

Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Darron Orr and I am a third generation farmer who resides in Corwin township which is in the SE corner of Stutsman county.

It is my belief that our township, along with our neighboring township, are the reason for the onslaught of bills being introduced by this legislative session to punish and silence not only political sub-divisions, but our citizens who make up this great state. Why do I believe this? Testimony by Jason Weiers of Otter Tail Power Company to the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee, states that there are two townships in Stutsman County that enacted a 2600 foot setback from an "occupied residence".

The current regulations or setbacks with the Public Service Commission pertaining to high voltage transmission lines are antiquated. The current setback is from the 1980's and it doesn't address the size and scope of these new high voltage transmission lines or projects.

The simple fact is this and it has happened to a number of residents in our county. How many of you know the size or height of these transmission poles being sited? They are 155 feet tall or the equivalent of a 15 story building. The current PSC setback is 500 feet from an inhabited residence. If an easement doesn't need to be obtained from that resident, then that resident doesn't need to be notified. The residents of our township found that to be appalling! How can a transmission line of that magnitude with so many negative implications be sited so close to a residence and they are not even notified?

If it wasn't for our township residents passing the 2600 foot setback unanimously, our neighboring township residents passing the 2600 foot setback unanimously or even the Stutsman County zoning committee passing the 2600 foot setback unanimously, after hearing testimony from all parties impacted, then who would of protected those residents who didn't have a voice in the matter?

Mr. Weiers of Otter Tail Power Company states in his testimony and I quote, "There is simply no way to build a project through this rural area of North Dakota while abiding by such an onerous setback requirement." end quote. I find it interesting Mr. Weiers and other proponents of this bill conveniently leave out the fact that our 2600 foot setback actually has a variance built into it which simply means that those residents who will forever be negatively impacted by the sitting of these lines actually get notified and have a seat at the table.

The JetX project is a perfect case why local control is so important. If it weren't for our township officers listening to the concerns of its residents and put in place some ordinances that protect people's health, wealth and personal property, then who would? Township officers spent months working with the Stutsman county zoning committee along with feedback from the Public Service Commission when drafting these zoning ordinances.

Governor Kelly Armstrong stated on BEK television during the gubernatorial race that, "We must protect personal property rights at all costs". He is the leader of our State and our state wants to be a leader in energy development. Instead of bringing forth bills that divide citizens and consolidates power in Bismarck, we bring forth a comprehensive plan that not only informs but includes state, county and township officers.

This bill circumvents local control and shucks the states responsibility to protect its citizens. I humbly ask you to take a moment and remember this commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as yourself". If you believe in your heart that people aren't smart enough or have the foresight to determine what they want their homes, neighborhoods or communities to look like, then vote for this bill. I, however love my community, respect my neighbors and believe in all the good attributes each of us have to offer and we will determine what's best for our future.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please vote NO on HB1258.