee and have served as Chairman of this
29 committee for the past three years.

30 Q. **What are your duties as County Board Chairman?**

31 A. As County Board Chairman, my duties include overseeing the Ogle County Board's
32 activities and day-to-day operations, which includes authority over zoning, housing,
33 transportation, agriculture, cultural and natural resources, and county facilities. More
34 specifically, I focus on promoting economic development within Ogle County and work
35 closely with community leaders and residents, businesses, and interest groups to further
36 the economy within Ogle County.

37 C. **Purpose of Testimony**

38 Q. **What is the purpose of your testimony?**

39 A. The purpose of this testimony is to express my support in favor of Commonwealth
40 Edison's ("ComEd") Grand Prairie Gateway transmission line project. It is evident that
41 the project will produce numerous benefits to Ogle County, its residents, and neighboring
42 communities. I am therefore recommending, on behalf of Ogle County, that the
43 Commission approve the project.

44 **II. RECOMMENDATION THAT THE ILLINOIS COMMERCE COMMISSION**
45 **APPROVE THE PROJECT**

46 Q. **Could you please tell me about Ogle County?**

47 A. Yes. Ogle County is located in North Central Illinois. According to the 2010 census,
48 Ogle County has a population of 53,497, however Ogle County has experienced
49 continued growth over the past several years. The County's economy is driven by
50 several industries – most notably are agriculture, food distribution and processing,
51 manufacturing, and energy generation.

52 Q. **What is Ogle County's interest in the Grand Prairie Gateway transmission line?**

53 A. Under the proposed routes, a significant portion of the Grand Prairie Gateway
54 transmission line route would run through Ogle County, up to and including its terminus
55 at the Byron substation, which is also located in Ogle County. Because of this, the
56 businesses, residents and communities of Ogle County stand to benefit significantly from
57 the line.

58 Q. **How will Ogle County benefit from the Grand Prairie Gateway Transmission line?**

59 A. Ogle County continues to grow and, as Chairman, I am committed to encouraging
60 residential and economic growth throughout Ogle County's communities. For example,
61 one of my first actions as Chairman was to appoint another County Board member,
62 himself a former mayor experienced in economic development, as a Board liaison for
63 economic development within all of Ogle County's communities. As someone who has
64 lived my entire life in Ogle County, I know that key to that growth are job creation and
65 the provision of reliable and cost-effective electricity. I am confident the Grand Prairie
66 Gateway project will contribute to both of those objectives.

67 Q. **Have you participated in the route planning process?**

68 A. Yes. Within the past year, ComEd has held numerous stakeholder meetings and
69 workshops. I attended and actively participated in many of them.

70 Q. **Does the Ogle County Board have any concerns with the proposed route as it
71 pertains to Ogle County?**

72 A. None that I am aware of. The proposed route comports with Ogle County's anticipated
73 growth and development plans, accommodates environmental concerns, and is acceptable
74 to Ogle County.

75 Q. **Has the Ogle County Board engaged in any other actions in support of the Grand
76 Prairie Gateway line?**

77 A. Yes. On February 11, 2014, I submitted to the County Board's Executive Committee a
78 Resolution (Ogle Ex. 1.1) in support of the project. I will submit the Resolution to the
79 County Board for vote at its next scheduled meeting on February 18, 2014.

80 Q. **Could you briefly summarize the Resolution?**

81 A. Yes. The Resolution states that the need for reliable electric service at a reasonable price
82 is an important and necessary priority for citizens and businesses within Ogle County,
83 and also important to promoting economic development and job creation. The
84 Resolution specifically notes the following benefits: (1) the continued development of an
85 effectively competitive electricity market allowing for reasonably priced electricity to be
86 delivered to the citizens and businesses of Ogle County; (2) substantial reductions in
87 energy costs and congestion costs for the citizens and businesses of Ogle County; (3) an
88 increase in electric reliability, especially during times of extreme weather events; and, (4)

89 the continued provision of safe, reliable, efficient electric service given the anticipated
90 future growth in the area of the transmission line. The Resolution concludes by stating
91 that the Ogle County Board supports the proposed Grand Prairie Gateway Project and
92 recommends the Commission approve the project.

93 Q. **Does this complete your direct testimony?**

94 A. Yes.