

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

The Preservation of Rural Iowa Alliance

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## THE PRESERVATION OF RURAL IOWA ALLIANCE

PRESS RELEASE - 7/15/2015

On July 1, 2015, the Missouri Public Service Commission issued an important order that Iowa landowners are excited about. The Commission found that the Grain Belt Express Clean Line [Grain Belt Express](#), one of Clean Line Energy's five projects, failed to meet its burden of proof to demonstrate that the project is necessary or convenient for the public service. The Commission therefore denied Grain Belt's application to construct a high voltage direct current electric transmission line across the state of Missouri to serve eastern electric markets.

Clean Line Energy [Clean Line Energy](#) is also the parent company of the Rock Island Clean Line [Rock Island Clean Line \(RICL\)](#) whose proposed project crosses 375 miles in Iowa and 125 miles in Illinois.

Carolyn Sheridan, board president and spokesperson for The Preservation of Rural Iowa Alliance [he Preservation of Rural Iowa Alliance](#), Iowa's grassroots organization against the Rock Island project, states: "Iowans need to feel confident that public opinion and landowner rights can and should be heard. Clearly this happened in Missouri when the Commission heard the concerns of landowners and understood the importance of private property rights by protecting Missouri landowners with their decision on July 1<sup>st</sup>."

Block Grain Belt Express-MO (a grassroots landowner opposition organization similar to The Preservation of Rural Iowa Alliance) is relieved that their pleas were heard by the Missouri Public Service Commission, which found that any actual benefits to the general public from the Project would be outweighed by **the burdens on affected landowners**. In a July 2<sup>nd</sup> press release Jennifer Gatrel, Vice President of Block Grain Belt Express-MO, stated "This is democracy in action. . . . You can stand up to corporate interests and protect your property rights."

This ruling is an important step in maintaining the rights of property owners across the state of Iowa. As Justin LaVan, attorney for The Preservation of Rural Alliances, states: "Specifically, the Commission found that the electric transmission line was not needed in Missouri, that it was not economically feasible, and that the project failed to promote the public interest. These are some of the same issues Clean Line will face with the proposed project in Iowa." Carolyn Sheridan agrees, and notes; "Iowans are now in a similar situation. Therefore, landowners and members of the community need to continue to remain strong in their fight for private property rights. If the Rock Island Clean Line project were to be approved, the use of eminent domain to take private property would be the largest unjustified taking of private property in Iowa's history."

Even with the lack of legislative action this past session to protect private property rights, this large group of people with a common goal continues to be successful in their strong opposition to this unnecessary project. This is evidenced by unprecedented formal objections filed with the Iowa Utilities Board (1347 thus far) and the less than 15% voluntary easements obtained from total parcels (1540) across the 16 impacted counties in Iowa. The Preservation of Rural Iowa Alliance is committed to using the resources necessary to protect private property rights of land owners and will continue to serve as zealous advocates on behalf of landowners, families, businesses, and community members.