

June 21, 2024

The Honorable Jennifer Granholm
Secretary, U.S. Department of Energy
Forrestal Building
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Secretary Granholm:

On May 8, the Department of Energy proposed a list of 10 potential National Interest Electric Transmission Corridors (NIETCs), areas of the country where DOE has deemed consumers are harmed by the “lack of adequate transmission” and the development of new transmission would advance “important national interests.” If implemented, NIETC corridors would impact 21 states. On behalf of Farm Bureau members in those affected states, we urge DOE to host in-person field hearings in every state containing the proposed NIETCs to receive landowner feedback.

We appreciate DOE’s effort to address transmission siting and permitting needs. However, we have concerns with this proposal including: the taking of private property through eminent domain for transmission line projects; DOE’s use of an applicant-driven, route-specific framework, which may violate the Federal Power Act; and usurping the regulatory authority of states to fast-track certain projects at the expense of long-standing protections for ratepayers and landowners.

We are also concerned about the staggering amount of private property that could be impacted by NIETC designations, as some of them are slated to be 100 miles wide. To our members, one high-voltage transmission line alone can cause countless problems to agricultural operations, preventing farmers and ranchers from efficiently planting, raising and harvesting crops by disrupting current and future land uses. Large transmission projects can also negatively impact agricultural drainage and cause soil compaction, which can take years to mitigate.

Our nation’s electricity grid is built upon the backs of farmers, ranchers and landowners, and to allow these projects to move forward without significant landowner input, compensation and protection would be unjust.

In order to understand landowner impact, we strongly recommend DOE host field hearings in every state the proposed NIETC routes will impact.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Respectfully,

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American Farm Bureau Federation

Garrett Hawkins
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Missouri Farm Bureau Federation

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