

2/26/19 Hbjdx

**BEFORE THE
PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION**

Application of Transource Pennsylvania, LLC :
for approval of the Siting and Construction of the : Docket No. A-2017-2640195
230 kV Transmission Line Associated with the : Docket No. A-2017-2640200
Independence Energy Connection - East and West :
Projects in portions of York and Franklin Counties,:
Pennsylvania. :

SURREBUTTAL TESTIMONY

OF

JOHN HASH

On Behalf of

**Citizens to STOP Transource
(York County)**

January 30, 2019

1 **I. INTRODUCTION**

2 **Q. PLEASE STATE YOUR NAME AND BUSINESS ADDRESS.**

3 A. My name is John Hash. My business address is 1790 New Park Rd, New Park PA.

4 **Q. BY WHOM ARE YOU EMPLOYED AND WHAT IS YOUR TITLE?**

5 A. I am a self-employed farmer.

6 **Q. ON WHOSE BEHALF ARE YOU PROVIDING THIS TESTIMONY?**

7 A. I am testifying on behalf of Citizens to Stop Transource (York County).

8 **Q. HAVE YOU PREVIOUSLY PROVIDED TESTIMONY IN THIS PROCEEDING?**

9 A. Yes, I provided testimony during the public input hearings held in this proceeding.

10 **Q. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF YOUR SURREBUTTAL TESTIMONY?**

11 A. The purpose of my Surrebuttal Testimony is to refute certain portions of Rebuttal
12 Testimony offered by Transource Pennsylvania, LLC ("Transource PA"). Specifically, I
13 address the Rebuttal Testimony of William F. Rothman regarding the effect of the
14 proposed project on property values on and adjacent to the proposed transmission line.

15 **Q. PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR BACKGROUND WITH REGARD TO PROPERTY**
16 **SALES IN YORK COUNTY.**

17 A. I began farming in 1989, and have been acquiring properties to build my business since
18 that time.

19 **Q. ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH ANY OF THE PROPERTY SALES LISTED IN**
20 **MR. ROTHMAN'S REBUTTAL?**

21 A. Yes. I was directly involved in two of the York County farm sales listed in an exhibit
22 attached to Mr. Rothman's Rebuttal Testimony. TPA Exhibit No. WFR-1R. Also, I have
23 knowledge of several other of those sales.

1 **II. RESPONSES TO REBUTTAL TESTIMONY**

2 **Q. DID TRANSOURCE PRESENT REBUTTAL TESTIMONY REGARDING THE**
 3 **IMPACT OF THE PROJECT ON PROPERTY AND REAL ESTATE VALUES?**

4 A. Yes. Mr. Rothman addressed the question of whether the project would result in the
 5 lowering of property values on and adjacent to the proposed transmission line.

6 Transource Statement No. 13-R at 2. He concluded that the existence of a newly-built
 7 high-voltage transmission line corridor would have “no discernable effect on property
 8 values of farm land.” Transource Statement No. 13-R at 3.

9 **Q. WHAT WAS THE BASIS FOR MR. ROTHMAN’S CONCLUSION?**

10 A. The basis for Mr. Rothman’s conclusion was a study he performed to investigate recent
 11 sales of properties. TPA Exhibit No. WFR-1R. To perform this study, Mr. Rothman
 12 gathered transaction records of recent sales of properties that were affected by the
 13 existing transmission line right of way and transaction data from nearby properties that
 14 were far enough from the ROW to not be affected. TPA Exhibit No. WFR-1R at 2. He
 15 then compared the sale price per acre of properties affected by the ROW with the price
 16 per acre. Exhibit No. WFR-1R at 3. Mr. Rothman shows the results of specific property
 17 sales that were not affected by the ROW. TPA Exhibit No. WFR-1R at 4.

18 **Q. WHAT DOES THE TABLE IN TPA EXHIBIT NO. WFR-1R AT PAGE 4 SHOW?**

19 A. The table showing the results of specific property sales that were not affected by the
 20 ROW indicates that the average price of these transactions was \$8,656 per acre.

21 **Q. IS THERE ANY REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THE SALE PRICE OF THOSE**
 22 **PROPERTIES WAS LOWER THAN IT MAY HAVE BEEN OTHERWISE?**

23 A. Yes. I purchased the property at Walnut Grove Road from Mary Lou Wilcox. I had
 24 farmed that property for the previous ten years, and had an oral agreement with her to
 25 have the right to purchase the property. I also purchased the property in a private

1 transaction without the services of an agent that would need to be compensated. I believe
2 my relationship with her provided favorable terms to the transaction.

3 **Q. PLEASE PROVIDE BACKGROUND FOR THE OTHER PROPERTY THAT**
4 **LISTS YOU AS A BUYER.**

5 A. I purchased the property on Blue Ball Road from George Thompson. This was also a
6 private transaction that did not incur the expense of an auction or a realtor. I knew Mr.
7 Thompson for years, and believe my relationship with him helped me in the transaction.

8 **Q. ARE THERE ANY OTHER PROPERTIES ON THE TABLE WITH WHICH**
9 **YOU ARE FAMILIAR?**

10 A. Yes. Mr. Miller purchased his property from Dr. Trouzo. That was a private transaction,
11 and Mr. Miller had farmed the property for over 40 years. The long relationship between
12 them very likely provided favorable terms for Mr. Miller.

13 **Q. ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH ANY OTHER TRANSACTIONS THAT ARE NOT**
14 **LISTED ON THIS TABLE BY MR. ROTHMAN?**

15 A. Yes. In June of 2017 I purchased parcel 32000AL0024 located at 21517 Barrens Rd.
16 South in Stewartstown, PA. I purchased the property from Rosanna Gemmill. The
17 property is ^{135 assessed} ~~134~~ acres, and I paid \$1,230,514 for the property, or \$9,185 per acre. This
18 value is significantly higher than Mr. Rothman's \$8,656 per acre average price for non-
19 transmission line farm land in York County.

20 **Q. CAN YOU EXPLAIN WHY THIS TRANSACTION WAS OMITTED?**

21 A. I cannot.

22 **Q. ARE YOU AWARE OF OTHER SALES THAT WERE OMITTED?**

23 A. Yes, on February 12, 2015, John and Mary Lapp purchased 78 acres at 1483 Fawn Grove
24 ROAD. The sale price of that farm was \$10,381 per acre

1 Q. CAN YOU EXPLAIN WHY THIS TRANSACTION WAS OMITTED?

2 A. I cannot.

3 Q. ARE YOU AWARE OF OTHER SALES THAT WERE OMITTED FROM MR.
4 ROTHMAN'S ANALYSIS?

5 A. Yes. Please see the table below for three other sales that were provided to me by an
6 appraiser as part of the due diligence of my purchase of the Gemmill property.

Date	Address	Buyer	Acres	Sale Price	\$ / acre
3/10/15	448 Myers Rd, Red Lion PA	KS Lapp	44	435,000	9,848
1/27/16	1318 Bartenslogger Rd., New Freedom PA	KT Burton LLC	96	1,100,000	11,402
2/15/17	3181 Holly Rd, Glen Rock PA	Saloman & Silvia Fisher	101	1,100,000	10,871

7
8 Q. CAN YOU EXPLAIN WHY THESE PROPERTIES WERE OMITTED?

9 A. I cannot.

10 Q. PLEASE COMPARE THE AVERAGE PRICE OF THESE PROPERTIES TO
11 THE AVERAGE PRICE OF PROPERTY CITED BY MR. ROTHMAN.

12 A. The five properties mentioned above as having been omitted from Mr. Rothman's table
13 showing transaction data for properties not affected by the ROW have an average price of
14 \$10,337 per acre. By contrast, Mr. Rothman cites an average price of \$8,656 per acre.

15 Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE FARMS MR. ROTHMAN
16 LISTS AS EXAMPLES OF PROPERTIES WITH POWER LINES?

17 A. Yes. The Esh property listed at 12172 Gum Tree road was sold for a very high value
18 (over \$13,000 per acre). I observe that it was purchased by an Amish family in the dairy
19 business at a time when dairy prices were increasing rapidly to an all-time high. Milk

1 prices are currently nearly half of that record price from 2014, and it is unlikely that the
2 family would consider that purchase price at this time.

3 **Q. IF THE ESH PROPERTY WERE EXCLUDED, AND THE OTHER**
4 **PROPERTIES YOU MENTIONED WERE INCLUDED IN THE ANALYSIS,**
5 **WHAT WOULD YOUR CONCLUSION BE?**

6 A. Excluding the Esh property would take the average price per acre of farms affected by the
7 transmission line in York County down to \$7,693 per acre. Including the five properties
8 above with the other properties listed by Mr. Rothman would bring the non-powerline
9 average to \$9,256 per acre. I see this as a premium of \$1,563 per acre for non-
10 transmission line properties.

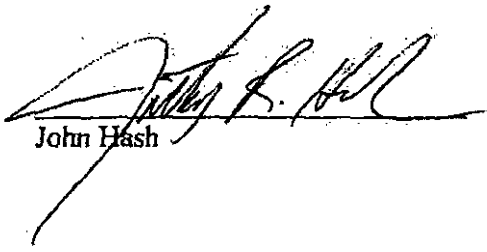
11 **III. CONCLUSION**

12 **Q. DOES THIS CONCLUDE YOUR SURREBUTTAL TESTIMONY?**

13 A. Yes.

VERIFICATION

I, John Hash, hereby state that I submitted Surrebuttal Testimony on behalf of Citizens to Stop Transource, York County and that the facts set forth in this document are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief. I understand that the statements herein are made subject to the penalties of 18 Pa. C.S. § 4904 (relating to unsworn falsification to authorities).



John Hash

Date: February 21, 2019