COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

July 30, 2026

Matthew L. Homsher, Esq., Secretary
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
400 North Street, 2nd Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17120

RE: Transource Pennsylvania, LLC's Certificate of Public Convenience Application for Franklin County

Docket No. A-2026-3062675

FORMAL PROTEST / CONSOLIDATION OPPOSED

Dear Secretary Homsher,

On behalf of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, I am writing to express concern over the proposed Transource Rice-Ringgold Transmission Line Project in Franklin County. The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture is committed to protecting the Commonwealth's agricultural resources, preserving productive farmland, and supporting the long-term viability of Pennsylvania's farming communities. After reviewing the proposed Transource Rice-Ringgold Transmission Line Project, the Department has significant concerns regarding its potential impacts on agricultural land and finds that the current application does not adequately demonstrate that these impacts have been minimized. The Department recommends that the project not proceed as currently proposed.

Pennsylvania's agricultural lands are a finite and irreplaceable resource that support food production, economic development, environmental stewardship, and rural communities. The proposed transmission corridor would permanently affect active farmland through the conversion of productive acreage, fragmentation of agricultural operations, restrictions on future farming activities, and the placement of transmission infrastructure that may interfere with modern agricultural equipment and farm management practices. These impacts have the potential to reduce the long-term productivity, efficiency, and economic viability of affected farming operations, extending well beyond the period of project construction.

Pennsylvania leads the nation in farmland preservation through the purchase of permanent agricultural conservation easements, and Franklin County has one of the most robust programs in the state with more than 169 farms covering 20,571 acres preserved and over $41 million in public funds invested in this county alone. These investments reflect a longstanding

Commonwealth policy to protect productive agricultural land as a strategic economic development resource.

Farm owners have given up the right to use their properties for uses other than farming in support of maintaining a thriving agricultural industry in the region. Many are now questioning how the Transource Rice-Ringgold Transmission Line Project will impact their farming operations and the lack of additional protections or considerations for preserved farms. Because farmland is cleared, open land, it is often viewed as the path of least resistance compared to other impacted resources. However, the relative ease of constructing across agricultural land should not be interpreted as evidence that such lands are the least valuable or least sensitive resource. It cannot be overstated that farmland is highly valuable to both the farm owners whose livelihoods depend on it and to the taxpayers who have made significant investments in preserving it. Projects that unnecessarily convert or impair productive agricultural land are inconsistent with the Commonwealth's long-standing commitment to protecting its agricultural economy and ensuring the continued availability of farmland for future generations.

The Department recognizes the importance of maintaining a reliable electric transmission system; however, infrastructure development should avoid unnecessary impacts to Pennsylvania's agricultural resources whenever practicable. Based on the information currently available, the Department does not believe the applicant has sufficiently balanced the needs for the project with the Commonwealth's interest in protecting productive agricultural land, particularly where permanently preserved farmland is involved.

For these reasons, the Department recommends that the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission deny approval of the Transource Rice-Ringgold Transmission Line Project as currently proposed. Please feel free to contact Stephanie Zimmerman, Director of the Bureau of Farmland Preservation, at 717-705-7796 or stzimmerma@pa.gov for any questions or further discussion. Should the applicant pursue an alternative proposal that more effectively minimizes impacts to agricultural lands, particularly preserved farms, the Department would be willing to review such a proposal consistent with its mission to protect Pennsylvania agriculture while supporting responsible infrastructure planning.

Sincerely,

Russell C. Redding
Secretary