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**CLEAN LINE ENERGY AND OTHERS ASK ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT TO DECIDE  
THE FATE OF WIND ENERGY POWER LINE**

**ILLINOIS ELECTRICITY PRICES, CLEAN ENERGY JOBS, WIND ENERGY AND THE FUTURE OF  
THE GRID AT STAKE**

CHICAGO, IL (September 14, 2016) – Almost one-third of the energy generated in Iowa comes from its incredible wind energy resource, and much more of the state’s vast wind energy resource remains untapped. Now, in a case about the Rock Island Clean Line power line project that is pending before the Illinois Supreme Court, that Court will help determine if much of this low-cost wind energy resource can ever reach Illinois and states beyond.

The Rock Island Clean Line, first proposed in 2010, has worked six years to get the needed regulatory approvals in Illinois. In 2014, Illinois’ utility regulator, the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC), unanimously approved the project. However, opposition from Commonwealth Edison and various landowners groups resulted in the Third District Appellate Court reversing the ICC’s approval.

Today, the ICC, joined by Rock Island Clean Line, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), and Wind on the Wires asked the Illinois Supreme Court to take up the case. The Rock Island Clean Line would enable low-cost electricity from new wind farms in northwest Iowa, which would otherwise be unable to access the Illinois electricity markets, to compete to serve customer load in Illinois.

"The court’s ruling unnecessarily interferes with vital interstate transmission projects," said Lonnie R. Stephenson, IBEW International President. "We have filed a request to ask the Illinois Supreme Court to review the Rock Island Clean Line case, because our workers cannot afford to have Illinois be a roadblock to nationally significant projects."

The appeals court ruling, if not reversed, would result in less competition in electricity markets, fewer choices and higher prices for electricity consumers, and the failure to develop and utilize the nation's best, most cost effective renewable resources.

“The appellate court ruling creates a dangerous precedent threatening the future of wind and solar development at the very moment when our state and our country are shifting to a cleaner energy future. We are challenging the court’s decision because it will harm Illinois consumers by reducing the amount of carbon-free energy in the marketplace,” said John Moore, Director of the Sustainable FERC Project at the Natural Resources Defense Council.

Through its case with the ICC, Rock Island showed that the project would reduce electricity costs in Illinois by \$320 million in the first year of the operation of the project, with additional reductions in future years. Rock Island also showed that the project would support 1,450 jobs in Illinois during the three-year construction phase.

“The appeals court made basic errors in its decision that we hope the Illinois Supreme Court will identify,” said Hans Detweiler, Vice President of Clean Line Energy. “The appeals court has created a Catch 22 barrier, with no basis in the statute, to prevent new companies from becoming public utilities and to prevent them from helping to lower energy prices in Illinois. The Rock Island project would deliver more than three times the annual energy of the Hoover Dam, from renewable resources, while saving Illinois consumers hundreds of millions of dollars.”

The Rock Island Clean Line is a \$600 million infrastructure investment in Illinois that would deliver enough clean wind energy to Illinois to power approximately 1.4 million homes annually.

**Additional voices asking the Illinois Supreme Court to weigh in:**

- David Kolata, Executive Director of the **Citizens Utility Board**, said, “New carbon-free power supplies are a critical leg of the stool for keeping electricity prices affordable going forward. This project could be good news for consumers, and we believe the court was wrong to reverse the Illinois Commerce Commission’s approval.”

- Michael Cornicelli, Executive Vice President of the **Building Owners and Managers Association of Chicago**, said, “Chicago building owners support energy infrastructure projects like the Rock Island Clean Line that bring down energy prices without adding costs to electricity rates. The appellate court’s ruling wrongly eliminates the ability for new companies to build energy infrastructure projects in Illinois, placing arbitrary limits on the competitive market. In a state that relies on market competition to keep electricity prices low, keeping out new competition is a spectacularly bad idea.”
- Tom Kiernan, Chief Executive Officer of the **American Wind Energy Association**, said, “New transmission infrastructure is vital to the national need for more wind energy development and Illinois is at the nation’s infrastructure crossroads. It is not good for Illinois or America for the state to close its borders to low-cost renewable energy. We encourage the Illinois Supreme Court to take up the appeal.”
- John Penn, Midwest Region Vice President of the **Laborers International Union of North America**, said, “With court decisions like this one, it is getting hard to build major new infrastructure projects in America. I hope that the Illinois Supreme Court takes the case and can put workers in Illinois back to work.”

To learn more about the Rock Island Clean Line, please visit [www.rockislandcleanline.com](http://www.rockislandcleanline.com).