MANITOBA CLEAN ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

BIPOLE III TRANSMISSION PROJECT

PUBLIC HEARING

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APPEARANCES

CLEAN ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION
Terry Sargeant - Chairman
Pat MacKay - Member
Brian Kaplan - Member
Ken Gibbons - Member
Wayne Motheral - Member
Michael Green - Counsel to the Board
Cathy Johnson - Commission Secretary

MANITOBA CONSERVATION AND WATER STEWARDSHIP
Elise Dagdick

MANITOBA HYDRO
Douglas Bedford - Counsel
Janet Mayor - Counsel

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Friday, October 26, 2012

Upon commencing at 9:00 a.m.

THE CHAIRMAN: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, can we come to order, please. Good morning. My name is Terry Sargeant. I'm the chair of the Manitoba Clean Environment Commission as well as chair of this panel reviewing the proposal before us.

With me on the panel are Patricia MacKay, Wayne Motheral, Brian Kaplan and Ken Gibbons. As well, there are officials from the Commission, notably our Commission secretary, Cathy Johnson, as well as our administrative assistant, Joyce Mueller, who is by the door.

There are also officials from Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship and a number from Manitoba Hydro. And the Hydro officials will be available to answer questions in respect of the project following the opening presentation.

We're here today at the request of the Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship to conduct public hearings into Manitoba Hydro's proposal for the development of the Bipole III transmission project. Last December the Minister wrote to the Commission asking that we review and

evaluate the Environmental Impact Statement prepared by Manitoban Hydro about this project, as well as Manitoba Hydro's public consultation summary.

The Minister asked us to recommend whether or not, in our view, an Environment Act licence should be issued to Manitoba Hydro for this project, and also to recommend any measures that we felt would be necessary to mitigate any potential environmental, socioeconomic or cultural effect resulting from the project.

The terms of reference also asked that we hold hearings in communities outside of the City of Winnipeg. This is the last of I think six communities. We were in Gillam, Thompson, The Pas, Dauphin, Portage la Prairie, and this morning here in Niverville. We'll return to Winnipeg next week for I think four and a half weeks more of hearings in the city.

A couple of housekeeping matters before we commence. We do have a number of people that have already indicated that they wish to make presentations, and we have actually got a full slate that's going to take us through to at least mid afternoon. If there are any of you who wish

to make a presentation who haven't already registered, please let Joyce by the door know that you would like to make a presentation.

A couple of things; I'm not very tolerant at all of cell phones going off. So if you have one, please turn it on to vibrate or turn it off. I'm also not tolerant of conversations in the audience when other people are making presentations. It's distracting for almost everybody else in the room.

Presentations are limited to 15 minutes. I have a couple of cards, one saying five and one saying two. I will flash those cards if you start to approach the end of the 15 minutes.

One other thing, at approximately 2:30 this afternoon there's going to be a fire alarm test in this building. This is an e-mail we got from the event director in this Heritage Centre. We don't need to evacuate the building. It will not last long, but I think we will take a short break at 2:30 when the alarms go off. I think that's it for opening comments.

The proceedings today will be that Manitoba Hydro will make an opening statement,

which is an overview of the project. Following that, anybody who has questions of Manitoba Hydro may come forward and ask questions of them. They have a number of officials who will respond to those questions. If they don't have relevant experts here, they will undertake to get that answer out as soon as possible.

Following the questions, we will then turn to the presentations. Under our proceedings, it's necessary -- or our proceedings require that anybody giving a presentation or giving evidence must affirm that they will speak only the truth. We will therefore ask each of you who makes a presentation to affirm that. You may note that some of the officials, in particular here today hydro officials, will not be asked to do that, that's because they have already done so. Most, if not all, of the Hydro officials who will be presenting today affirmed during hearings in Winnipeg or in one of the other communities. And under our practice, once you do it that stays in effect until the end of these hearings, which will be sometime in late November.

I think that's it. I'll turn the floor over to Mr. Neufeld who will give us the

project overview.

MR. NEUFELD: Good morning Mr. Chairman, commissioners, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Gerald Neufeld. I work at Manitoba Hydro. I have been in this as a division manager of transmission planning and design. I have been in this role for ten years. I graduated from the University of Manitoba in 1985 with a Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering, and I have been employed with Manitoba Hydro for 27 years. And for most of those years, I worked in the area of transmission. Organizationally I report to the vice-president of transmission.

An overview of what I'd like to present here today includes a description of the existing system, a brief project description for Bipole III, why we need Bipole III from a reliability standpoint. Also we'll be talking about the environmental assessment process and some comments on construction planning.

So as it relates to the existing system, I'd like to describe briefly how the existing system works. And what we have in our province are two separate and independent electrical systems. One of them is the high

voltage DC system, and you'll see that marked with this line. And you'll see the green lines, which aren't fully comprehensive as they relate to the province, but the green lines represent the AC system.

So how the DC system works first of all: On the lower Nelson River, we have the biggest generating stations in Manitoba Hydro, which include Kettle, Long Spruce and Limestone. These three generating stations feed into what's called a collector system in the north, and that collector system in turn feeds into Radisson, and Henday converter station is where the electricity is converted from AC to DC. We use DC because it's a more efficient way to transport bulk amounts of power from far distances in the north to the south. So the DC flows down to existing Bipole lines, Bipole I and Bipole II, and those two lines terminate at Dorsey where the electricity again is converted from DC back to AC and injected into the existing AC transmission system.

On the AC system, we have Kelsey, Laurie River, Wuskwatim, Jenpeg and the Winnipeg River plants, along with Brandon and Selkirk, and

these feed directly into the AC system.

If we were to lose Dorsey or the DC system -- what I mean here is both lines at the same time -- we would have to rely on the Winnipeg River generation along with the other AC plants which included Kelsey, Wuskwatim, Laurie River, Jenpeg, Grand Rapids, and whatever we could import either from Ontario, Saskatchewan or the United States. And if we lost Dorsey or the two lines, we wouldn't -- there wouldn't be enough power for Manitoba. We'd be substantially short. And on a day like today, we'd probably be somewhere in the range of about 1000 to 1200 megawatts short, maybe even more. And that translates into about 200,000 homes in Southern Manitoba.

We have a significant amount of transmission in Manitoba. To start with, I already described the two 500 kV AC lines. They are roughly just over 900 kilometres long each. So for Bipole I and II in total we have 1843 kilometres line length, we have 500 kV AC as well. And the 500 kV AC comes from Dorsey. It swings around the east side of the province and goes down into the Minneapolis area. The length in Manitoba is 209 kilometres. The 230 kV AC, which is

represented by these green lines, not comprehensive as I indicated earlier, some 5,000 kilometres of line length. We have about 1400 kilometres of 138 kV AC, and some 2900 kilometres of 115 kV AC. And along with that we have the various interconnections to the neighboring provinces and to the United States. We have installed some 18,500 kilometres of AC transmission, which ranges in voltage level from 32 kV to 500 kV over the last 60 years.

When it comes to addressing environmental work for transmission facilities, we have a licensing and environmental assessment department who are assigned to work on transmission facilities. They are a department of experts, there are ten in total, and they are dedicated to conducting environmental assessment for our transmission projects. These people are professionals, well trained in the environmental sciences, and they manage this important work for Manitoba Hydro, and are dedicated to transmission facilities.

And you can see here that since the Environmental Act was proclaimed in force at the end of March 1988, that we have received licences

for all the facilities you see listed here. And these are for 115 kV and over. And we have successfully developed and managed the high voltage transmission system, including the regulatory review and licensing of numerous large scale transmission projects in both northern and agricultural Manitoba. And during this process we have grown in knowledge about licensing and the environmental assessment process. And we have a long history in assessment and development of transmission lines and a successful record of obtaining environmental approvals.

With regard to the Manitoba Hydro Act, one of the clauses in the Manitoba Hydro Act speaks to the purposes and objectives of this Act are to provide for a continuance of the supply of power adequate for the needs of the province. And that's why we're here. There's a need for supply of power to the province, and I'm going to talk a bit more about that in the upcoming slides.

This is a graph that shows the energy supply capability in the event we lost Dorsey. So the energy supply capability shown on the bottom line in blue, and I'll speak to some of the changes in the energy supply capability in just a

few minutes. The green line is our load growth in Manitoba. And you can see that it changes from one year to the next, and it's always in an upward direction. This line is straighter here because this is a forecast. And the important point here is that the energy demand is significantly higher than what we can supply, if we lose Dorsey.

So let's get into the details on this graph. So you can see here in about 1995, there was a drop by 132 megawatts, if we were to scale that -- and that's as a result of retiring Brandon units one to four. And there was an upswing here in the late 1990s, and that had to do with Brandon six and seven being installed, and that added 360 megawatts of supply capability.

If we move ahead here, you can see this line, that's roughly the current year, and that's Wuskwatim coming on. And the ramping up has to do with the sequencing of units one then unit two and then finally unit three, which just within the last few weeks has come online.

And finally, if we go to 2014, which is two years in the future, you can see that there is a 300-megawatt increase again, and that has to do with sectionalizing our 500 kV line down to the

United States. And what sectionalizing means is that we have another facility that is being installed just east of Winnipeg, it's called Riel station, and it provides an alternative injection point into our transmission system to allow for import from the U.S. in the event we were to lose Dorsey.

Our projections are that by 2017, which is the forecasted inservice date for Bipole III, that we'll be 1500 megawatts short which translates roughly to about 340,000 homes. Just following that in 2019 there's a drop, and that's retirement of unit five at Brandon, and that would be another drop of 105 megawatts. And we are forecasting this load growth, so that continues going up, and what we need to do is close that gap.

And the difficulty here with the existing system is that we don't have redundancy for Dorsey and the high voltage DC system, and we don't have sufficient emergency back-up resources.

A bit more description about our Manitoba Hydro system, and this really points to the reason why there's a vulnerability of the existing system. What we have are two Bipole

lines, as I mentioned earlier, 900 kilometres long and on the same right-of-way. These two lines and the southern Dorsey station transmit 70 percent of the northern hydro generation. And again that was the sum total of Kettle, Long Spruce and Limestone. We have more eggs in one basket than any other system in the world. So by comparison, Hydro Quebec, although they have substantially more generation capacity than does Manitoba Hydro, have a maximum of about 11 percent of their generation capability in one corridor. Brazil with the Itaipu dam has a maximum of 20 percent. Three Gorges in China has 15 percent. Dorsey today, as I mentioned, is 70 percent. And with Bipole III that drops to 45 percent. So there's no utility in the world that transmits so high a percentage of power through one critical facility.

I'd like to describe some of the near misses we have had; some very recent. The first one is in September, early September 1996, and that was a downburst one and a half miles north of Dorsey. I'm going to speak to the details of that on an upcoming slide. In July 2006 two storms collided over Winnipeg. And I can tell you there was a substantial amount of high voltage line

tripping, lines had tripped from Dorsey all the way to Brandon, from Ridgeway to Rosser, which covered the eastern part of the province. The 500 kV line got tripped out, and that creates a lot of problems.

In June 2007, you probably all remember the Elie F-5 tornado.

In August there was a storm that hit Dorsey, it took out Bipole I, and emergency measures had to be invoked in terms of shifting very quickly to significant imports in order to make up the shortfall at Bipole I -- we lost with Bipole I.

Forest fires take out these lines. And I'm going to jump down to January 2011, there were the flood waters and ice buildup on 117 kilometres of DC right-of-way in structures in Northern Manitoba. This is near the Nelson River, just south of Kelsey. And these towers were encased in ice that was shifting up and down. And these were big towers. The type of havoc that can be created with moving ice was just incredible. And we had 50 towers and 400 guys that were encased in ice, and many of the bases of those towers were substantially damaged.

So I'm going to get into a few details. The September 1996 downburst: So we can see here is Dorsey, the Dorsey station, and the DC lines. I spoke earlier about the 500 kV AC line going down to Minneapolis. It comes out of Dorsey and heads east. The distance from, at the turning point for -- this is the Dorsey to Forbes line, it is about three kilometres north of Dorsey. And you can see the perimeter that we've got marked out here where we lost those 19 towers, that was a downburst. And a downburst comes as a result of an electrical activity in a cloud structure. It's like if you have a really high pressured balloon and you poke a pin at the bottom and everything just comes gushing out. Those winds are tremendously strong. They bent some of our towers like they were toothpicks. And fortunately that occurred at a time of the year where there was minimum load. And the impact of the minimum load is that there were no outages experienced in Manitoba. We relied heavily on our imports from the United States to get us through that time. The other fortunate part of this occurrence is that it happened near good roadways and where there was good access, so our construction crews

were able to get in there in a very timely fashion, and working around the clock we got those systems back up and running in a very short period of time. It could have been a lot worse.

The Elie tornado: This tornado destroyed four homes in Elie. It flipped cars and even tossed one homeowner's Chrysler Fifth Avenue onto a neighbour's roof. The tornado lingered over the same area of Elie for approximately four minutes before it cut sharply to the south and rapidly dissipated. All this happened within about a 25 kilometre distance from Dorsey. And the tornado struck repeatedly the same area of town, and it had a 40 minute life span. It picked up a three-quarter ton G.M. van filled with drywall and tossed it hundreds of feet up. And it really had a very devastating impact when it hit the ground, as you can imagine.

And most coincidently at the same time as the Elie tornado, another tornado was touching down near Oakville. And that tornado was rated as an F-3. Again not that far from Dorsey. And the winds in the Oakville tornado were -- some were 295 kilometres an hour. And it destroyed several outbuildings. We were just very lucky this didn't

go through Dorsey. A repair to Dorsey with tornadoes and wind storms like this would have caused such extensive amount of damage it could have taken up to three years to repair that facility.

The August storm, you can see these pieces of equipment here, I spoke to this just a bit earlier. We relied on the United States again for the imports. I talked about the three lines that tripped. These pieces of equipment, this is probably a three foot segment of very heavy duty ceramic, and probably in the range of eight to nine inches diameter. And if you looked at that, you would wonder how or what would cause a solid device like that to actually become decoupled from its connection to pipe bust such as what you see here. This is all very rugged equipment.

I'd like to talk a bit about the Bipole III project. And so the Bipole III project starts in the far north. The northern converter station is connected to the same collector system I spoke of earlier with regard to Radisson and Henday, which currently feed into Bipole I and II. The collector system would be extended to feed into the Keewatinoow station in the north. And

Keewatinoow station is going to be located 79 kilometres from Gillam. And the purpose of that station will be to convert AC power to DC. The southern termination will be at Riel just north of Deacon's corner. And the purpose of that station will be to convert from DC back into AC, as I indicated earlier, to inject back into the existing system. And we have 1384 kilometres of 500 kV AC transmission line that comes around to connect those two facilities. And the projected inservice date for this system is the year 2017.

In the north we'll be using guyed towers such as what you see here. These towers sit on a single pedestal and you can see the guy wires coming down one on either side, and they are anchored into the ground. And these are particularly suitable for the north where there is more shifting ground and difficulties with regard to frost.

In the south we'll be using free standing towers. And here are some different examples of the types of towers we'll be using. To your far left is a small zero to small angle, like 2 degrees tangent, what we call suspension tower. So as long as your transmission line is

running as a line of sight, these are the types of towers that will be used, both of these would be applicable. This is for a slightly greater angle from 2 to 7 degrees.

Then we get into what we call the dead end towers, and the dead end towers can take up the strain of the line, and they are used for heavier or larger angles. This one here is for 7 to 25 degrees. And then we've got the biggest tower from 25 to 92 degrees. So these dead end towers are placed, and they also provide an anti-cascading function. And cascading is that phenomena that takes place, and you have seen this with dominoes where they are all stacked up and you hit one and they go and the whole string of dominoes will fall one after the other like a deck of cards. These dead end towers block that. They can take the full strain so you don't have -- that's why we call them anti-cascading.

What we see here are -- this is actually our 500 kV line, the one that goes from Dorsey down to Minneapolis and it's located in the field. And the towers -- this is just an example of what the towers look like in the field. The Bipole towers will be, as you saw in the earlier

slide, the towers are placed in the centre of the right-of-way. And north of highway 16, the towers will be 33 metres from the edge of the road allowance. And south of highway 16 to Riel, they will be located 42 metres from the road allowance.

And here is a close-up, you can see that the tower takes out a minimal amount of arable land. And again, in Southern Manitoba, the intent with installing these towers is so that the farming activities can take place to the edge of the structures.

And there is a close-up of the footprint. And you can see the small amount of land that will be taken out of service.

A bit about the construction process. In the north, for the Keewatinoow converter station, there is currently a developed access road, but the site is not developed. This is a remote construction location which will require full scale worker accommodation, so a camp will be installed on that vicinity. And the terms of the hiring of labour for the Keewatinoow station will fall under what we call the Burntwood Nelson labour agreement. And this sets out hiring preferences, including priority for northern

Aboriginal residents, and outlines certain wages and benefits that would apply.

The Riel converter station here in the south will also follow the normal practices that we subscribe to and will be contracted out on a competitive bidding basis.

A very high level schematic, again just to run through how the electricity gets created. So we have the generating station in the north. This would be again reflective of Kettle, Long Spruce and Limestone, feed into the collector lines that go into the Keewatinoow station. Here it gets converted from AC to DC, feeds it into the Bipole line which spans down the western side of the province and terminates at Riel. And at Riel the conversion goes from DC to AC, and then it gets injected into the existing transmission system.

With regard to the environmental assessment process, the starting point for environmental assessment for this project followed the confines of what you see in this yellow marked area. And that was the broad area that was used for starting that work which ultimately ended up with the announcement of the final preferred

route. And the final preferred route you see here in green.

The preferred route, as I indicated earlier, is 1384 kilometres long. The right-of-way is 66 metres wide. 931 kilometres of that line length falls upon Crown lands, 454 kilometres on private lands, and on those private lands that's represented by approximately 436 private landowners.

The environmental assessment for this process has entailed going through a comprehensive site selection and environmental assessment process. It has involved embracing engagement with the public through four rounds of public consultation. And during this process we have used the input of public consultation to learn about the areas that would be used to improve the routing decisions and to avoid the impacts and effects, all the time building on knowledge accumulated in the licensing of projects since legislation in 1988.

So Manitoba Hydro did commit to an assessment period that was conducted over four years.

Some final comments relative to the

environmental assessment process. You can see here that we started with a broad area. This covers about 20 percent of the Province of Manitoba. And as we fine tune, as we gather information through the public assessments, as we do research, we start to narrow up the corridor until finally we arrived at the final preferred route.

The environmental assessment process -- this is a very high level flow chart. You can see we have round one, round two, round three, round four. And again this took place over four years, and various opportunities in the meantime to do evaluation from various inputs, whether it was from the public consultation or the study and research that was done.

And we respect that there are a myriad of issues to account for in routing a transmission system of this magnitude. And we believe that we have selected the route with the least impact on the environment and on the communities and residents along the proposed path of the transmission line, and a route that meets Manitoba Hydro's needs for reliability and technical feasibility.

With regard to construction planning, again we have the Keewatinoow station in the north, Riel in the south, and we have broken this final preferred route into eight different line segments. There are four northern line segments. You can see this is N-1, N-2, N-3, N-4, and we break these up for construction purposes. Then we have two central regions, C-1, C-2, and then several southern ones as well. So we will work with stakeholders and the public during project construction and after to ensure that expectations and commitments are met.

And some final comments relative to the transmission line construction process. One starts at a coarse level with towers that are shown on drawings. The exact tower locations aren't committed at the time of the design. That comes with a fine-tuning in terms of what's required at the site. So, the exact tower spotting occurs in the field, taking into account ground constraints, various construction logistics and any additional input from landowners or other stakeholders. And, an example of a stakeholder, we're working with Manitoba Construction and Transportation right now to avoid quarries of

interest to them by position of towers or slight deflection of line, if needed. And that's where those towers that I described earlier come into play, where you can award an adjustment on the line which might require a different type of angle tower to be installed.

And it's important to realize that we don't finalize details too early and too quickly, similar to what we described with the environmental assessment process, so that we can get it right.

With regard to environmental protection, the site selection process is used to avoid impacts wherever possible through routing. The environmental protection program, it provides a framework for the delivery, management and monitoring of environmental mitigation measures. And the environmental protection plans prescribe general protection measures, ensure compliance with regulatory requirements and identifying prescribed mitigation for specific sensitive sites.

The environmental protection program in specific describes how Manitoba Hydro is organized and functions in terms of delivering

timely, effective and comprehensive solutions and mitigation measures that will be used to address the potential environmental effects. Roles and responsibilities are defined.

Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Neufeld. I have one question that's actually popped up every time I have heard this presentation, which is about six or eight times now, and since this is the last time I'll hear it, I think I should ask the question now. And it's just the 70 percent figure, that Manitoba Hydro has 70 percent of its load basically on one track, why or how did Manitoba Hydro get into this situation, particularly knowing that no other major utility has, I think you had figures between 10 and about 20 percent of their load on one track?

MR. NEUFELD: Right. So going back historically, these are developments that took place in the 60's and early 70's. The thinking at the time was that -- and we know back from our knowledge of history, that Conawapa wasn't going to be too far down the path. Conawapa was going to be part of the big Ontario contract and that was going to include Bipole III on the east side

of Lake Winnipeg. That contract got cancelled. So along with that, the Conawapa generating station and the Bipole III line that had been forecast at that time to run the east side of Lake Winnipeg were also cancelled.

THE CHAIRMAN: But if Conawapa had been built in the early '90s and a line had run more or less straight east into Ontario somewhere, it still would have left 70 percent of your Manitoba load on the Bipole I, II and Dorsey track.

MR. NEUFELD: That is correct. So the other part of the equation is similar with our environmental assessment process and with the design and final placement of the transmission towers, there is a learning and a growth. And the DC system, as you might recall, was the first one installed in the world here in Manitoba. And so there has been a significant amount of growth about, and knowledge about vulnerabilities generally since that time. And so that's the other piece of the equation.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Mr. Mazur, did you have something to add?

MR. MAZUR: Yes, I'd just like to add

further to what Mr. Neufeld said, when Ontario's contract was there and the line would have been built, I mean there was -- one of the options was building, in fact probably the final option was building the line into Southern Manitoba. And as our load growth, these contracts eventually get clawed back to serve Manitoba loads. So, we'd be in a position today that would be similar to where we might be after Bipole III, which is moving in a direction of getting -- reducing the dependency on one facility.

THE CHAIRMAN: It's still not going to get you anywhere near the 10 to 20 percent of other major utilities.

MR. MAZUR: No, it isn't. It's going to take, you know, several system facility additions to get to that direction, yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MR. GIBBONS: If I may, it's actually just a follow-up. I'm still not sure after hearing that explanation as to why so much of the system capacity went into Dorsey in the first place. Separate from all that other discussion, why is it that -- and it's obvious you have a converter station because you are taking DC,

converting back to AC. But was there ever any thought at the time of having more than one converter station so that one facility wasn't handling all of that?

MR. NEUFELD: Yes, there was, and if we roll the clock back there was a time where Manitoba Hydro was going to have a substantial amount of nuclear generation. So that is one point. That would have provided an alternative power supply. The other point I'll make is that it wasn't up until the mid, probably the mid '80s, mid to late '80s, that the problem became -- that the problem really became severe, because up until that point in time there was sufficient generation with the Winnipeg River, Grand Rapids and Kelsey. Wuskwatim wasn't in place at that point in time. The load wasn't so great that we weren't able to supply it if we lost Dorsey, and furthermore if we did lose Dorsey we had in place what was called a southern system generation criteria where we'd fire up the coal plants. So over time things changed. Nuclear fell off the radar screen for a lot of reasons that we commonly know. A southern system generation and running coal plants become unfavorable. It's not like there was one target

that we could have been working towards in the late '60s and early 70's, 40 years hence. Things change. And --

MR. GIBBONS: I think that's clearer now, that sequence of decisions.

MR. NEUFELD: Right.

THE CHAIRMAN: I'll now open the floor to anybody in the audience who might have questions of Manitoba Hydro relating to the presentation that was made here this morning. This is questions, not presentations, at this time. Sir, could you come up to the mic, please.

MS. WIENS: My question in regards to your presentation: As we just heard, things change. And we know things are changing rapidly in the U.S. with gas finds, tremendous amounts of natural gas being found. And if Mr. Romney becomes the new president, part of his platform is to bring coal on in a big, big way. So things are changing or may change very rapidly as we speak. So why we assume that things change in the '90s with your deal with Ontario, we may be seeing substantial change within the next few years. How are you dealing with that? This whole thing might be redundant. We might not need this power

transmission to the States. These contracts could disappear.

THE CHAIRMAN: Sir, before you run away could you just state your name for the record, please?

MS. WIENS: Bob Wiens.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MR. NEUFELD: Yes, I understand your question, and it has to do with export contracts. We're not installing the Bipole III line today to serve as export contracts. We are installing it to provide the redundant facility to the existing DC system, and it's to service Manitoba Hydro, Manitoba residents, Manitoba business, and to ensure we have an adequate supply of electricity for Manitoba.

THE CHAIRMAN: Please come up to the front. Please state your name for the record and ask your questions.

MS. LOEWEN: My name is Faith Loewen. My question is, from your presentation, I understand there was a lot of community consultation. I believe most of us, some of us are aware of issues with impact that this line will have. Most of us rely on the government, on

Manitoba Hydro and on the Clean Environment Commission to ensure that projects of this kind are set up in such a way to not impact people. In my research, I understand that when these lines cross a major transportation route, that is when the greatest health effects are felt. And that these effects can be felt within ten kilometres. Why, therefore, did Manitoba Hydro, or did Manitoba Hydro take this information into consideration when planning this route within a few kilometres of my children's school, which is located on highway 75 and within ten kilometres of Domain school, which is also located on the highway? I think the health of our children is most important to me. And from my research, that is the most important -- that is the greatest health effect that there will be.

MR. NEUFELD: We have looked at the health effects. We would certainly share your concern about putting in a facility that would have a detrimental impact to health. I can tell that we have hired a renowned expert, Dr. Bailey, who gave a presentation in Winnipeg during the first week of the Clean Environment Commission hearings, and he described the impact of DC lines

as it relates to electromagnetic fields. And his research, his extensive research shows that there is no detrimental impact to human health.

MS. LOEWEN: I'm not talking about the electromagnetic fields, I'm talking about the combination of the emissions by huge traffic volumes of heavy machinery going -- like the trucks that go on highway 75, the combination of these emissions with the force field of the electricity. So, it's not the electromagnetic field, I agree we're outside of that. But how often do we have southern prevailing winds? And I am not even sure that there are other schools that wouldn't be within ten kilometres of this line. I think that's a risk that we as a province can't take, and I hope Manitoba Hydro has really taken this into consideration. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are there any other questions of hydro officials? Sir?

MR. DERKSEN: Hi, my name is Joe Derksen. One question that I have, maybe you can answer this, do these DC lines, what are their impact on other radio signals such as GPS or cell phone reception? Is there any interference from the lines to those kinds of signals?

MR. NEUFELD: I'll speak to the GPS, first of all. We have brochures that we have passed around at most of our presentation locations. We have done research on that, and what happens with GPS is that typically a GPS system will be coordinated through various satellite towers, including from four up to ten, depending on what types of GPS system you've got. And I believe your concern is as you get near the line with your equipment, your farming equipment, what will be the impact.

So, what happens with the DC towers, it's not the high voltage line, it's the physical presence of the steel in the tower that creates just a small shadow effect. And so it may lessen the signal from one satellite through line of sight, but you've got three or four, or up to eight or nine, depending on what your system looks like, to maintain tracking and all you need is two.

MR. DERKSEN: Well, I think generally speaking, my system shuts down after whatever, you lose a lot of accuracy once you're actually under five or four even I think generally speaking they would shut out. At least that's my set up, we're

often running more than that.

The question that I have, how about the radio frequencies that we would get for RTK corrections or your cell phone signals, how does it impact those?

MR. MAZUR: I think the brochure also covers that particular aspect. The frequencies that those devices operate under are significantly higher. And so there is generally no effect on cell phones or anything from the DC. The DC can affect AM radio or, you know, analog TV, depending on where the location is, but it won't affect digital TV or cell phones or anything like that. Some of the correctional systems on GPS which are low level, low frequency, as Mr. Neufeld just explained, blocking can occur, but that's fairly transient, and that's by the tower, not the DC noise itself.

MR. DERKSEN: It is just a question I ask because we're moving more and more towards that. And right now, if we lose -- if I lose my connection, I can't, you know, I'm pretty much sitting in the field idling and not going. One other comment I just want to make, thank you for answering those, is maybe a question that you had

in your presentation, you had your initial area where the environmental commission was looking at where the best line was, where the best route was. And you said it covered 20 percent of the province. I just found it interesting that it was focused entirely on the west side of the province, and the east side later in the presentation there was at one time a possibility of the line running on the east side of the province. And I was just wondering why, whenever it was, 30 or 40 years ago that was acceptable to run a line down that side, and now in the recent time that wasn't even acceptable to look at. That's my last question. Thank you.

MS. MAYOR: We've got Mr. McGarry here to just talk about your first question and then in terms of the change, maybe that can be answered after that. So we'll try and answer both of those.

MR. DERKSEN: Thank you.

MS. MAYOR: Just in terms of the brochures that were mentioned, they were filed as exhibits in the last hearing and very shortly we'll have them all at the back table. They are there right now. So that is something you can

pick up on your way out.

MR. McGARRY: Good morning commissioners, Pat McGarry, and good morning Mr. Derksen, and ladies and gentlemen. We did -- because you were mentioning self steer systems and other modern technology regarding farm equipment, we did an independent study, which is part of the record, and we'll be happy to provide it to you as well, where we used a company, Pollock and Wright, land surveyors, tested a number of different equipment on tractors and farm machinery under our existing Bipoles I and II which are similar DC lines. And they reported on that, and they found very, very little effect on the self steer systems using different equipment as well.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does anyone wish to address Mr. Derksen's policy question or do we just -- the decision was a policy decision.

MR. McGARRY: Yeah, I think it's fair to say that many years ago, when we first started looking at Bipole, yes, the east side was an option that we looked at. Somewhere in the mid 2000s, policies said that that route wasn't available, and we'd have to look for other options, and that's where we are today.

MR. DERKSEN: I guess maybe it's just a comment more of -- it's just an interesting view and I just would say maybe as my last comment is that as a landowner where the line is proposed to go that I hope that there is, you know, that we can reach a fair and reasonable compensation for going across our land. I hope that there is good communication with landowners to come to an agreement there. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, sir. Are there any other questions of hydro officials? One last chance for questions of hydro officials. Thank you.

We'll now turn to the presentations and we'll go according to the agenda that we have. And the first person to make a presentation is Marg Rempel. Ms. Rempel, I'll ask the Commission secretary to affirm your evidence.

MS. JOHNSON: Could you please state your name for the record.

THE WITNESS: Margaret Rempel.

MS. JOHNSON: Ms. Rempel, we just want to make you aware that it is an offence in Manitoba to knowingly mislead this Commission. Do you promise to tell only the truth during

proceedings before this commission?

MS. REMPEL: I do.

Margaret Rempel: Sworn

THE CHAIRMAN: You may proceed.

MS. REMPEL: Thank you. I own and operate a mixed grain and livestock farm in the RM of Hanover, located about 15 miles east of here. I have been farming at that location for 37 years now. A large hydro power transmission line crosses my property, impacting approximately 630 acres of the land that we farm.

Heavy transmission lines are a significant cost and inconvenience in a number of ways. And I thought perhaps you would find it interesting to get a glimpse of the financial implications of the existing power line to my farming operation. And you might understand a little better my reluctance to experience another.

Firstly, in terms of time: Our crops require seeding, harrowing, herbicide application, fungicide application, sometimes swathing, combining, manure injection, fall tillage and harrowing again, or approximately nine passes per year. If it takes an extra three minutes to maneuver around each pole with each pass, that's

an extra 60 minutes per pass, times nine passes adds up to 540 minutes or nine hours. Paying an employee $18 an hour amounts to an extra $162 a year and over 37 years my out-of-pocket expense has been approximately $5,900.

Secondly, repairs: Sooner or later, there are instances of equipment requiring repairs due to the bumps and bruises of contact with the poles. A very conservative amount over these decades would be $5,000, not including downtime which can be very costly, especially if the weather turns unfavorable.

Thirdly, weeds: Weed proliferation around the poles is a continual challenge. The option for weed control is spraying with a backpack sprayer and/or trying to combat them using a weed whacker. Using an ATV to transport the sprayer and extra water and herbicide tramples the growing crops. Assigning again a very conservative 800-dollar cost per year in terms of chemical, times several applications to address the weed problem over 37 years means $29,600 has gone out of my pocket. And I am not addressing the weed problem beyond what happens through the rest of the field because of the nice little seed

bed you've got going under the poles there.

Fourthly, options: Heavy power transmission lines mean that aerial application of herbicides or fungicides is not an option. And that doesn't impact those few square metres that the pole is located on, it impacts the entire field.

Most cropping seasons in our part of southeastern Manitoba have involved dealing with excess moisture. Crop protection products are obviously most effective if application happens at the optimum time for the crop. Five days later reduces the benefit, and that is not an unusual amount of time to have to wait for the ground to be dry enough to carry the sprayer. Even then, we often have had to deal with significant mud ruts, which are not only hard on equipment during subsequent operations on that field, the ruts usually require additional fuel, time, and tillage to close them up and prepare a reasonable seed bed for the following spring. If for ten years only of the past 37, I have had a three bushel per acre yield loss on 450 acres of canola, that would amount to 1,350 bushels a year or 13,500-bushel yield loss over ten years at an average price of

$8 per bushel, that means a loss of $108,000 on my farm. In actuality, there have been many more than ten wet years in my farming career, and canola is a lot more than $8 a bushel. Again, this is a conservative calculation and excludes all the related incidental but very real cost to me.

So minimally a total of $148,000 for one farmer. Yes, it would have been my preference to have those dollars in my retirement fund, but the choice was taken away from me. I understand that public utilities cross private land, that's the way our system works. And it is assumed that farmers will just bear the additional cost, again, on our own. So I hope that Manitoba Hydro and the provincial government understand that the compensation they have suggested with regard to Bipole III is viewed on the part of farmers as vastly insufficient.

I am presenting a very abbreviated glimpse into the real and recurring costs to me, and to others whose land already has power lines crossing it. Please understand why we are very apprehensive to have yet another line cross our properties. The most frustrating part of the

Bipole III proposition is that this route across thousands and thousands of acres across some of Manitoba's finest farmland is not necessary, let alone desirable.

Beyond the costs I have mentioned, the current route will apparently add another thousand dollars per year to my hydroelectric bill, again unnecessarily. But that extra grand will also not only appear on my statement but on the statements of every average customer of Manitoba Hydro living in our province.

In the past favourable hydroelectricity costs have been one important factor in encouraging business, industry, manufacturing, as well as agricultural livestock production and processing to operate and to continue to operate in our province. It's an advantage we should be seriously guarding. This proposed route for Bipole III erodes that economic advantage with a line that is unnecessarily long, thus incurring more capital costs, cutting 60 kilometres more trees than the east side option, and means a significantly greater loss of electricity once in operation. That string of electricity is of serious concern for human health

and the functioning of our electronic equipment, and it is a very serious concern for our livestock production facilities which also depend on sophisticated electronic equipment, often very sensitive to such interference.

As you can tell, I'm adding my voice to the hundreds of thousands of voices calling for Bipole III route to follow the east side option. Thank you for hearing my comments.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Ms. Rempel. Any questions? Mr. Gibbons.

MR. GIBBONS: Thank you for those comments, I find them very interesting. And there's one that I'd like to put out as a question. But I think this is a question for Hydro rather than for yourself. You have laid out some interesting detail about the cost to farmers and then at the end there is the 1,000-dollar bill for this line. And I wouldn't mind hearing from Hydro, if anyone is able to do so, if not, perhaps an undertaking that we could get the information as to the concern that this, on top of everything else, will add a thousand dollars to everyone's bill, shall we say hydro bill, during the course of a single year. It's a per year figure. Do we

know offhand what that figure might be?

MS. MAYOR: Perhaps we can just take that as an undertaking, and we'll try and have it answered by the end of today. If we can just convene at a break and see if we can get that answered for you.

MR. GIBBONS: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Ms. Mayor. Anyone else? Actually arising out of your presentation, Ms. Rempel, I have a question, I think also for Hydro, and that is what does happen to the electricity from the line loss? Is it stray electricity or where does it go? What happens to it, how is it lost? It's a good question. It hasn't come up before, I don't believe.

MR. NEUFELD: So the electrons are confined to the line itself. The line has an element of resistance to it. And for those that are familiar with Ohms law, which is the law of electricity, what happens with regard to that, those electrons that are injected in the north and don't make it to the south, is they turn to heat.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Thank you very much, Ms. Rempel, for a very thoughtful and

well prepared presentation. Thank you for coming out this morning. Next on our agenda, Bob Wiens.

MS. JOHNSON: Could you please state your name for the record.

MR. B. WIENS: Bob Wiens.

MS. JOHNSON: Mr. Wiens, we just want to make you aware that it is an offence in Manitoba to knowingly mislead this Commission. Do you promise to tell only the truth during proceedings before this commission?

MR. B. WIENS: I do.

Bob Wiens: Sworn.

THE CHAIRMAN: Go ahead, sir.

MR. B. WIENS: I appreciate the opportunity to make a presentation to this committee. I have many concerns about the Bipole III line being built on the proposed west side route. As a citizen and taxpayer of this province I object to the enormous additional expense of the longer route, both in initial construction costs and ongoing maintenance costs caused by an unnecessarily long line which crosses many miles of prime agricultural land.

My other concern has to do with being a farmer who will be negatively impacted by the

line crossing my land. I currently farm land that has a hydro line crossing the middle of the field, and am well aware of the inconvenience, additional costs of cropping inputs, and extra time this incurred. The doubling up of fertilizer and chemical application and the potential environmental hazard this might cause should be reason enough for this commission to recommend that the line be built on a shorter east side route. I am also aware how easy it is to damage equipment and hydro poles when trying to get close with a machine that is 50 to 100 feet wide.

And Mr. Neufeld mentioned that the hydro, some of the structures will be I think roughly 40 metres from the edge of the property line. We now operate some equipment that's 130 feet wide, and new sprayers now are coming out with 130-foot booms and larger, and we don't know where it's going in the future. 40 metres is not adequate.

On our farm, 943 acres, or approximately 40 percent of our crop land will be affected. The line will cross one mile east to west through the middle of a section of land in which the fields are laid out in a north to south

pattern. We have spent many years improving our field drainage. The longest and deepest drains run north to south. We can operate seeding and harvesting equipment along these drains, but not across them. So it is not practical to change our field pattern to an east/west configuration to accommodate this line. And also the location of existing municipal ditches make it impractical to change our drainage pattern.

The average assessment of the affected land on our farm is $1,346 per acre. Using the current market value ratio of 1.3 proposed by Manitoba Hydro results in a market value of $1,750 per acre. This is well below current market value. So the ratio needs to be increased. Using Manitoba Hydro's formula of market value times 150 percent for easement compensation factor, times 26.24 miles per acre equals approximately $69,000 that I would receive for an easement. This gives Manitoba Hydro total control of 26 acres of land cutting across the middle of much of our farm. This will affect us for the rest of our farming career and generations to come, our children and grandchildren. For $69,000, I am not interested in granting an easement to Manitoba

Hydro, essentially giving up control of a parcel of land in the middle of my farm.

In a normal cropping season, we cross our field eight times. And Marg Rempel mentioned nine times, but that includes manure application, which we are not involved with. Twice for seeding, twice for chemical application, twice for harvest and twice for fall work. Our seeding and tillage equipment averages 50 feet in width, harvesting equipment is 35 and 40 feet wide, spraying and harrowing equipment is 100 feet wide. In a normal year on this one mile wide section of land, we could expect to travel underneath this line over 700 times at speeds from 5 to 12 miles per hour. Is this a possible health concern? Might it be in 20 or 30 or 50 years? Manitoba Hydro is offering to buy out residences located within 75 metres of the transmission line. Obviously there must be a negative effect from living or working that close to this line.

Manitoba Hydro is offering a one time payment for structure impact compensation. The amount being offered per structure is more for row crop land than for cereal crop land. Cropping practices in our area have changed dramatically in

the past five years. Corn and soybean acreage or row crop land is increasing rapidly at the expense of cereal and canola crops, or cereal crop land. There is no reason to suggest that this trend will change. Basing one time structure payments on past cropping practices when changes are very likely is not reasonable. All structure payments on crop land should be based on row crop rates.

The cost of working around a structure increases as labour, fuel, fertilizer, chemical and equipment costs increase. These structures will exist for many decades, and basing compensation for the future on current rates is unreasonable. The compensation agreement must include an annual payment to the landowner for as long as the line exists. These payments should be subject to periodic review, reflecting changes to input costs, crop values and the value of the hydro that's being transmitted.

Basing compensation for the future on current costs would be like Manitoba Hydro setting hydro rates based on current costs and guaranteeing these rates for decades into the future. They can't even predict what next year's costs will be.

In the November 2011 Bipole III landowner compensation information brochure, the compensation being offered per structure has been lowered by 8.6 percent for cereal crop land and by 9.2 percent for row crop land compared to the initial brochure. Why are we now being offered less per structure, and will this be even lower next year?

We produce pedigree seed on our farms. So producing a clean crop is very important in order to meet crop specifications and regulations. We currently hand spray one or more times per year around the hydro poles running across one of our fields. According to Manitoba Hydro the base of each structure is eight by eight metres or 26 by 26 feet. Allowing 3 feet on each side for equipment clearance would leave several 32-foot by 32-foot areas in the middle of our seed production fields that can not receive the same weed control as the rest of the field. In order to control the weeds it means going back with a backpack sprayer or a small utility vehicle and doing it manually. It's a very time consuming operation at a time of year when farmers are already busy. It's also my experience that much

heavier rates of chemical are being used when doing small areas manually compared to a large field sprayer crossing a field.

When the line runs through the middle of the field that I own, I have access to all four sides of the tower with my equipment and can work within 3 or 4 feet of the tower if I turn the equipment around enough times. The line also crosses another section of land where we are farming the south half section and another farmer owns the north half section. The towers would be situated on the border between our two properties. In this case we each have access to only one side of the tower. So with each farming operation the equipment has to start moving over well before it gets to the tower, and it takes just as long to get back on course after passing the tower. Large triangles must be left unseeded on either side of the tower. Another area that will either produce an abundance of weeds or need to be sprayed manually. No one knows what chemicals might be needed, how much it will cost, and the cost of labour two or three decades from now. But Manitoba Hydro expects to adequately compensate us with a one time payment. Not a very realistic

plan.

Another big concern is liability insurance. The risk of damaging farm equipment and the towers is high. Farmers will have to carry extra liability insurance to cover the added risk. Extra coverage equals higher premiums. If a tower is damaged and the insurance company has to pay, the farmer risks losing his coverage, and at the very least will lose his claims free discount for three to five years, which in my case is 15 percent. And losing that on a 10,000-dollar premium adds up quickly. Manitoba Hydro will be placing these towers on my land against my will. I don't want them, but may be forced to accept them and the added risk. Manitoba Hydro, as the owner of these towers, must be responsible for the liability insurance, and the contract with farmers must state that farmers and their employees will not be held liable for accidental damage to the towers.

For crossing one mile of my farm, I could expect to receive approximately $40,000 for three structures. If this money is to cover my ongoing costs for many years in the future, the real value to me is the interest it can earn,

currently 2 percent or about $800 a year. $800 a year does not cover the costs and risks of working around the structures, the time and expense of doing angle weed control inside and around the structures, the additional liability insurance, to say nothing of the loss of production.

I'm aware that a shorter and less expensive east side route will also cross farmland and would negatively impact farmers in a different area of the province. After looking at the map of the final preferred west side route issued by Manitoba Hydro, it's obvious that much less farm land would be affected by an east side route. If it was only 25 to 30 percent of the farmland crossed by the west side route, east side farmers could be paid three or four times as much compensation. It might make it somewhat more acceptable to them.

Our government is promoting the Bipole III line as a great economic benefit to the province. Agriculture is also a great economic benefit to our province. But the serious negative impacts that this line would have on thousands of acres of prime crop production land would seem to be of no concern to people making the final

decision.

And for anybody to suggest that minimum amounts of land would be affected is ludicrous. People just aren't in touch, if they suggest it. While most Manitobans will be the beneficiaries of Bipole III and not be inconvenienced in any way by its construction or location, hundreds of farmers will be seriously affected while being offered inadequate one time compensation. A better option, the east side route exists.

If these hearings carry any importance, and I hope they do, and if you, as its members, are truly concerned about the environment, and I hope you are, you will advise the government to abandon the west side route, and I urge you to do so. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Wiens. Mr. Kaplan has a question.

MR. KAPLAN: My question is directed I believe to Hydro, based on your submission, Mr. Wiens. And my question to Hydro is as follows: I'd like clarification on the submissions that this Commission has heard a number of times already and read a number of times

already. It seems to me that Hydro asks for increases based on changes when required, as far as amounts to be paid for electricity. Therefore my question then, based on Mr. Wiens' submission and others that have made a similar submission, is this one time payment versus annual payment to land owners as long as the line exists. I'm wondering if you could explain to me if there is some consideration along that route as far as landowners as put forth by Mr. Wiens and others and what the position of Hydro is.

MS. MAYOR: Sorry, Mr. Kaplan, so you're asking for an explanation as to why it was a one time payment verse annual payments?

MR. KAPLAN: Yes.

MS. MAYOR: Perhaps we can -- at the break we can speak to our property folks and see if we can, before we resume the presentations, we can come back and provide an explanation for you. We do have the presentation next week, but if you are interested in hearing a general answer earlier, we can do that for you.

MR. KAPLAN: I think, Ms. Mayor, it's fair if that can be accomplished while Mr. Wiens is present to hear a possible answer, that would

be appreciated.

MS. MAYOR: Thank you. We will endeavour to do that.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Mr. Wiens, from your presentation and others, as Mr. Kaplan has alluded to, it's clear that very few farmers are happy or would be happy with towers on their land. Would a different compensation scheme, you suggested annual payments, would that at least mitigate your concerns?

MR. B. WIENS: If there was no other way of doing this, I would be interested in talking about this and accepting it. There are other ways of doing this. And this is what baffles me, that why we would do it. But certainly if it's going to happen, and eventually I would likely be powerless from preventing it from happening, it will come down to compensation, for sure. But these numbers they are talking are so far out from what I think is reasonable, that if Manitoba Hydro goes back and recalculates this whole thing, maybe they will come up with the conclusion this thing isn't workable.

And then to be told when we're meeting with the Minister, when we asked about the east

side line, they said if we go on the east side there could be possible court and litigation. And to expect that we're not going to end up in court as we deal with compensation on the west side route, that's where it's going to be going, because I don't intend to sign a paper with Manitoba Hydro. The only way they are crossing my land, it will be against my will and without my signature. And at this point if the compensation was three or four times as much, they will still not get my signature. Somewhere in the future this will come back to haunt Manitoba Hydro.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, sir. Any other questions? Yes, Mr. Motheral.

MR. MOTHERAL: Yes, I may have too many questions being a former farmer.

You mentioned the 1.3 times the market or assessed value to get a figure for compensation for the right-of-way.

MR. B. WIENS: For market value, yes.

MR. MOTHERAL: You mentioned 1346 per acre is what the average assessment is. What would be a market value of land in this case? If you were to sell your property today, what would you get for it? Do you have any idea?

MR. B. WIENS: Well, at this point it would be -- I would venture to say it's $2,000 and higher. And the other thing to keep in mind, if you want to buy something and you're dealing with an unwilling seller, you pay more.

MR. MOTHERAL: Do you feel as though the 1.3 figure should be higher or should the assessed value be higher? I'm speaking now as a former municipal councillor also.

MR. B. WIENS: Well, I don't set the assessed value. I think it's changed every five years, if I'm correct. I'm just taking the numbers from my recent tax bill, so I believe they are accurate.

MR. MOTHERAL: Thank you. That's good. The one time payment versus the annual compensation, how much greater would that one time payment have to be before you would not consider annual payments? You answered that possibly before in the previous question.

MR. B. WIENS: Yeah, I'm not sure what I should state here. I haven't thought that out. My thinking is that the value is the interest that it earns, because it's supposed to last for generations to come. So when you use Marg

Rempel's numbers, for something to produce -- if all of a sudden I decided that in my mind I need to generate several thousand dollars worth of interest per year to cover my costs, 100,000 dollars at 2 percent is 2,000. It's easy figuring, and we've got no reason to believe that interest rates are going up any time soon. We don't know where they will be in two or three decades from now, and it's got to cover my ongoing costs, and costs are not going down.

MR. MOTHERAL: Could I ask one more question?

THE CHAIRMAN: Certainly.

MR. MOTHERAL: You talked about the half mile that you owned on one side and a neighbour or whatever owns the other side, and you can't get access around the poles. Do you feel as though a compensation should be greater if you can only access one side? It's just something to think about.

MR. B. WIENS: Yeah, right, it is. I can't tell exactly where the line is going, is it going in the middle or will it be further into one quarter or the other quarter. And even if it goes on his quarter completely or on my quarter, if

it's only 40 metres or less from the line, from the quarter mile line, then he doesn't have access to that side for some equipment. And even though it's not on my land, it's just beyond it, airplanes can't fly, the weeds will still grow. And, of course, at that point I have no access to get in there to do weed control. So I've got the problem and I'm not able to provide a solution.

MR. MOTHERAL: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Gibbons.

MR. GIBBONS: Mr. Wiens, thank you for your comment. I don't know if off the top of your head you have an answer for this, but I am wondering what percentage of land might be lost through the placement of these towers and lines on your land. I am trying to think now not just of your land but also for all the farmers use lands that's being crossed, do you have a ballpark idea of what you think you might be losing in that process in terms of productive arable land, crops that can't be grown? Talking now, for example, the triangles that are left, for example, near the towers when you are on the half mile line and so on. Do you have a ballpark idea that would be helpful to me in trying to understand the amount

of land that could be lost through the process of placement of towers and so on?

MR. B. WIENS: Well, I don't. I have just given a figure how big the spot, if I can work on all four sides, I think I mentioned 32 by 32 I have to leave out. And that's the land that wouldn't produce. The land that I turn around on to bring it down to 32 by 32, once I have packed it several times, and this is from experience, it produces less. So there is the loss of production on that little area, there is the lower production on a somewhat larger area. And then there is if an airplane can't spray at the right time because of the land, it could be a quarter section, it could be a much bigger piece. I can't answer that. I'm sorry.

MR. GIBBONS: But the loss of the aerial spraying, though -- and when I meant loss of land, I don't mean lost to the point where there's nothing on it at all, but you did mention, for example, if there is no aerial spraying possible because of the presence of the towers and the lines production is lost. If production is down by 10 percent on a small piece of land that's a hundred acres, it's the equivalent of losing ten

acres.

MR. B. WIENS: Right.

MR. GIBBONS: I'm thinking along those lines in a more fluid sense of loss of land. Let's call it loss of productivity. So for property such as yours, you could be losing overall a 10 percent --

MR. B. WIENS: It could vary from year to year. If we get a really good year like we had this year where excess moisture isn't a problem, it would be less than that. If we get years that we have had in the '90s and the last 10, 15 years where it's almost impossible to operate, where you cannot operate a field sprayer, it can be much greater than 10 percent. And so to put a figure on it I think would be very difficult. But it can vary widely, depending on environment, weather conditions.

MR. GIBBONS: And let's say a range of loss of productivity might also depend on the type of crop, as you said, if you are growing row crops as opposed to something else.

MR. B. WIENS: I don't know if that would have that much to do with it, whether it's rows, solid seed or row crop. If a timely

operation can't be done, you know, if say you're growing a crop of wheat that's going to gross $400 an acre and you don't do a timely operation, you lose 25 percent of it, that's a hundred bucks an acre. If it's corn, that's worth $700 an acre or $800 an acre, you lose 25 percent because of the timely operation not being done, that's 200 bucks an acre. So it depends on what you're growing and what your problems are.

MR. GIBBONS: That's helpful. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you have any questions?

MS. MacKAY: A question about the size of the equipment and the very large booms you are referring to, what are your options if you are faced with a placement of a tower? Do you have -- would someone have smaller equipment that they could use in that situation or what would you do?

MR. WIENS: Well, the custom operators of course are generally the guys who are available for hire are generally the guys running the large equipment. So there might be somebody available. But as a pedigree seed grower, I don't just allow anybody on to my land. And so with my neighbour

and myself, why don't we get together and solve our problem, right? Well, he doesn't want me going on his land if he's seeding canola and I'm seeding wheat, he doesn't want me scattering my seed on his land, or when I'm spraying using different products on different crops. It's not just as simple as I can go on his and just clean it up, because we're not doing the same thing. And I don't want him on my land dropping various different seeds, or contamination, wheat seeds, whatever, just like he doesn't want me on his land doing the same thing. And to get in smaller equipment, again it's a timeliness thing. I can't just phone somebody can you come here and spray three acres for me next week. Nobody is interested in doing this clean up and everything that's required on the sprayers. I don't think that's practical, no.

MR. MOTHERAL: Maybe just one final point on the liability part. Manitoba Hydro did speak to this a couple of days ago, and they may want to speak now about it. If you damaged towers, that if you are doing normal operations, that it would certainly be negotiable, I'm sure with Hydro as to who would pay for the damages.

Oh, I've got an audience. Maybe Hydro wants to talk about that. Was that not mentioned? That they would be negotiating if something happened to towers?

MS. MAYOR: I think the presentation on Wednesday we asked our insurance department to provide us with some information about that, and what is normally done and what sort of negotiation takes place. We haven't received an answer yet, but we will for certain next week provide an answer to that question.

THE CHAIRMAN: Any questions? Thank you very much, Mr. Wiens, for your presentation. Thank you for coming out this morning. We'll take a 15 minute break now, so we'll come back at ten to 11, and we'll have Karen Friesen and Don Harris and others on the list.

MR. B. WIENS: Thank you for your time.

(Proceedings recessed at 10:35 a.m. and reconvened at 10:50 a.m.)

MS. JOHNSON: Could you please state your name from the record.

MS. FRIESEN: Karen Friesen.

MS. JOHNSON: Ms. Friesen, we just

want to make you aware that it is an offence in Manitoba to knowingly mislead this Commission. Do you promise to tell only the truth during proceedings before this Commission?

MS. FRIESEN: I do.

MS. JOHNSON: Thank you.

Karen Friesen: Sworn

THE CHAIRMAN: Go ahead.

MS. FRIESEN: Good morning, Mr. Chair and panel members, I'd like to first of all welcome you all to Niverville and to thank you for this opportunity to finally speak this morning. My name is Karen Friesen. I stand here today, October 26th, to voice my concerns about Bipole III in my own community, the community where my husband was born and raised on the family farm, and where together today we are raising our family on that this now soon to be fourth generation farm.

I am finding it rather ironic because it was exactly two years ago to the day yesterday when I stood in our legislative buildings on Broadway before a meeting of the committee on Crown corporations along with over 100 other upset landowners. That was the day that I was first

refused the opportunity to voice the concerns over Bipole III of hundreds of landowners from across Manitoba's most productive farm belt. That was the day that I first became aware that there were so many others, including engineers, retired Hydro executives, even one CEO, and so many others from across our province that also had serious concerns about the Bipole III project.

As you will likely know, I have spent the better part of the last two years working with many others, trying to make sense of how a project so important to all Manitobans can be a project that has become one where decisions are being driven by policy and by politics and not by best practices.

I have had the privilege of working with some of the finest people in this province, from all walks of life, trying to ensure decisions are being made for the right reasons, and that mistakes will not be made today that we will be forced to pay for tomorrow.

There is no doubt that the Bipole III project is a complicated one. It is impossible from the general public, myself included, to understand all aspects of the project. I can't

begin to count the times I have been asked by people in this province, including those who may have the most at stake, the producers of our food who contribute in such a huge way to the food security and economic well-being of our province, what is the real reason that the Bipole III route was changed to traverse the far west side of Manitoba through our best farmland at such an extra cost and with so many more negative effects? I have searched for the answer for over two years. There has been a lot of smoke and mirrors advanced by the parties involved, trying to answer the question. Unfortunately, I have yet to hear any good answer. The truth in my mind is there is none.

Today I stand here as Karen Friesen, a farmer and a land owner whose family and whose farm will be directly impacted by the Bipole III transmission line. I want to focus on just a very few of the concerns that we have with the project as its line traverses our land and our communities. It is my opinion that these concerns continue to get lost in a complicated debate and that they are still not being properly addressed.

According to provincial calculations,

economic activity generated by farmers, along with the food and beverage processing and food service industries, generated $10.1 billion in economic activity in 2010 and created over 62,000 jobs for Manitobans. Keystone Agricultural producer research shows for every dollar a grain farmer earns, $13.90 is sent into circulation in our economy.

Of the 20 million acres farmed in Manitoba, only 25 percent is classified as land inventory classes 1, 2 and 3, our very best soils. Every class 1 acre is located in the southern portion of this province. Productive land across the province continues to be lost in non-agricultural uses, putting even more pressure on the remaining arable land. As Manitoba Hydro went through the process of choosing a route for Bipole III through these most productive soils, they set up a matrix to help them decide the best option for routing Bipole III. What completely astounds me is that when Hydro was considering the 23 criteria they chose for their route selection matrix, agriculture was ranked equally among the other 22 criteria which included amphibians and reptiles. Six of the criteria, including birds,

mammals, caribou and culture and heritage were even given the opportunity for extra weight. Agriculture, on the other hand, remained ranked equally with garter snakes, even in this predominantly agricultural zone. Unbelievable, considering what it contributes to our province and its economy.

To make matters worse, while the decisions on routing were being made by Manitoba Hydro, the landowner stakeholders did not even know they were being made.

I would like now to touch on a few of our concerns that I know are also shared by many other landowners. On our farm, one of our serious concerns will be the severe production constraints we will be forced to work with for the rest of time once the line is built. There will be ongoing problems associated with placement of towers in the field. In any single season, farmers may be in a field a minimum of 10 times, pulling different implements with high horsepower tractors. Working around or near towers and lines will pose problems to many landowners and these problems have not been properly analyzed by Manitoba Hydro.

One of the production constraints we will deal with is the time and financial cost of maneuvering large equipment around towers located in the field. Overlap and underlap of pesticides and fertilizers around towers will be a continuing problem. We row crop our entire farm, and so special season-long problems of inconvenience and cost with row cropping around towers will be a serious issue for us. The spreading of noxious weeds from areas beneath and around towers and rights-of-way will give us higher costs on an annual basis from both increased use of pesticides, fertilizer, fuel and increased labour costs.

A large portion of the route for Bipole III in the southern section of the province will traverse the most heavily populated hog, poultry and dairy belt in Manitoba. The land we farm, as well as almost every other acre in the RM of Hanover, is dedicated to manure management plans that are demanded by Manitoba Conservation of every single hog operation and many dairy and poultry operations. The plans dictate very strict rules that must be adhered to by every producer with regards to manure application. These rules

are strictly enforced for good reason so that we are all operating in environmentally responsible ways. The majority of these operations work with liquid manure injection and spreading equipment, utilizing drag hoses to apply the manure. This type of specialized equipment is incompatible with large obstructions such as huge towers placed in the field. It is functionally incompatible and it will present a safety hazard to the equipment and the operator, not to mention a risk to power security.

Every year on our farm, we are subject to random audits by staff from Manitoba Conservation who come and sample application rates and soils to ensure we have not over applied manure. Having towers in fields that are allocated to the manure management plans will pose risks of severe environmental fines to the farm operator due to overlap and uneven application as a result of these field obstructions.

Manitoba Hydro has already admitted that it has not taken any of these serious issues or consequences into account when they were planning the route. It has become clear that they do not appreciate the density of hog operations in

the area and the amount of land that will be covered with hog manure application on an annual basis.

This is just one example of what today's farming practices involve. Most farmers today strive through management practices to be good stewards of the land and to work so that our environment remains protected for future generations.

Another serious concern for us is the operational complications of aerial spraying. The area that we farm uses aerial application every single year. It is an area of the province that grows many special crops such as corn, beans and canola. The soils are very productive and allow us to produce excellent crops. On many of the crops that we grow, like canola and winter wheat, for example, the use of late season fungicides applied by aircraft because the crop is too advanced to apply by ground based equipment is common practice every year. If we get wet years, as we often do and as was the case in the spring of 2011, air application of herbicides and pesticides may be our only option. If the application of pesticides is not an option, the

losses will be catastrophic to the landowner.

Manitoba Hydro has completely underestimated the impact of this serious constraint. They have failed to take into account that the effects of this particular production constraint has a far wider reach than simply the field that the line will traverse. There will be situations that adjacent fields will also be impacted and yet will not be considered for compensation. On top of these obvious problems, when aerial applicators have more work than they can handle at busy times, it's not surprising that they choose not to service fields with a power line traversing them. The safety risks and application constraints are too great. Who can blame them? Yet we all know that in the case of Bipole III, it will be the landowners who will suffer the resulting losses.

There will be a wide number of problems associated with placement of towers in a field, depending on where they end up. Of utmost concern to me will be the safety and liability issues that will arise from working around such a structure in the field. As I noted earlier, it is common practice to be in any field numerous times

in a season. Today's farmers are working with huge tractors, many over 500-horsepower and pulling very wide implements such as our own 110-foot Harrow and our 120-foot sprayer. We are working with GPS and auto steer technology. We are also often working 24 hour days and farming large acreages. We are striving to maximize productivity as well as striving to be responsible partners with our environment. It is the simple nature of farming today. It is the reality, and it is exciting for our children, including our own son who will be one of the farmers of tomorrow.

What I am witnessing happening with so little thought and understanding of agriculture and the routing of this transmission line through the most productive farm belt in Manitoba is wrong. In fact, it is a disgrace. I have heard Manitoba Hydro explain in recent days that they cannot route the line along road allowances as they can't risk road traffic hitting one of the towers and taking it down. If this route proceeds as planned, it is only a matter of time before the inevitable happens. If a tractor or an implement it is pulling hits or just even hooks a tower, you will see it buckle in seconds. The risk is so

much higher for a tower placed in a field where farm implements will be forced to work constantly around it than along a road allowance. It is hard for me to believe that this topic has been avoided in discussion.

To make matters even more critical, we will have to worry not only about the safety of our operators, which includes our young family members as they learn to farm, but about the liability and insurance issues that we will now have to deal with once the tower is damaged, or worse yet, brought down. When you traverse over 350 kilometres of prime cultivated farmland, it is guaranteed to happen. It's only a matter of when and to whom. It is impossible to compensate for the increased risks and liability.

Hydro says they will place towers 42 metres into the field. They say, "this will allow for farmers to work around the tower." In reality, this will leave little leeway for today's wide equipment to work around and does not take into account tomorrow's technology changes. One thing we know for sure is that farming history teaches us that everything gets bigger. We are always trying to cover more acres in less time.

Having an obstruction in the field means we farm around an obstruction.

Constraints are forever and with changes in technology will only get worse. And it is safer and easier to farm by an obstruction, in other words along a road allowance, ditch or field boundary than to constantly have to farm around it.

You will also know that it is my opinion that the route for Bipole III should have been left where Manitoba Hydro had spent decades planning for it and where it would have affected next to zero agricultural land.

The last concern I will touch briefly on today is the lack of concrete, long-term evidence that will guarantee there will not be or that there will never be any health concerns to those of us in our family or our livestock who will be forced to live alongside the line and at times pass back and forth under hundreds of times in any single season. It is one thing for those who are forcing the line upon us to state there are, and I quote no "known" long-term health concerns or no "direct" links today. But it is a completely different thing to be able to guarantee

these concerns will never exist. History has proven that this can change over time once more studies have been completed. No one is going to put into writing that there will never be anything of concern.

It is also one thing to choose to make a decision for yourself and family with any of life's risks. It is completely another for something to be forced upon you over which you have absolutely no control. There is no denying that there has been and will continue to be a large stress factor to all of those that will be most directly affected because we are forced to live and work along side Bipole III. There will always be safety concerns which can and will impact long-term health and well-being. No amount of compensation will ever change that.

Manitoba Hydro has admitted that many of these issues cannot be properly mitigated so their only means of dealing with these very serious direct impacts are through what they call fair compensation. They have failed to understand that it will be impossible to compensate fairly for many of those issues and that it will certainly be impossible to do with a one-time

compensation package. I have heard them state more than once that they have chosen a one-time package in order to simplify things for Hydro. They have stated that the one-time compensation payment requires less administration and provides an up-front capitalized payment for the loss of future value of the land. I have also heard a Hydro employee say, and I quote from an article in the Western Producer, "We want to make this fair, if not more than fair, so we can facilitate the project when we get approval. It would take an awful long time to battle with 500 plus landowners if your compensation package isn't adequate."

Well, I would like to emphatically state here today that if the only answer Hydro is able to provide us as to how to handle landowners who they admit will be so negatively impacted by the project is compensation, they will have a fight on their hands from many of us and they will have to go back to the drawing board rather than try to convince us that a one-time payment of any amount could ever be fair. That is why past Hydro projects offer annual compensation packages and so many other provincial utility companies do the same.

It is also why the Association of Manitoba Municipalities at their last two annual meetings have approved resolutions with 90 percent membership support, asking the Government of Manitoba to reconsider the routing for Bipole III. Again, a disgrace when these requests so heavily supported from across the entire province are ignored. When there is also concern from many other groups including the Keystone Agricultural Producers, it continues to compel me to fight for the future of our farms that will be so directly impacted by the Bipole III project.

In the final days of the process as Manitoba Hydro goes through the motions and gets closer to receiving their licence to commence construction of the line and to change the landscape across Manitoba's best farming region as well as our farms forever, I ask you, panel members of the Clean Environment Commission, to please take a close look as to what is about to happen here. This is our last chance for the future of our farms, the future of our families and the future of our province to stop one of the most monumental mistakes ever being made in our province.

I'd like to close with one final request. Over the past few years, I have participated in and watched the Bipole III debate unfold, and now here we are, in the final stretch of what I consider to have been a flawed process that seems to be leading to an inevitable decision. I would like to ask both the proponent, Manitoba Hydro, and the Commission panel to remember that at the end of the day, you have both been paid to do a job. Your decisions and recommendations on the Bipole III project will be made and you can all move on to your next order of business. However, for every individual who has appeared before the Commission to voice their concerns, there are hundreds and thousands of others who have not. We have not been paid to do a job and we cannot simply move on to our next order of business in our lives and on our farms.

I ask the Commission panel to please remember when considering their recommendations to the Minister, that this is a decision we will be forced to live with for the next 100 years. And once it is made, it can never be taken back.

Thank you very much for your time.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much,

Ms. Friesen. I do have a question. Near the end of your presentation, you referred to past Hydro projects which offer annual compensation packages and other provincial utility companies. Could you expand on that a little bit, please?

MS. FRIESEN: Well, I have done a lot of Googling in the last two years and I have also spoken with a lot of landowners, landowners that currently have Hydro lines on their properties. And I know along the route very close to Niverville, there are landowners that have the same hydro line on property and a neighbour shares the same transmission line. One had a one time payment, a previous owner of the land had purchased the land back in the 60's, and when it traded hands, of course, the one-time compensation package went along with the land transaction. A neighbour, on the other hand, refused to sign that one-time package and they are receiving an annual payment to this day. That's one simple example.

I believe some of the windmills that have recently gone up are also on an annual compensation program. And I know for a fact that's in other provincial jurisdictions, because I have been dealing with some out-of-province

people that work with those types of things.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can you give us an example from another province?

MS. FRIESEN: I know in Alberta, you will hear from an expert in later November, that will know a lot more about that. We have conversed, I can't give you details, but he certainly will be able to --

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay, thank you. Any other questions? Mr. Gibbons?

MR. GIBBONS: Yes, Ms. Friesen. Thank you for your presentation. I'm wondering if I might ask you to explain a little bit more for me so that I can more clearly understand the concerns that you were raising, but others have also raised here, Portage la Prairie, and even in some cases farther north. And it relates to the right-of-way being along an existing road and so on. How much difference would that make to your life? And I'm speaking here only of you, relating this to your own experience? How much of a difference would it make to your life if in fact the right-of-way was adjacent to the road and not in the location that you expect it to be?

MS. FRIESEN: Okay. You know, again,

there's so many complexities to every one of these issues we talked to. So I speak on behalf of what my beliefs are. Every farm is different. So there is so many factors that come into play. It depends, number one, if you have neighbours that -- you don't own the entire section, for example, you have to consider the effect it's going to have on neighbours as well. But the difference that it will make, you will still have to deal with many of the issues. For example, the aerial application issue, that really doesn't make a huge difference if it's 30 metres into the field or if it's along the road allowance. There's still a transmission line there. So it will not make a huge difference in that situation. It would however make a huge difference for the safety of the operators of the equipment on my farm. If the tower isn't located into the field, the chance, of course, of hitting it with some of your equipment, we're talking very heavy horsepower equipment here, we're talking huge tractors that if it hits any of that metal, there is going to be trouble. There is going to be damage. And if a tower is located into the field, you're working around the tower. If it's located

at the very edge of a property, it's like a lot of the simple poles that we see today, we farm around those when they are on the road access, or if they are close to the edge of the field, you can work around that. If that pole was set into the field, and I believe you'll see some testimony on that later on in the hearings as well, anything placed at all into a field poses far higher safety risks, far higher risks as far as inconvenience to the farmer.

But there is a matter of opinion on all of this. Every situation is different. And that's why it's impossible for me to speak and I will not speak on behalf of all landowners. My point being, it doesn't make sense to come through this intensely agricultural land. The risks are too high from so many aspects.

MR. GIBBONS: Thank you.

MR. MOTHERAL: Thank you, Ms. Friesen. I think I understood you to say that you are 100 percent grow crop?

MS. FRIESEN: Some years we are, it depends on our crop rotation. Every acre is potentially 100 percent. This year, I would say 90 percent of our farm. We had one canola grow

that wasn't grow crop.

MR. MOTHERAL: You have clarified that. I noticed there was canola and winter wheat.

MS. FRIESEN: We didn't grow winter wheat, there was corn, soybeans and one field of canola.

MR. MOTHERAL: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Help me a little bit on the aerial spraying. I had watched it being done from a distance but never close up. How low do they come? Do they come down below the heights of the towers?

MS. FRIESEN: You know, I'm not comfortable answering those questions because I'm not an aerial applicator, but you will hear an expert witness testimony from an aerial applicator in November.

THE CHAIRMAN: Good, I look forward to that and that will be helpful. Thank you very much for your presentation today.

MS. FRIESEN: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Dawn Harris. Following Ms. Harris will be Mark Reimer and Willy Nayet.

We'll ask the commission secretary to

affirm your testimony.

MS. JOHNSON: Could you please state your name for the record?

MS. HARRIS: Dawn Harris.

MS. JOHNSON: Ms. Friesen, we just want to make you aware that it is an offence in Manitoba to knowingly mislead this Commission. Do you promise to tell only the truth during proceedings before this Commission?

MS. HARRIS: I do.

Dawn Harris: Sworn

THE CHAIRMAN: Go ahead.

MS. HARRIS: Good morning ladies and gentlemen. I do appreciate the opportunity to come and speak to you. I'm approaching my presentation from the perspective of agriculture and the landscape. I hold a degree in agriculture. I worked in the field for 30 years, some of those years as a farm owner. And I also hold a masters degree in landscape architecture.

My introduction to the Bipole III topic came several years ago when the university of Manitoba hosted a panel discussion on the issue, including alternate routes. The room was packed.

Two things stuck in my mind. The first was MLA Rob Altemeyer who gave a short presentation and then left, refusing to take any questions. That action said to me that the government either views this issue as inconsequential because one of its representatives could not take the time in his schedule to meet about it, or else the government thinks so little of its constituents that it didn't need to converse with them. As a citizen of Manitoba, I take exception with this attitude.

The other thing that left an impression with me was the university professor who showed the audience a map of the vast area of the boreal forest east of Lake Manitoba. In order to put into perspective the physical impact of a transmission line on the boreal forest, he said: "Now imagine a pencil line being drawn north to south on that map. That represents the amount of land that the hydro line would occupy." I thought, well, any other route is a non-starter except perhaps the one under the lake which was also presented at that meeting and it intrigued me.

Words cannot describe my disbelief

when I finally saw the actual proposed route west of the lake and to call it a route west of the lake is a misnomer. It is a route through western and southern Manitoba, nowhere near Lake Winnipeg. It is a route that goes through agricultural land, prime crop land, some of the best in the province. Prior to the last election, the government released numbers about how much agricultural land will be taken out of production. The statement was attributed to Rosann Wowchuk, then Finance Minister and former Minister of Agriculture. The number was so nominal that I could not figure out how it was arrived at. Turns out the calculation included only the land immediately underneath each tower. How disingenuous. The impact on farmers and agriculture is far greater than just the land removed from production underneath the towers.

My husband was raised on a farm in the Interlake that hosted the first set of hydro towers from Grand Rapids in the 1960s. Even with a one percent deviation in the route so that the towers didn't run between the barn and the house, and I'll tell you it was a very small farm yard, so that would have made a huge difference had the towers gone there, his family lost their eastern

and a portion of their northern shelter belt. To those who live in urban spaces, a shelter belt may not seem important. But to those on rural properties, a shelter belt creates a micro-climate that saves energy in heating homes, reduces the snow accumulation in the yard site and contributes to animal and human comfort and convenience. I am reminded that Manitoba Hydro is always telling us to be energy smart and to save energy.

Most importantly, those towers were a challenge to operate around. My husband recounts a story of one harvest when his dad forgot about his proximity to a tower and neglected to lift the unloading auger on his combine. You can imagine what happened. A farmer doesn't need any equipment out of commission during harvest. And that was a tower with a square base. Towers with guy wires are even more difficult to maneuver around. My father-in-law's experience was at a time when equipment was much smaller and his was the smallest of the small.

I'll just interject here. You have heard from people who are now farming today with very large equipment. So you can imagine what would happen had they hit that tower.

So you can imagine the difficulties these towers will introduce to a farming operation today and reduced efficiency from having to maneuver around the towers in unseeded acreage because of the difficulty of making numerous tight turns around towers, and in the risk of damaging equipment and injuring operators, not to mention the risks for custom and aerial applicators.

I find it hard to believe that the government believes a few square kilometres of boreal forest is of more significance to the well-being of the province than farmers' ability to farm effectively and safely as part of a sector that feeds Manitobans and contributes thousands of jobs to the economy.

For another anecdote, and as an aside, I've found over the years anecdotes are much more effective than facts and figures. When I was very much younger, we were renovating our house. We had to move the fridge. I plugged it into a very long extension cord. The fridge didn't seem to be doing quite the same job it had done where it was originally plugged. It was explained to me that the longer the cord, the more energy that is lost along the transmission distance and the harder my

fridge had to work.

With this episode in mind, I can't comprehend how Manitoba Hydro and our government can justify proposing a transmission route that is nearly 500 kilometres longer than necessary. This is such a waste of resources. It is an approach that I don't understand coming from a government that prides itself on being green aware and that has made such strides in recycle, reusing and reducing. While the government may feel it is being green by keeping the transmission lines out of the boreal forest east of the lake, it is really false environmental economy. When the expenditure of resources outweighs the savings in resources, the project is not environmentally friendly.

From a landscape perspective, it is a false premise that undisturbed nature is significantly more valuable than that in which humans participate. If I can refer to that age old question, if a tree falls in the forest, does anyone hear it? Similarly, if a few acres are kept pristine, do they have any impact in the scheme of things when thousands of acres are unnecessarily and willfully disturbed?

Many studies have been done that show that people who have access to green space in built environments show improvements in mental health and well-being. For workers in office buildings and patients in hospitals, this access need only be visual to show a decrease in stress and an improvement in health.

I have to wonder about the psychological impact of a disfigured green space on thousands of rural Manitobans when their horizons are unnecessarily scarred by hydro wires and towers. A Manitoba sunset will just not be the same with hydro towers silhouetted against the skyline. And that will be just a little difficult to photoshop out.

All kidding aside though, one of the concerns of a landscape architect is how people impact the landscape and how the landscape impacts people and to find solutions that mitigate those impacts for the immediate and long-term. In the case of Bipole III, the appropriate resolution would be to abandon the proposed western route.

Deep ecologists and even those environmentalists that are less so will accuse me of being anthropocentric. But when there is a

solution that benefits humans with limited impact on nature, that is the solution I will accept. If that is being anthropocentric, then so be it. Any discussion of Bipole III's western route is purely an ideological environmental one. It can be nothing else because it's not cheaper, it's not less disruptive, it's not more green and it's not necessary. Ideology is a very poor basis for making public policy.

As a final note, I would like to say that I'm appalled that Manitoba Hydro and the provincial government refuse to listen to the many credible professionals who have come out against the western route for Bipole III. I have been acquainted with one of those professionals, Dr. Garland LaLiberte, for more than 30 years and I have immense respect for him.

In closing, I understand that this Commission has not been given the mandate to look at the alternatives to the western route. If that is the case, then I would suggest that the only recommendation that the Commission can make is to abandon the route.

Now before I leave my presentation, I'd like to just add an addendum. And this

occurred last night after I read my presentation, I happened to go to the CEC website and look at some of the presentations that were done in Portage. I noticed there was an exchange about shelterbelts. There were questions from some of the Commissioners and similar responses from Manitoba Hydro, and it had to do with fully or partially removing trees during construction of Bipole III. So while I'm not an expert on shelterbelts, I do know that there is a bit of science to it as far as placement and species. This is an issue of more than just replacing trees, so I just want to make some comments on a few things that were exchanged at Portage.

You have to ask the question, what type of shelterbelt is being replaced? Is it young or mature, field or yard? The size and type of tree affects how the wind acts on the lee side of the belt. The height of the trees affects where turbulent and calm areas on the lee side of the shelterbelt will occur. Mature shelterbelts are irreplaceable; removing them and replacing them with young trees can significantly change microclimates and affect snow deposition and wind speed. In the case of a yard shelterbelt, partial

removal can create a wind tunnel, substantially change the climate of the yard. And in the case of livestock operations, possibly affect odour distribution.

In the case of field shelterbelts, the location of towers and the required size of the right-of-way could make the relocation of a shelterbelt ineffective depending on field size, could take more land out of production or could make working around the shelterbelt and the tower very difficult.

With respect to types of trees, there are very few trees and shrub species that only grow to 12 or 15 feet. So planting within the right-of-way is not all that practical. A question was also asked whether the trees under the tower could be trimmed every 10 years or so. While I agree with the response from the Hydro representative that it is not possible, I do so for a different reason. If trimming were to be done, the only way that could approach cost effectiveness would be to top the trees. One arborist told me that topping trees is almost tree murder. Why? Because a tree can't heal its wounds unless a branch is removed back to where it

connects with a larger branch. A topped tree is then susceptible to insects and disease. Depending on how much of the top growth is removed, the tree's longevity can be reduced as well.

One of the commissioners asked about the length of time it takes to re-establish a shelterbelt. The answer was a couple of years for poplars, longer for other species. Generally speaking, the faster a tree grows, the shorter-lived it is. The Agroforestry Development Centre, formerly known as PFRA, and that's what most of us in the agricultural community still call it, estimates that Siberian elm and several of the commonly planted poplars have a life span of 10 to 25 years. Given Manitoba's climate, it takes a very long time for trees to reach a mature height. For coniferous trees to reach a reasonable shelter belt size, 25 to 30 years is not out of the question, and then they may only be a third or a half of their mature size.

Lastly reducing the presence of shelterbelts on the landscape or replacing older trees with young ones reduces carbon sequestration capacity, something that should be taken into

consideration given the current concerns over greenhouse gases.

In conclusion, we need to remember that we are dealing with living things when we talk about trees, and they are unpredictable. We're not dealing with a stick of wood. From my perspective, a mature sized shelterbelt cannot be replaced. And at the end, you will see I have given you a couple of web links to sites with PFRA that talk about shelterbelts. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Ms. Harris.

Questions?

Thank you very much for your presentation this morning.

MS. HARRIS: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mark Reimer?

MS. JOHNSON: Could you please state your name for the record.

MR. REIMER: I am Mark Reimer.

MS. JOHNSON: Mr. Reimer, I would like to make you aware that it is an offence in Manitoba to knowingly mislead this commission. Do you promise to tell only the truth during proceedings before this commission?

MR. REIMER: Yes, I do.

Mark Reimer: Sworn

THE CHAIRMAN: Go ahead, sir.

MR. REIMER: Thank you for giving me the time to speak here. I am a farmer and imagine me wearing a farmer's hat today. My title is how Bipole III will affect my farm and I respectfully have no interest in telling you where to put a hydro line, I am not a professional on that, but I feel I am a professional farmer and I have farmed all my life.

I am a partner in a family farm in southeastern Manitoba. We farm the land my father and my grandfather farmed. I live on the yard my grandfather lived 130 years ago. We grow several thousand acres of corn, soybeans, canola, wheat and specialty crops. As a third generation farm, the dirt we farm is sacred. We intend to pass on this land to my 16 year old son who plans to also continue farming. We consider the land we farm alive, breathing, full of living organisms, organic matter and nutrients we care for and monitor on a yearly basis.

Further, we are not against progress. We have welcomed the installation of gas and hydro lines on our property. We just have to consider

what effect this will have environmentally and economically. The property in question where Bipole III is planning to cross has only been in the family's possession since 1967. I helped pick stones, clear bush and care for this land. When someone wants to limit our family's ability to farm this land, I feel I have to make a statement. These proposed structures on our land will have great ramifications on my family from generations to come.

Allow me to discuss two reasons why I oppose this project, environmentally and economically. We will experience, by each structure, an increased application approximately double of seed, fertilizer, herbicide, pesticide and fungicide because of the overlap from our equipment ranging in size from 40 to 120 feet. Approximately, a minimum, I am trying to be conservative here, a minimum of an acre per pole or structure will be affected. My cost of inputs range anywhere from $350, and that includes fertilizer, seed, fungicides and pesticides to $450 per acre, resulting in an extra cost per pole of an average of $400 per year forever. This is calculated by a radius of 120 feet from the centre

of, I'll use the word pole, all the way around. In my second point I will describe how I come to this.

Because of the structure placed in our field, we will have to circumvent each pole during the operation. Some fields receive more than 10 operations. Because of the turning operation of an implement, we will cause increased compaction similar to the effect of a dirt bike racetrack, just not as extreme. And I will demonstrate that. Could you go to the fourth page of your attendment where you will see just past the Trimble preface. And this is a field. And I am not a techie but this came off a yield map of my harvesting equipment. The first is the height. And to demonstrate this, I was looking for a field that had an object or an obstruction that I had to circumvent in the field operation. This particular one in the centre where you see that little circle is an abandoned pivot, an irrigation pivot. Notice all the way around the field, we have a field operation where we turn around.

Do you all have the right page? It says "height" on top? Yes. We cause compaction by turning around even when the implement is out.

During this one little corner here, we had the tillage unit always in the ground. And what that causes is firstly compaction, because much like a dirt bike, taking a corner around the field as well as a depression in the soil. And this is demonstrated, this goes all the way around the field.

Going to the next page, page five, this is a yield map. Take a look, all the way around the field where we turn around, we have a decrease in yield. And this is on almost every field I can demonstrate, all 30 of my fields on my farm I can demonstrate.

Now take a look around that little pivot there, it's also a decrease in yield. And that is approximately, and this is where you'll have to trust me, it is about 120 feet of influence around this. I'm calculating that as if I have a 120-foot circle radius around one of these poles in the field, it would be approximately an acre, probably around 44,000 square feet. This is where I have my concern. Getting back to the first page, I have a problem with firstly increased production of overlap of fertilizer. And also what's happening here is I

have a reduced yield production of approximately a half of that 120-foot area. So I'm losing about an acre, or half a yield on an acre of every pole on my farm. I'm over-applying, double, on that acre, approximately.

And so I'm not a really good speaker, my apologies here, so I'm rambling here. Because of the overlapping of inputs, fertilizers pesticides, and herbicides, we will cause also environmental damage to our families' land and our rivers and streams. When we over-apply these products, a few things happen. An increased percentage runs off the land because of the depression and compaction water ponds, and nitrogen evaporates in the air. And thirdly, the compacted soils become eventually alkali with heavier fertilized soils. This area may become non producing, possibly forever polluting even more of the environment because none of the fertilizers, et cetera, will be utilized. We all know the restrictions agriculture has on overapplication of fertilizer. This is only on one acre per pole. But on my farm, this will be half a dozen.

Because of the close proximity to

highways and buildings, I will be restricted from using aerial application of seed, pesticides, herbicides on some of my fields. Our farm regularly uses aerial application on about 15 per cent of our farm due to the various reasons such as muddy fields, crop staging being too tall for ground equipment. This cost could not be calculated, but could cost our farm tens of thousands of dollars on some years.

I understand my family farm has to assume liability for these structures. With larger equipment today, sometimes working all night, implements have in the neighbourhood hit these structures and were responsible for the damage. Fortunately there were no deaths.

We also were faced with weed control issues around these structures. I can't help but remember when highways annexed some of our land and left it out of production for a year. The weed issue caused by idle land spread to my adjoining field and affected me for five years. There was a need for extra herbicide use and also resulted in less yield.

Also, the value of property will be reduced. One parcel which the proposed structure

is on will subsequently prohibit buildings to be erected. This would prohibit our farm from erecting barns or grain storage on an ideal piece of property.

Imagine when my son retires, it will cost him, with my calculations, $35,000 per structure, plus restrictions, not considering this $700 per year, $400 is extra cost, $300 is less yield. And I could justify that if you request that.

I made a decision a few years ago to do my part to be responsible for my share of the environment, do my part in agriculture. This transmission line restricts me from doing my part and my peers in agriculture. The implications are far greater crossing farm land than has been considered. The sacredness of land has to be considered, the environmental impact, as well as the financial burden to the farm.

In conclusion, at today's costs of production and commodity prices, each structure will have a $400 extra cost per year, will have a minimum of $300 less yield per structure based on today's values. $700 per pole per year and restrictions on aerial applications and

development of the land which is impossible to calculate.

This is my view how our farm will be affected by the proposed Bipole III transmission line. The yields, commodity prices are my values today and I cannot guess what will be tomorrow and the ramifications of these structures tomorrow.

I respectfully plead with you to consider the gravity of this issue for me and my fellow farmers and consider an alternate route where there would be less economic and environmental impact.

THE CHAIRMAN: Questions? Mr. Gibbons?

MR. GIBBONS: Yes. Just a point for elaboration. In regards to point number seven where you indicate that "One parcel which the proposed structure is on will subsequently prohibit buildings from being erected. This would prohibit our farm from erecting barns or grain storage on an ideal piece of property," could you just elaborate a little bit on that and why that is so and the implications on that so I can better understand that?

MR. REIMER: The parcel is about

20 acres adjacent to a highway as well. It is in an abandoned yard but the transmission line would be within 100 feet of where the yard would be located.

MR. GIBBONS: And that 100 feet is within the range?

MR. REIMER: I'm using my reasoning. I apologize, I am not an expert, I am a farmer. And I would be restricted. With transmission lines, we have 80, 90-foot augers. There would be many reasons why I would not bring equipment on that yard because of transmission lines sometimes in between the poles are rather low. And the liability or death culpability would be high. I would avoid that property.

MR. GIBBONS: So it's partly a maneuverability issue.

MR. REIMER: And safety, yes.

MR. MOTHERAL: Just one comment, I'm glad to see you pick stones, too. The pivot in your particular farm there, that was, you said, a form of irrigation pivot?

MR. REIMER: Yes, it's sitting there.

MR. MOTHERAL: With your intention to use it at a future site?

MR. REIMER: I am renting that property, so the pivot has not been used for years. But the land originally was farmed through where that pivot is located. This is the only piece of property I can find on my land that had a yield map that can show or demonstrate what circumventing routes around, and I would challenge the Committee to find other farms that have yield maps and they would demonstrate the same thing.

MR. MOTHERAL: Thank you for this information. And I know the figures you have, and I'm sure we're going to get more today yet, too, have been very helpful for us, thank you.

MR. REIMER: Thank you very much.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Reimer.

Next, Willy Nayet.

MS. JOHNSON: Could you state your name for the record.

MR. NAYET: Yes. My name is Willy Nayet.

MS. JOHNSON: We just want to make you aware that it is an offence in Manitoba to knowingly mislead this Commission. Do you promise to tell only the truth during proceedings before

this Commission?

MR. NAYET: Yes, I do.

MS. JOHNSON: Thank you.

Willy Nayet: Sworn

THE CHAIRMAN: Go ahead, sir.

MR. NAYET: Thank you. My name is Willy Nayet. My wife and I farm south of Ste. Agathe. Some of the land we farm belong to our family and spans from the Osborne area to just west of Ste. Agathe.

The Bipole III route will run through two and a half miles of our family's land. We are very concerned about having these structures built on our land.

We used to live on a dairy farm near Steinbach. Now we had bought land there and the first thing we did when we bought the land was to hire a track hoe and a bulldozer to bury several stone piles that the previous owners had gathered on fields. We did this in order to farm the land more efficiently.

We are willing to invest in our fields in order to remove these obstructions. Sorry, we are willing to invest in our field in order to remove the obstructions. It is costly initially

but better for the long run. Why would we do the opposite now and allow Hydro to set up pylons in the middle of our fields? It would be like someone paying us back what it cost us to bury those stone piles only to have them back on our fields again? Once those pylons are installed on our fields, it would take a very big hole to bury them.

Of course from an economic and practical point of view, this is a very bad deal for us. The extra costs of circling those pylons, overlapping with seed, chemical and fertilizer, the extra fuel and time, how is that good for the environment? What about those applying manure on their land? Our NDP government came up with manure management regulations. Will the government penalize them for over-applying on the overlaps around those towers?

We are not certain at this point exactly where the poles will be located within our fields. Of course it will certainly affect the topography and the drainage of our fields as well. On one of our fields, the line will likely be right on the major drainage ditch. How will this be addressed? Will Manitoba Hydro pay for the

extra cost of re-routing the drainage ditch? This will affect the way the whole section drains. We spent a lot of time and money over the years in order to have proper drains on our land. It is crucial for us to remove excess water efficiently or it has the potential of ruining crops. Who will pay for that?

I understand one of the reasons the government wants to have Bipole III is to have an alternate route in case something was to happen to the other lines. A good friend of mine is an engineer from Germany. And his company inspects power plants for efficiency throughout the world. Now he was here to visit last March. When I described the Bipole III project to him, he suggested it would be more efficient for the province to build a natural gas power plant near Winnipeg than building the line. Even if it was on a standby basis and only to be fired up in case the lines are down. Has the province looked into this alternative?

During the '97 Storm of the Century, which preceded the Flood of the Century, it was a terrible snow storm, you probably remember. We were out of power for several hours on our dairy

farm. Manitoba Hydro did not offer a second alternate route to bring the power to our farm. They told us to install a standby generator.

A natural gas power plant would be just that, a standby generator for southern Manitoba. There is already such a plant in Selkirk. Why could we not add onto it in order to meet the new demand? We could even produce cheaper electricity with the low cost of natural gas if we wanted to.

Speaking of the flood of '97, at its peak, the Red River was some 30 miles wide at its widest east/west point. Now the routing of the Bipole III is almost exactly there, right through the Red River flood zone. How intelligent is that? How will Manitoba Hydro be able to have access to these towers if something was to happen to the line during the flood event like in '97?

I would like to tell you about our experience we have with a line going north/south through some of our fields as well as through my mother-in-law's yard. This consists of two wooden poles carrying five lines bringing power to Lettelier and to the States. It's not that we don't like these poles in the middle of our field,

we hate them. We are always somewhat nervous when we send a driver in those fields, whether it be for seeding, cultivating, harrowing or spraying or combining. Will he be careful enough and not to touch the poles with the machinery? Will he not leave too much of a gap unseeded or not sprayed where weeds will grow wild? Will he avoid doing these fields at night because of the extra danger involved? Then someone has to go up there through the crop and spot spray around those poles in order to kill the weeds.

Last year, we nearly had an accident when moving a grain auger on my mother-in-law's yard. The line goes right through the edge of her farm yard. I was unloading a grain truck and the bin was full. I needed to switch to a different bin in order to unload the truck completely. I figured I would simply move the auger to another bin and I did not lower the auger as much as I should have, not thinking about the line right there and then. As I moved the auger away from the first bin and turned to line up to the next bin, the edge of the auger swung towards the line. By chance, I glanced at the other end of the auger and saw from the angle I was in, it seemed like

the auger was already touching the line. I stepped on the brakes and my first thoughts were well, I'm still alive. I immediately moved the hydraulic lever to lower the auger. My heart was pounding as I knew that if the auger touched the line, it would not be good. I needed to calm down. I stepped out for a few minutes. The truck driver and I looked straight up from underneath where the auger was and we could see the auger must have been within two feet of the line. I did not sleep well that night, thinking of what could have happened had the auger touched the line.

The next day, I called our local Manitoba Hydro office. I explained that I felt this line was way too low where it crossed my mother-in-law's yard and needed to be raised. And the man from Manitoba Hydro came and I asked him what would have happened if the auger had touched the line? From the conversation we had, I remember his points, that first you don't need to touch the line, the electricity can arch to the auger. There would have been a few sparks, then a lot of smoke, and then the metal would start melting. All tires would have blown. I asked if I would have had enough time to be able to jump

out of the tractor and avoid being electrocuted. He said I likely would not have lived long enough to even think about jumping out.

This is a 230,000 kilowatt line and there are five wires on those poles. A normal line servicing a farm yard carries 7,000 kilowatts. This is 32 times what a regular line carries. He measured the lowest point from the line to the driveway with his electronic meter and he said it was 28 feet from the ground. I asked if Manitoba Hydro could raise the poles like they have done in certain intersections. He said 28 feet is within their allowable range and it would be too expensive to raise the lines. So he suggested we redesign the yard in order to avoid working so close to the line. This is not a feasible solution to us. He offered to give me some yellow warning stickers.

This is just an accident waiting to happen. How much is one's life worth? We have spent thousands of dollars to bury our own service lines underground within our yards for safety reasons. If Hydro is not willing to spend the money to raise the line, do we need to have an accident before they decide it needs to be done?

A few weeks later, they decided to cut a row of mature trees which apparently were too close to the line. It is very difficult for trees to grow in this yard due to the soil type, rabbit and deer and whatever. There are very few mature trees on the yard, although hundreds had been planted over the years. We like to have trees for wind break and esthetics and wildlife. Manitoba Hydro decided the trees were too close to the line. The trees themselves were not, but the branches came within a few feet of the line therefore the trees needed to go. We argued but they fired up the chain saws anyways. The only thing this accomplished was that my mother-in-law now has a better view of the hydro line from her kitchen window.

The line going through my mother-in-law's place was put up in the 60s. At that time, Manitoba Hydro offered farmers compensation which may have seemed like a lot of money back then. Today, some 50 years later, we have to continue to put up with this line crossing our yards and fields. Our input costs have increased, our machinery is larger. What seemed reasonable back then becomes expensive and

problematic today. The previous owner may have been lured into signing a deal with a few dollars, but this line is costing us each and every year and will continue to cost and be a danger to our family and employees for generations.

On a quiet day, you can hear the electric current sizzle through the line, a constant reminder of the danger that hangs over our heads.

There has been a lot of technical advancement over the last 50 years. The machinery we drive, the way we farm our land will likely be different 50 years from now. For example, next spring, a company in Fargo will be launching a new tractor line without a cab, no driver. The unit controlled by their own new Area Positioning System. This is just an example.

Will those pylons and power lines keep us from making use of future technology opportunities in the future? Because of the issues we have had with the existing line, we have not had a good experience with Manitoba Hydro. And now we're looking at having more poles over more field with more voltage and more risk.

What about our health for humans and

livestock? As a dairy farmer, I am glad Bipole III does not run close to our dairy farm. We would likely need to relocate, if this was the case. There has been extensive research done on the effect of stray voltage on dairy cows. It is easier to measure the effect of electricity on dairy cows as there is a direct impact on production and reproduction, which is noticeable and can be measured. Within the industry, we are aware that the tolerable levels of power companies are much higher that that of a cow. Farmers were left on their own when Hydro would test and say the stray voltage is within tolerable levels.

Now if stray voltage affects livestock, it likely affects humans as well. It may be simply too difficult, if not impossible, to diagnose. How does the magnetic field affect people who live and work near those lines?

Today we hear there is no adverse effect, just like back in the 80s. Many power companies were saying their stray voltage tolerance of 10 volts had no adverse effect on livestock. We know today that the threshold should be closer to half a volt based on new research. Many dairy farmers lost their shirts

due to stray voltage and the power companies were washing their hands.

The farmland value will be affected by the line, as a buyer will not place as much value on that field with a line compared to one without. The extra costs of farming the land, liability and the extra risks involved will not make those properties attractive to a potential purchaser, whether for farming or for residential purposes. All landowners will be affected by this.

Maybe the pair of bald eagles we sometimes see near an old farm on one of our fields will find those poles will make a nice perch, that is if they don't get electrocuted. The most frustrating part is there are alternatives. This project is going to create a debt all Manitobans will have to pay through their hydro bill for something which does not make economical sense, that is bad for our farms, bad for the environment, bad for our health and will be an eye sore in our fields forever.

Manitoba Hydro has been running TV ads to encourage Manitobans to become power smart. How is Manitoba Hydro being power smart when the extra energy loss of that lengthy line will burn

many thousands of kilowatts per day. How can that be good for the environment? You should lead by example and cancel this environmentally disastrous project. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Nayet.

MR. GIBBONS: I have questions, I'm not quite sure who has answers to these. And perhaps the proper source of the answer for this first question is someone or some organization that may or may not be here.

A couple of people now have mentioned this here, I think it was also mentioned in Portage, about the overlapping that occurs when using manure. Do we have any past experience in this regard with previous towers that people know about that has created problems? I'm assuming that Manitoba Hydro may not have an answer to this or maybe it's Manitoba Conservation or the agriculture department or whatever. But does anyone know of previous experience in this regard? I did find it an interesting question. If you have the towers and the overlapping creates increased levels of manure application, are you susceptible to actions by the government?

MR. NAYET: Well, the manure

management regulations are fairly new. And on the dairy farm, I am still a partner near Steinbach. We have a consultant that we use to guide us as to where to apply the manure and it's based on soil tests.

Over the years, as I mentioned, we buried the stone piles. So the field that we have for the farm now, I don't think there are any obstructions on any of the fields that we farm. And so I can't really comment on where there has been an accumulation of nutrients, where there were overlaps. I think we'll see that over the next few years as more and more soil tests are done in those areas, and whether the government will come and enforce those regulations and apply penalties if they are excessive because of obstruction. It is yet to be seen. But the regulations are there and we are hoping to be able to abide by them. But pylons in the field will make it very difficult to do that.

MR. GIBBONS: Okay. So I think we may need to raise this question perhaps when we get back to Winnipeg, presuming there's someone from an appropriate official capacity who might be able to answer that.

The second question that derives from your observations actually is one that I want to direct to Hydro. And that is this is another issue that we have heard several times. And that is the question of stray voltage and the effect particularly on cattle, dairy cows. I see, for example, this is the first time I have seen someone refer to the specific threshold value. Do we have an understanding now of threshold value? Is it, in fact, something that is different from what it used to be? Has it changed in regards to the new research, for example, and how does it relate to, in some brief form at least, how does it relate to distance between the line and the dairy operation?

MR. NEUFELD: Well, let me state first of all that the stray voltage phenomena is one that results from the alternating current system. And Mr. Nayet has correctly identified that there are occasions at times there are ground currents flowing from the DC system. These are two entirely different systems. When we have ground currents flowing, they want to go back to the source. That's the law of electricity. It happens. It has to go back to the source. So

when we have the source on the Bipole III system and when we are using the ground electrode, the source is at the Keewatinoow station. And so the electrons want to flow in the earth from the Riel grounding electrode site back up to Keewatinoow station. That's an entirely different circuit than the circuit that Mr. Nayet is referring to as it relates to the AC system.

MR. GIBBONS: Okay. And the third question also goes to Manitoba Hydro, and I don't think anyone else up until now has raised this question at the hearings, but I'm intrigued by it. I didn't think of it myself. I'm not sure why I didn't, but I should have. That is with the Bipole going through what is basically referred to as the Red River flood zone, does Manitoba Hydro have contingency plans in place for how they might deal with issues relating to that? Or maybe I should ask, are there issues relating to that?

MR. NEUFELD: We have, from an electric utility standpoint, many, many years of experience with the high voltage transmission lines located in the flood plain, there are many of them. And we have, with regard to Bipole III, we've got tall towers. These will be

significantly higher yet. The Lettelier to Drayton line, which we call line L20D which Mr. Nayet has referred to as being the 230 kV line in his area, we have had no difficulties with that particular line, nor do we expect, based on our experience, to have any difficulties with Bipole III.

MR. NAYET: Can I make one comment? The concern with the stray voltage I realize is different, like it was just mentioned, is different than the circuit you are looking at. My point was that, and I'm saying Manitoba Hydro but I should be saying power suppliers throughout North America, back in the 80s, the tolerance levels of stray voltage was much higher than it is today and I think it varies from companies to companies or jurisdictions to jurisdictions. But it was a problem that was not identified or that was not acknowledged back then. Many were saying 10-volts is a tolerable level. And today we know that this is very different. Correct me if I'm wrong, but I think Manitoba Hydro probably has much lower tolerable levels than they used to back in the '80s.

My point is that today, we hear that

the magnetic field around those lines do not cause any harm to humans and to livestock. Maybe down the road we'll be in a situation similar to what where we are now with stray voltage with new studies. We realize now that there may be an effect.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ms. MacKay?

MS. MacKAY: Yes. On the third page on your presentation, you refer to the lines that go through your mother-in-law's property. Am I correct that those are on wooden poles?

MR. NAYET: Yes.

MS. MacKAY: Single wooden poles?

MR. NAYET: Yes.

MS. MacKAY: I'm wondering then if Hydro can just give us a bit of information? At the top of page 3, it suggests that this is a 230-kilowatt line. I'm wondering if that's the 230 kilovolt line; is that correct?

MR. NEUFELD: That's correct.

MS. MacKAY: Is it usual for that kind of a line to just be on wooden poles or are they normally on the metal poles?

MR. NEUFELD: They can be on both. And as we drive across the landscape in Manitoba,

you'll often see the 230 kV lines that are mounted on wood poles.

MS. MacKAY: Okay, thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Nayet.

In a moment, we'll take a break for lunch. Immediately after lunch -- earlier this morning Manitoba Hydro has asked if they can give a bit of a high level response to some of the concerns around the compensation program. Hydro will have a very brief presentation after lunch to explain some of that. I suspect you all won't get the answers that you'd like, but this is just a presentation of what Hydro is proposing.

I would repeat that what was observed earlier, that next week in Winnipeg there will be a more detailed presentation by Manitoba Hydro in respect of the compensation program. And there will be any number of questions from participants as well as members of the panel on the compensation program at that time.

This afternoon we have, I believe, about eight people lined up to speak, so we'll have a fairly busy afternoon. So we can come back in one hour at 10 after 1:00 and we will carry on.

MS. JOHNSON: Mr. Chairman, just

before we break for lunch, we need to take care of some business here. We'll put this morning's presentations on the record. They will be listed as NIV. Starting with number 1 will be Ms. Rempel's presentation, number 2 Mr. Bob Wiens, number 3, Ms. Friesen, number 4, Ms. Harris, number 5 will be Mr. Mark Reimer and number 6 is Mr. Nayet.

(EXHIBIT NIV-1: Ms. Rempel's presentation)

(EXHIBIT NIV-2: Mr. Bob Wiens' presentation)

(EXHIBIT NIV-3: Ms. K. Friesen's presentation)

(EXHIBIT NIV-4: Ms. D. Harris' presentation)

(EXHIBIT NIV-5: Mr. M. Reimer's presentation)

(EXHIBIT NIV-6: Mr. W. Nayet's presentation)

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. And we will adjourn now until ten after 1:00.

(Proceedings adjourned at 12:10 p.m. and reconvened at 1:10 p.m.)

THE CHAIRMAN: Good afternoon, I'd

like to come back to order. We have a fairly busy afternoon ahead of us beginning with a brief presentation by Manitoba Hydro on the compensation program.

Just as an aside before we get going, you'll all be happy to know that the fire alarm test has been called off so we'll be safe at 2:30.

I don't believe either of these gentlemen were sworn in Winnipeg, so commission secretary, Ms. Johnson, please.

MS. JOHNSON: Could you please state your names for the record.

MR. GRAY: Glenn Gray.

MR. McLEOD: Curtis McLeod.

MS. JOHNSON: Gentlemen, just to make you aware that it is an offence in Manitoba to knowingly mislead this Commission. Do you promise to tell only the truth during proceedings before this Commission?

MR. GRAY: I do.

MR. McLEOD: I do.

MS. JOHNSON: Thank you.

Glenn Gray: Sworn

Curtis McLeod: Sworn

THE CHAIRMAN: Go ahead.

MR. GRAY: Thank you, and good afternoon, Mr. Chair, committee members, ladies and gentlemen. Just prior to breaking for lunch, following Mr. Wiens' presentation, there were three questions or there were two questions and a request for a short presentation. There was a question on the assessed value and how we determine it based on a 1.3 ratio to determine current market value. And the second one was a lump sum payment versus an annual payment.

Curtis is going to start by sharing with you a brief high level presentation of the compensation package and how it has been derived and I will follow up by answering those questions.

Maybe before we get into it, I'll introduce myself a little bit more in depth. My name is Glenn Gray. I'm the manager of our corporate property department. I've been with the organization for 33 years in various capacities, currently as the property manager for the last two years.

MR. McLEOD: Good afternoon, everybody, my name is Curtis McLeod. I am a property capital project supervisor. I have been with Manitoba Hydro for 16 years, all of which

have been with the property department.

There's a few slides I'll be giving you today. It's a very high level look at our compensation policy or practice. But before I start, I would like to help explain some of the terminology that was used in past information presented to the public. And that would be specifically about the use of the word of assessed value and that 1.3 factor of same. It was just a tool that was put in the brochure for the property owners or the public to try, if they did not know what their market value of their land was, that they could take a look at their tax bill, see what their land was assessed at, maybe multiply it at 1.3 and it would give them a rough idea of what their market value of the land was.

That is not how Manitoba Hydro derives at the market value of the land when it comes time to compensate the landowners. Actually what we do is we have accredited appraisers and they study all the recent land sales. And they compare them by soil type and they develop a current market value for each specific property.

Now I'm going to go back to my presentation here. There's basically four types

of compensation the land owner could expect to see. And they categorize this, as you see up on the screen, is land compensation, construction damage, structure impact and ancillary damage. As part of the land compensation portion, we have come up with an item being 150 percent of the market value of the land taken up by the easement. As for construction damages, those are actual damages that are unavoidable during construction activities as the trampling of a crop of such.

The structure impact compensation payment is based on how our structures and the use of our right-of-way affect the use on agricultural lands. And like it says, it's a one-time payment upfront.

And the ancillary damage compensation portion is how we affect the land use directly or indirectly by the use of overall right-of-way. That would be the case where we may restrict the use of irrigation systems and/or aerial crop spraying. So they would all be considered within that portion of the compensation package.

To delve a little deeper into the structure impact compensation, I would also like to explain that Manitoba Hydro has developed this

compensation package in conjunction with Agriculture Manitoba and we use all the numbers provided by them in the generating of these compensation packages.

On this sketch here, it shows a typical location of a structure within a right-of-way. If you see that blue square right in the middle, that would be typical of an eight metre by eight metre structure base. The area directly around it would be a 66 metre wide corridor. And in this example, I'm showing a nine metre gap between the edge of the right-of-way and the road allowance. That would be a typical alignment in the southern zones in the highly agricultural farmed areas south of 16 Highway.

When you look at this section here to the right of the area where you see the big diamond, that's how we have worked with Ag Manitoba to develop our calculations on what and where it has been affected. So if you look at the, I have transposed for you that show the eight metre base of the original tower, and then you see the two diamonds on either side with a bigger block, that whole entire area is considered 100 percent crop loss in our calculations. Then

with the bigger diamond area around there, that would be the areas considered as a 20 percent loss in production.

Now, when we work on calculating out these structure impacts, they take into consideration that the area has a permanently removed production, which would be the 100 percent area, and the rest would be the reduced productivity in the area of overlap around each structure, the additional time required to maneuver machinery around each structure, double the application of seed, fertilizer and chemicals in the area of overlap around each structure and also including weed control around each structure. All those items are taken into consideration when we are looking at and compensating the landowners.

Now as we don't know where all the towers are going to be specifically spotted within the right-of-way and how they may interact with other infrastructure, this is a starting point. And should there be something else, it conflicts with our model, then we would look at it on a case-by-case basis and the structure impact could possibly go up if there is an outside factor affecting our typical model. But that's just our

basis to start with. And in most locations and areas, if spotted correctly, there shouldn't be any outside conflicts, but if there is, we don't ignore them.

Just to give you a brief example of what a land owner might expect. And if he owned one mile of right-of-way, I'm using a market value here of $1,300 per acre but it could be anything. For my example, I'm just going to use $1,300. This is strictly what we would think if it was called a market value of $1,300 per acre. Also it would be a self-supporting structure. So in the farmland areas, we're not using guyed structures. So it would be very unlikely we would run into that. But just working on that, a self-supporting eight metre by eight metre type of structure and it would be on lands classed as cereal crop lands, and for this example there is going to be four structures.

Also in this example, I'm not going to include ancillary damages or construction damages. For just an example, those are more specific to each site. And I think those would give you a better rundown of a typical transmission line compensation.

So if you took that one mile of line which is 26.24 acres at $1,300 per acre, times 150 percent, works out to a land portion payment of $51,168. For the structure impact compensation with four structures, at $15,000 a piece, works out to $60,000. So a one-time payment for land compensation structure impact compensation, as you see, works out to somewhat over $110,000 per mile.

Not all landowners will get four structures, not all will get three, it all depends on how they are spotted. Just for a rough example, that's what it works out to.

Now just food for thought, if you took that $111,000 for that one mile right-of-way and equated it back to the total number, just took that to a dollar per acre of easement as one package, that works out to over $4,200 per acre of compensation. And if you took it even further back, took that total number and related it to what our model shows as directly affected land by a structure, that works out to $48,700 per acre of affected land of a structure.

That's all I have to say about the compensation.

MR. GRAY: So Mr. McLeod addressed the

question with regards to the assessment value of 1.3. Based on the difference between or Manitoba Hydro's decision to move with a lump sum payment versus an annual payment, it's really based on our past experience with landowners. We have three of our last transmission lines within the major agricultural areas and I refer to Rosser/Silver 230 line, Dorsey/Neepawa 230 line. Actually Dorsey/Neepawa and Brandon. And finally the Glenboro/Rugby 230 line. The landowners in all of these instances appreciated and accepted a larger one-time upfront payment as opposed to a much smaller annual payment.

I want to refer a minute to Mr. Wiens' example this morning about a $40,000 lump sum payment versus an $800 smaller annual payment. Taking that amortization over 50 years, basically it's either the lump sum payment which gives the opportunity for a landowner to receive the money up-front, apply it to operations in a way they see fit, which is really the feedback we've been getting from landowners, versus taking the smaller payment and having an annual payment over the course of X number of years. So that's really the rationale behind that. And it's based on the

experience in our past transmission line applications.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is that taxable income to the farmer?

MR. McLEOD: At this point in time, we say it's unknown by us. It's on a case-by-case, it's an item for the land owner and their tax accountant and Revenue Canada to decide. But we are unaware of how that would work out with each person's instance.

THE CHAIRMAN: What about the past experience, the other transmission lines that Mr. Gray referred to?

MR. McLEOD: I have not heard that it was or wasn't. I haven't heard feedback from the landowners that they were taxed on it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Mr. Motheral?

MR. MOTHERAL: On a one-time payment in this case that you were talking about 110, $111,000, if that land changes hands in the next two years, then the next owner would get nothing and I guess that would be realized in the land sale, would it? Or how does that work?

MR. McLEOD: No. It's the owner of

record at the time of the compensation. But let's say, just to give you another example here, if the ownership changed before the installation of the structures, then because we only pay out for structure impact post construction, because that's when we'll know exactly when they were installed, then the next owner would get those structure payments. It's the owner of record at the time of compensation. But no, their future owners don't receive any compensation from Hydro, it would have to be worked out between them and the person they are buying the property from.

MR. MOTHERAL: Thank you.

MR. KAPLAN: Perhaps I can ask Mr. Gray if you can just explain to me, as best you can, the way you are putting it annual versus lump sum. It seems most of the landowners, if not all, that you have dealt with seem to want the money upfront as you say. But my question to you, the difference between the lump sum versus the annual, as far as Hydro is concerned, what are the advantages to you to pay upfront?

MR. GRAY: Certainly the advantage, well to Manitoba Hydro, obviously it would be nice to complete the transaction to make it clean.

Certainly it doesn't really affect us one way or another in terms of how we apply the payment. We have actually, in reciting the examples I used previously, are taking what we felt was in the best interest of the land owner.

MR. KAPLAN: And therefore, if the land owner says that for the life of the line, he or she would appreciate annual payments, are you saying that's not a difficulty to Hydro?

MR. GRAY: I don't think it would be a difficulty. There are other instances outside of the area of transmission line payments that we do make annual payments to in terms of if we lease a building. So we do have the ability to make annual payments in other circumstances. I can't see why it couldn't be applied, if it be in the best interest. But again referring back to the land owner, we have kind of taken the information from and gone with the guidance what previous land owners have said to us.

MR. KAPLAN: So similar to precedence in the court system, you can and the land owners can rely at least on precedents that have been set?

MR. GRAY: Correct.

THE CHAIRMAN: I will entertain a few questions from the audience. We do have a busy afternoon so I won't let it go on too long. Mr. Wiens, come forward, please.

MR. WIENS: I don't have so much of a question, just a few comments seeing some of the questions derived from my presentation.

Your compensation, the way you have things added up here, you want several things from me as a land owner. First you want the right of an easement, the right to have access to my land. That's one payment. That is totally separate from anything else. The right costs money. Then you want to put up the impact, the structures. There is more cost for the land production I'm losing just for the loss of land, bang, right there. The annual payment, I never inferred anywhere that I would be happy with an $800 annual payment. I said that payment would not cover my costs. I never suggested for one minute that I thought $800 annually was adequate.

After you have done these other compensations with me, the easement, putting up the structure, that's when we start talking about annual payments in my opinion. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, sir. Are there any other members of the audience who have questions of these two gentlemen in respect to this program? Okay, as I have noted a couple times already today, this will be presented and reviewed in some more detail when we return to Winnipeg next week for the hearings. Thank you very much, gentlemen.

MR. McLEOD: Thank you very much.

MR. GRAY: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Moving on to our afternoon line-up, the first person on the agenda is Heidi Wiens.

MS. JOHNSON: Could you please state your name for the record.

MS. H. WIENS: My name is Heidi Wiens.

MS. JOHNSON: Ms. Wiens, we just want to make you aware that it is an offence in Manitoba to knowingly mislead this Commission. Do you promise to tell only the truth during proceedings before this Commission?

Heidi Wiens: Sworn

MS. H. WIENS: Yes. As I just told you, my name is Heidi Wiens. I am proud to be a member of a Manitoba farm family. In 1956, my

grandparents purchased the farm and surrounding land where my family still farms today. They raised five children on this farm and all 11 of their grandchildren have been blessed with many special memories from the farm. I was devastated when I learned that Bipole III was to cross our family's farmland.

I am concerned for the safety of my family. My parents and my brother and his family will be living practically right under the transmission lines. Do not patronize me and tell me that there are no known health risks living under transmission lines. Researchers have already made the link between major health issues such as various cancers, skin growths, sleep and daily rhythm disturbances, depression, birth defects and even suicide to exposure to electromagnetic fields. I want assurance that 10 years, 20 years and 100 and more years from now there will be no dire and irreversible health effects discovered from living near or under these monstrous transmission lines. Manitoba Hydro cannot give me this assurance. They are willing to put the lives of many Manitobans at risk for this project.

My family and I will also have the hazard of forever maneuvering large farm equipment around the bases of these gigantic structures. It is already a daily stress for us as we maneuver around a transmission line built in the 1960s that runs directly across some of our best fields. It is very difficult to even imagine having a second and exponentially larger transmission line on these very fields. Our safety will be compromised yet again as we struggle to work larger machines around monstrous structures built on our fields against our will.

I am also concerned about the loss of productive agricultural land. In a world of hungry people, including many Manitobans who go hungry every night, it is outrageous to think that productive, valuable farmland is to be used up for this project. Farmers feed the world. They feed every person in this room. The Bipole III project will cross over and eat up some of the most valuable farmland in Manitoba. Farmland will be irreversibly destroyed and no longer be able to produce crops each year to feed a growing and hungry population.

The compensation package that has been

offered is completely inadequate. There is no price that can be put on the health and safety of my family and the loss of valuable productive farmland. Nonetheless, a compensation package with a one-time payment has been offered to farmers which frankly is so insufficient it's difficult to talk about. How can farmers even consider such a deal? The effects for them last not only for the rest of their careers but for all generations to come. These farmers will forever have lost out on valuable acres to seed, they will forever be working machines around these monstrous structures and the value of their property and farmland will forever be diminished.

Nonetheless, the message from the government and Hydro is that they must sign or their land will be expropriated. I looked up synonyms for expropriate as I was working on this presentation and the following words came up: To take, steal, pocket, nick, filch, walk off with and confiscate. Hmm. I then looked up synonyms for bully and these words came up: To intimidate, terrorize, persecute, torment and frighten.

Manitoba Hydro, do not bully farmers and land owners to sign over their land for this

project. I am not sure how much clearer we can all be with our message. This is our farmland. We put sweat, tears and long, long hours into our work every year to feed you. We want to continue to farm. We want to pass our farms down to the next generation and we need to do so without our health and safety being seriously compromised.

The health and safety of myself, my family and the community I live in is at risk should this Bipole III project proceed on its proposed route. The Bipole III project cuts through some of the most densely populated areas of this province. This places the health of many Manitobans at risk who have yet to even learn what their government and Hydro are planning to do within mere miles or even less of their communities and homes. The beautiful Manitoban landscape that makes me proud to say I'm a prairie girl will be gone. My confidence in government and Manitoba Hydro to protect and care for Manitobans and our precious environment has been shattered.

In closing, I would like to quote a Kenyan proverb that says,

"Treat the earth well. It wasn't

given to you by your parents, it was loaned to you by your children."

We all need to do our part to live up to this proverb. Farmers have been living this everyday. Now it is up to government and corporate officials who have the power to make and overturn decisions with dire environmental consequences to do their part. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Ms. Wiens. Any questions? Thank you very much for your presentation today.

Next on my agenda is LeeAnn Peters.

MS. JOHNSON: Could you please state your name for the record.

MS. PETERS: My name is LeeAnn Peters.

MS. JOHNSON: Ms. Peters, we just want to make you aware that it is an offence in Manitoba to knowingly mislead this Commission. Do you promise to tell only the truth during proceedings before this Commission?

MS. PETERS: I will.

MS. JOHNSON: Thank you.

LeeAnn Peters: Sworn

MS. PETERS: Good afternoon, my name is LeeAnn Peters. Many people told me I shouldn't

be speaking today. They told me not to waste my time or my energy and there was nothing I could do to persuade change for myself and my neighbours. I am a land owner but not one that will be directly compensated by Bipole III. It will have a huge impact on my life and on my business though. Even Hydro employees have told me I cannot in any way change this and I best accept it. However, I am stubborn by nature and hopeful that something I say today might resonate with somebody who might be able to influence my future.

On July 26, 2010, Hydro informed us that there will possibly be a line running through our neighbourhood. The letter stated that Hydro was proceeding into the fourth and final round of selection. How is it possible that we had not heard yet we were in the final stages of selection?

At that point, there were three alternate routes on the table for discussion. We talked about it as neighbours, we attended the legion open houses and we expressed concerns. Funny thing was, we really didn't think Hydro would actually choose our specific sections. We said no way, too many people live here, too many

businesses and too many livestock. Imagine our shock when that's exactly the choice that they made.

I'm here today to share my story and the impact that this decision is having on my family, my neighbourhood, my business, even before the land is built.

I'm getting ahead of myself. First let me do some introductions. We live on section 24-7-5E and adjacent to section 13-7-5E. It's a quiet neighbourhood in Hanover just outside Steinbach. For those with a routing map, it's the straight north section of segment 88 on the preferred route.

Historically, this land was one of the first immigrant villages in 1874. The town was called Bergthal and it was a busy place. In the fall of 1874, 17 families registered homesteads and called this place home. They established farms, a church, and a school. If you drive through our neighbourhood, you will see why. It's a combination of rolling pasture land, fertile fields and wild prairie grassland all transected by an idyllic creek that winds through this section. I'm a little biased but it's a pretty

perfect place to live.

Fast forward to 2012, 11 families live in homes that line the preferred route on and adjacent to these two sections. And by adjacent I mean within reasonably close proximity, not across the section. These families operate five businesses reflecting almost every segment of agriculture. There's hogs, there's dairy, there's poultry producer and market lamb producer and of course those that farm grain.

Often you hear about lots of rural home-owners and farmers and spats between them but it doesn't seem to exist here. We support one another, we keep watch on each other's homes, we clear snow for each other, and we stick together to help out whenever anybody needs assistance. It's a real little community.

It should be noted that five people are speaking today regarding the same section of line and the impact it will have on our lives.

I am the market lamb producer in the area. I raise 80 ewes which generate about 145 market lambs per year. I depend on my 50 acres of pasture and wild grassland for feed on eight months of the year. For the harsh winter months,

I purchase grain, straw and hay from the neighbours that farm around me. The pasture where my baby lambs are born each year runs adjacent to the proposed route with the line only 400 metres away in plain site with no trees and no shelter.

Market lamb may be a small industry today but its importance in the Manitoba food chain is growing rapidly. There's an increasing desire by the public to source and eat locally grown organic and free-range raised meat. And I believe that market will only get bigger as we become more concerned about food sources for the future.

Raising lamb in Manitoba has its challenges. It's a business of long hours in the spring and fall and at times low returns. The payback comes in the form of raising my children in a rural setting, teaching them respect for living things, the importance of the preservation of the environment and watching them learn the circle of life, and finally the rewards that come from hard work. These lessons will be important to inspire the next generation of farmers and not inhibit growth of the agricultural sector in Manitoba.

And those are some photos of my world and how special it is to me. I am sure you can see that.

We do have our challenges. One section is already transected by a large AC transmission line and a hydro substation is only one to two miles away on the Highway 206. We have concerns about long-term exposure for both people and livestock from the already present line. There is a lot of conflicting studies on the impact on humans and on animal health regarding AC lines. For every study that says there is no impact, I'll show you one that says there is.

Neighboring farmers already have to crop around a line so they can be less inclined to consider crops that have to be cut, turned and baled like the hay and straw that I so desperately need to run my business.

There is also the continued loss of agricultural land in municipal projects. Steinbach and Mitchell had each built two new lagoons in the last 18 months within two miles consuming a large area of what was once valuable agricultural land. This translates to more residential sprawl as folks continued to build

houses outwards. And this also limits the hay and straw and land available for cropping in my area.

We can't forget that the valuable energy that Manitoba Hydro generates -- sorry, we can't forget that like the valuable energy that Manitoba Hydro generates, prime agricultural land is one of Manitoba's key aspects and we have to protect this resource for the future.

So enter Bipole III, let's look into the future and what it might look like for us. If it's constructed on these two sections, there will be not one but two lines to farm around. This will make it next to impossible to grain farm never mind bale crops. Do we need to take even more land out of production in this already challenged area? Those 11 families, some with small children, will now live in close proximity to two lines. How will this impact our health and mental well-being? Don't forget that these people are already exposed to EMFs from one line. If there is an impact from another, we won't know until it's too late.

We can debate the studies but actual health impacts or not, perception is everything. Who is going to buy lamb from my farm with a large

power line in the background? Several people have already told me they will not.

This will have a tangible impact on my business and on my way of life. I won't get compensation but a town three miles from me might. This doesn't seem fair. But at the end of the day, it's not compensation I want. I want consideration for another route for these two sections. There are no large scale studies on the impact of EMF from a DC line on sheep and lambs. There have been some small studies on the impact of AC lines on hormone levels that play key immunity roles in sheep. One experiment was completed with 10 ewes and one experiment with 45 ewes. But it should be noted that only 15 ewes in that group of 45 were actually subjected to EMFs. The researcher's current interpretation of the data is that magnetic field strength and age of the animals may be important variables in determining whether EMF exposure will affect the IL-1, that's the hormone level, activity in sheep. I referenced this paper at the end of my presentation that I have given you. Most specifically, the largest impact of EMFs on lambs is in the babies. And guess where my winter

pasture is.

As part of my job, I complete statistical studies on performance and livestock regularly, primarily in the hog industry. I can tell you from 10 years of experience, the sample size on these two studies are way too small to determine anything with any level of certainty. Therefore, the true impact of EMFs on sheep is unknown as the research contains small sample sizes, conflicting results and no consideration for impact on subsequent generations. If there is concern for second and third generation caribou, there very well could be concerns for me too. Truth is, we just don't know. And I think in this situation, it might be better to err on the side of caution. There is a tonne of other places to run this line, even in our own area.

I do believe it's in the interest of the CEC to protect as much valuable land as possible. And there are many other routing options. This would achieve Hydro's goal of line construction on time and budget but also protect the best interest of an important sector of the Manitoba economy.

I had a phone conversation with a

Hydro employee following the selection of the preferred route. I was told that they were threading the eye of the needle in this area and maintaining as straight a route as possible to save costs. What about my costs? The section they are talking about could easily be relocated because it starts at a corner tower. It could be redirected north at several points further west and then east again, ironically avoiding more homes, families and livestock than it is today. The cost would be minimal as it would only add one additional corner but could shorten the overall distance and perhaps even the compensation packages that will have to be paid. However, Hydro will not entertain this discussion.

The other benefit to this, it would be to extend the distance of the line from dairy cattle and sheep in the area, mitigating any unknown impacts on free range livestock. As myself and my neighbour who dairy farms across the road are two of the only remaining hoofed animal farmers in the area.

It also would spread the responsibility for provincial infrastructure with others. We are already impacted by an existing

line, a substation and two municipal lagoons. When is enough enough? When can I just be allowed to live rurally and raise my kids without fear?

In closing, I can appreciate the challenge that setting a route for a large project like this must be. Each day I lead continuous improvement projects supported by experimentation, data and solid statistics. I have felt the impacts of outside influence on projects and know this amplifies and makes the work so much more difficult. This project must be one heck of a task for those of you charged with making it happen. I know you will hear a lot of recommendations for change over the next little while but I beg you to consider listening to the points raised here and look at them with a different lens. Ask the question how can I make this recommendation work as opposed to listing the reasons why I can't make this recommendation work? It could truly make a world of difference to the individuals that are feeling pain because of this line. It also could make the project exceptional instead of an exceptional disaster. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Ms. Peters. Could you just give us a little bit more detail on

the proposed route you suggested? I think you suggested it would turn a little further to the west?

MS. PETERS: Yeah, there's several options. When Hydro came up with the proposed route, there were two other lines running west when they had the three different routes and they selected the one that was closest, farthest east to us. So there are two other lines that they did investigate, most of them unfortunately running through agricultural land, however not having the livestock and the human aspects that go with where they have placed it now. It won't run directly over people's homes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Both of the other preliminary routes were better off in that respect?

MS. PETERS: In my opinion. Those routes could also be modified slightly. There's other options. It's just we're always told that they want to keep the route as straight as possible and corners can't be considered. Adding corners can't be considered to go around things.

THE CHAIRMAN: Any questions?

MR. GIBBONS: Just one really quick

point of clarification because I'm not sure if I heard the answer correctly. The routing that you are suggesting would be on farmland but not free range livestock land? That's the distinction?

MS. PETERS: Not free range livestock land which we don't know the impact of, and avoiding more homes as well.

MR. GIBBONS: Okay, thank you.

MR. MOTHERAL: Ms. Peters, you mentioned you have one existing hydro line, is that correct, going across your property?

MS. PETERS: I don't own property with the lines on it nor will I own property with the future lines. I'm adjacent to the lines. But on the two sections that I live adjacent to, we already have a line in close proximity, yes.

MR. MOTHERAL: Is the proposed route for the Bipole, will it be going alongside of that line or is it criss-crossing?

MS. PETERS: They are criss-crossing, yes.

MR. MOTHERAL: Okay. One more question. You mentioned that it would obviously, in your opinion, devalue land for resale. Is there any information and maybe Hydro do have this

information, does assessed value of land go down when there's a line crossing it and does it go down even more with two lines crossing it?

MS. PETERS: There's a study done in 1995 and I don't believe I referenced it. I certainly can forward the title to the commission. They looked at 12,000 homes. The average impact, when you are in line of sight of a large hydro line is 6.3 percent devaluation. That's significant. But I'm not sure. That may be the issue for some of my neighbours. I think the bigger issue for many of our neighbours is just having to farm and work around it. And the devaluation of course of our products potentially being grown under it.

MR. MOTHERAL: Thank you. That's all.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Ms. Peters.

MS. PETERS: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Gerald Lapointe?

MS. JOHNSON: Could you please state your name for the record.

MR. G. LAPOINTE: Gerald Lapointe.

MS. JOHNSON: Mr. Lapointe, we just want to make you aware that it is an offence in

Manitoba to knowingly mislead this Commission. Do you promise to tell only the truth during proceedings before this Commission?

MR. G. LAPOINTE: I do.

Gerald LaPointe: Sworn

MS. JOHNSON: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Go ahead, sir.

MR. G. LAPOINTE: To all members of the CEC commission, my name is Gerald Lapointe. My wife Solange and I have been farming together since 1976. Our ancestors have farmed in the Ste. Agathe area since 1896. We are the third generation that has been making a living in agriculture. We have four sons who are also involved in the operation. The affected property is on river lots 543, 545, NE parcel of 10-7-2E and the NW corner of 10-7-2E, a total of about 560 acres. This specific piece of land has been farmed by Lapointes since 1906. Our home and farmyard is on river lot 543 which would be about 520 feet from the proposed line. On the map, we indicate where the line is proposed to run and also the proximity to our farm.

I don't know, can we put the map on your screen? I have a Google map here to where

the proposed map is supposed to go through.

I guess the two lanes highway 75, the two lanes, either one going north or south. And like it doesn't really show on the screen, but on my map here, you see we've got the proposed hydro line is going about 520 feet to the north of our farmyard which is on the left. Anyway, I'll continue.

We would have approximately three miles of land directly affected by the proposed transmission line. Living along the Red River, all parcels of land are measured as river lots which are 660 feet wide and two miles long, making them already narrow lots to work with large equipment. In this proposed route, we also have a 240-acre parcel which is parcel the NE of 10-7-2E and the NW quarter of 10-7-2E, that fortunately have no visible encumbrances existing such as hydro or telephone poles. Therefore, it is easy to work this field but the towers would change all that.

We have several environmental concerns about this proposed route. The first concern is the proximity of the unsightly towers close to our home and farmyard. Who wants to live 500 feet

from towers? We certainly don't. We are worried about the noise, having to listen to the constant hum and crackle of the line that is worse in bad weather. We are stressed about the uncertainty of health issues and the visual aspects of this project. We have noticed that our shelter belt surrounding our farmyard does not grow properly underneath the existing hydro line. So what does this indicate for our own health? Also, what about stray voltage? What are the risks? We don't have any answers to these questions and it gravely concerns us.

Another concern we have is working around these towers. As previously mentioned, the river lots are only 660 feet wide. The towers and easement would take 216 feet. As a result, this reduces the land width available for producing a crop to 440 feet, making it very difficult to work with today's wide farm equipment. For example, we use an air drill that is 45 feet wide and 100 foot sprayer. Using this equipment around nine towers would oblige us to make 18 additional headlands in order to straighten out each pass, therefore adding to the fuel, seed, chemical and fertilizer costs. This means double of everything. And we

will be continually farming this land so it would add up to a huge additional cost in the thousands for every year that we try to produce a crop. Unnecessary use of chemicals and fuel creates more environmental issues to deal with.

Another concern we have is the feasibility of aerial applications around these towers. We discussed this problem with a few local aerial applicators which we employ to apply fungicides to our crops. They have indicated that working around towers and lines is out of the question because of how dangerous the job would be. They cannot fly underneath the lines because it's against the law. Also the aerial applicator cannot fly within the 216 feet easement of the transmission line right-of-way because of safety concerns.

Since the aerial applicator cannot complete the job properly of spraying the entire parcel, we would have to do it ourselves depending on the right conditions. If the land is wet, the aerial applicator would have been able to complete the job if the transmission line were not there. If the land is wet, we cannot access the easement area with our sprayer because it would get stuck.

Also we will have more costs added to grow a crop. Again, this adds to extra costs, extra chemicals which aren't good for the environment.

Another environmental concern we have is the crop and land damage in the year of construction and the following years due to soil compaction. Soil productivity would likely be affected primarily due to the use of heavy equipment and vehicles, disturbance of surface materials during grading, excavation of foundations and removal of vegetation. The result are losses of soil structure, losses of topsoil and subsoil material. Impairment of soil quality are anticipated to have an effect on the future crops. Then we will also have to deal with the garbage left behind such as bolts, nuts, unused crushed stone mixed in with dirt, broken insulators, metal strapping of construction equipment, cardboard, wire, wood and concrete dribbling. We have personally dealt with MTS fibre optic line, Manitoba Hydro and Winnipeg Pipeline who say the topsoil will be removed in order to preserve the value of the soil. But our experience so far has been that the construction crews don't do it because there isn't sufficient

supervision of work crews who do not follow directives.

Then we discussed our observations of the existing Bipoles. We are concerned about the abundance of Canadian and sow thistle weeds underneath the towers. These weeds are left to grow which eventually spread to the adjoining crops which result in yield reductions and poorer soil productivity. Who will be responsible for the upkeep of the land and weed control underneath each tower which is approximately 500 square feet. This would be an ongoing and additional unsightly problem and cost. It can't be good for the environment to have the weeds spreading all over the countryside. They possibly would become a noxious weed problem.

Another observation we have made is one that will affect the bird population. Every spring and fall, we see huge flocks of Canada geese taking their migratory path directly over the proposed route. These lines will be dangerous for the birds because they will eventually fly into the lines causing their deaths. Since we live by the river, it's lovely to see the geese land in the Red River on a daily basis.

Our provincial government has decided to build this Bipole line on the best and most intensively productive agricultural land in Southern Manitoba. According to the maps provided, this area covers almost the width of two-thirds of the province from highway 13 to highway 12 and then some more going back up north. Manitoba is known as an agricultural province worldwide. But they are willing to waste prime agricultural land. The government is also willing to put people's lives at risk because of uncertain health factors. They also don't care about the livelihood of the farming taxpayer or the agricultural industry in general. Billions more will be spent to go on the west side at the taxpayer's expense for a government that is already in a deficit. Does this make sense? Is this what you call a responsible government who should consider all of the population of Manitoba? The NDP government does not really care about farmers. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, sir. Any questions?

MR. KAPLAN: I have a question more directed to Manitoba Hydro. Based on the input

received from Mr. Lapointe and specific reference, I look at having to deal with garbage left behind such as bolts, nuts, unused crushed stone mixed in with the dirt, and he goes on and on to describe that very little seems to have been done in his prior involvement with other agencies, and he blames that on insufficient supervision of work crews. What can you tell us as far as the plans with respect to Manitoba Hydro if this project were to be approved and to start as far as construction is concerned?

MR. PENNER: Glenn Penner. Yes, so I look after the construction crews. The first thing that we would certainly do is we would be stopping by and meeting with every land owner, providing information to when we'd be coming through and a contact name for any concerns in regards to construction damages, whether it be garbage that was left. You know, I can't guarantee that there would never be any garbage or debris left but we would certainly be working together with the land owner to make sure that they are satisfied with the condition of the land when we are finished with the project. So that's something that my staff would be working with you

to make sure that we have cleaned it up to your satisfaction if there's compaction issues, if there's fences that need to be mended or whatever else. That would certainly be addressed.

MR. KAPLAN: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Lapointe. Next is Yves Lapointe.

MS. JOHNSON: Could you please state your name for the record.

MR. Y. LAPOINTE: Yves Lapointe.

MS. JOHNSON: Mr. Lapointe, are you aware that it is an offence in Manitoba to knowingly mislead this Commission?

MR. Y. LAPOINTE: Yes.

MS. JOHNSON: Do you promise to tell only the truth during proceedings before this Commission?

MR. Y. LAPOINTE: Yes. I do.

MS. JOHNSON: Thank you.

Yves Lapointe: Sworn

MR. Y. LAPOINTE: My name is Yves Lapointe. I have been farming since the year 2000. My wife Kelli and I have two children. We are fourth generation farmers who want to keep on farming and hope to have a fifth generation of

future farmers. We are the owners and operators of river lot 547 where the transmission line is intended to pass. The parcel of land is 142 acres which is already cut up diagonally in three parcels by the highway 75, adjacent to hydro power line, as well as the Ste. Agathe community dike, CNR railway tracks, fibre optic line and a municipal ditch. In July 2011, we would learn that we would additionally have to deal with another hydro line which will be an even greater hazard and nuisance.

We have several environmental concerns about Bipole III. If this transmission line is built, we would have to work around six possible towers extending over the length of the river lot which is two miles. There are safety concerns in dealing with these structures such as there's always a possibility of hitting the towers and we must also consider the safety of the equipment operators.

We also inquired about third party insurance liabilities. The company we deal with has indicated that the machinery damage would be covered by our existing policy but would not cover damage to the hydro structure. The possibility is

always there to incur such an accident, which would cost thousands. Who would be responsible to the damage for the hydro structures?

As a young farmer, I extensively use GPS systems. I use this technology for my row crop farming practices growing corn and soybeans. This system is very convenient since I use it when I seed, spray and harvest my crops. I wonder how well this system would work near and underneath the lines? Signal in all likelihood would be very poor or non-existent. This does not surprise me at all since cell phone reception is already poor in that area. Having these transmission lines will not make the problem any better. We rely on that kind of technology now more than ever for all kinds of reasons, be it to grow a crop, call an ambulance, fire department, family or any help of any kind. We also rely on two-way radio communication between various farm machinery operators. These towers would probably cause interference with this and also not give us the possibility of effective communication, putting us at risk. This creates a huge impact on our lifestyle and our health.

A huge transmission line such as

Bipole III will negatively devalue the farmland property. No farmer likes to work around structures that will give him difficulties or increase costs to produce a crop. Therefore, a possible future purchaser will not want to pay top dollar for such land or production constraints.

One of these reasons Manitoba Hydro wanted to build another transmission line was to protect from severe conditions. Unfortunately this area is known to be part of an area where tornadoes have been devastating. For example, the Elie and Aubigny tornadoes. We are concerned as to the danger of having these towers near structures to high winds like we have seen this past fall.

Another hazard of the towers being built close to the major highway is the possibility of snow drifts. Large amounts of snow could accumulate therefore causing drifts which in turn could cause several automobile accidents and are dangerous to the drivers. In the fields, huge snow drifts would take a long time to melt in the spring and would delay seeding operations. All of these stressful issues must be considered.

Also adding insult to injury is the

very inadequate Bipole III Landowner compensation information package dated November 2011. I have seen this pamphlet here, I have seen it. Several of you have had it.

Land assessment and compensation is unrealistic at today's prices. No consideration is made for further costs incurred of the towers which will put the onus on the landowners to maintain something they never wanted to begin with. It also will be a detriment for future generations of farmers. Our health, our way of life and our community will be potentially affected. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MR. MOTHERAL: Mr. Lapointe, I'm just amazed at how many things are going across your land, that you have anything left to farm.

MR. Y. LAPOINTE: It's an ongoing struggle we have, many obstacles. The ditches and the power lines, the fibre optics are all underground as the natural gas lines and so forth. But it's just river lots is something we have had to deal with forever. It's just because they are long and narrow, and it's not like a quarter section where the ease of farming is easier.

MR. MOTHERAL: I understand. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Lapointe.

Next is Alvin Wiens.

MS. JOHNSON: Could you please state your name for the record.

MR. A. WIENS: Alvin Wiens.

MS. JOHNSON: Mr. Wiens, just to let you know that it is an offence in Manitoba to knowingly mislead this Commission. Do you promise to tell only the truth during proceedings before this Commission?

MR. A. WIENS: I do.

MS. JOHNSON: Thank you.

Alvin Wiens: Sworn

MR. A. WIENS: Good afternoon, panel and chair, my name is Alvin Wiens. I am farming together with my son on a third generation farm. My parents bought this farm in 1956. We have farmed this land continually and hope to for generations to come. I have huge concerns with the proposed Bipole III crossing our land.

In the 60s, a transmission line was built crossing this land diagonally, making

farming the land difficult. The proposed Bipole III line will cross the older diagonal line in a south to north direction. Having fields cut up in this way makes aerial spraying impossible. Ground spraying is also very difficult since by dodging all the poles and steel towers, you double or even triple the chemical rate as you try to maneuver around poles and towers. Even so, it will be impossible to control all weeds around the poles and towers. This will lead to the spread of noxious weeds. It seems ironic that the same government that claims to be environmentally friendly would route a hydro line through some of Manitoba's best farmland, thereby hindering food production.

Another concern is that the land used for Bipole III will become greatly devalued. Our environment will be changed forever. Nobody wants to live near or, in our case, practically under a huge transmission line. We want to enjoy a beautiful Manitoba sunset, all we will see is unsightly transmission lines. More importantly, it will be incredibly difficult and dangerous to produce food on this land.

Safety is perhaps our biggest concern.

We have been told that there is no known health concerns living near the lines or working under the lines. However, according to research done by Responsible Electricity Transmission for Albertans, the health concerns are huge. They have conclusively linked being exposed to these high voltage power lines to a variety of cancers, leukemia, tumour growths, skin growths, abnormal cell activity, sleep and daily rhythm disturbances, mental and behavioural problems, immune system deficiencies, nervous system disorders, fetal development problems, miscarriages, birth defects and blood and circulatory problems. A U.S. study in 1993 found that people who lived either on a property abutting the power line right-of-way or who could see the towers from their yard or house had a risk of depression 2.8 times the expected. The risk of non migraine headaches was up 1.5 times the expected. I do not want my children and grandchildren working under these lines year after year knowing that the health risks are huge. We also know that this government will long be gone years from now and will therefore not take any responsibility when the health issues surface.

Another safety issue is working around the poles and towers. The equipment is huge. Farmers must work when the weather is favourable. This means working long hours, sometimes well into the night. This does increase the risk for accidents as farmers will be faced with the challenge of maneuvering around the poles late into the night. First our property gets taken away, we are forced to work under the unsightly monstrous towers and then we will be held responsible should an accident occur.

The cost in dollars of Bipole III is phenomenal to every Manitoban. However the cost of human life and the increased use of our healthcare needs to be taken seriously. Not only will electricity become unaffordable, our healthcare system will become unsustainable. Bipole III will affect every Manitoban.

We did write a letter to the government when we first realized that Bipole III was to cross our land. The answer we received, and this is our interpretation, was that we have a majority government so we can do what we want. I consider this bullying from the very top. Bullying is now receiving a lot of attention. It

is everywhere, everyday, on TV, in the newspapers and on radio. It is very difficult to listen to all the attention given in to bullying when you are the one being bullied. We feel all the emotions, anger, unfairness, hopelessness and despair. Does this government really care about bullying?

It is beyond comprehension why our government would choose to build Bipole III in a densely populated, agriculturally productive community leaving forever a bigger environmental footprint than necessary due to the longer length, stray power loss and passing through the most tornado and storm prone parts of Manitoba. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Wiens. Questions? Thank you very much, Mr. Wiens.

There may be an error on my agenda, I'm not sure, but there is a Jim Wiens who is listed next but I have been given a paper by somebody named Timothy Wiens. Is there a Jim and a Timothy Wiens or just one?

MR. T. WIENS: Just one.

THE CHAIRMAN: Timothy?

MR. T. WIENS: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Come forward, please.

MS. JOHNSON: Could you please state your name for the record.

MR. T. WIENS: Timothy Wiens.

MS. JOHNSON: Mr. Wiens, just to make you aware that it is an offence in Manitoba to knowingly mislead this Commission. Do you promise to tell only the truth during proceedings before this Commission?

MR. T. WIENS: I do.

Timothy Wiens: Sworn

MS. JOHNSON: Thank you.

MR. T. WIENS: Good afternoon. Thank you for this time to speak. This is my 15 minutes and I just want to make sure that my voice is clear because in the past I have spoken, hasn't made a difference. Is this okay? You can hear?

THE CHAIRMAN: We're hearing you, sir.

MR. T. WIENS: Thank you. My name is Timothy Wiens. I first learned about Bipole III from a concerned neighbour sometime in 2010. We attended the Steinbach landowner information centres on September 27, 2010 and clearly stated that we would not be interested in housing these towers on our land and working under these high

voltage lines as we already have to deal with existing diagonal lines. We clearly made our position felt. We also met with Manitoba Hydro's property representative lately and were very clear that we still do not want to be a part of this project. Then we sent a letter February 6, 2012, still not agreeing to take on these towers. Our interpretation of the response given by property representatives, minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro and the environmental specialist was this: Any delays could hold this project up and is a race to the finish. No one will stand in our way. And of course like has been mentioned, I feel this is bullying.

We are against this route for many reasons and I'll share briefly some of the ones that I want to state. Loss of agricultural land has been immense in this area the past few years. Urban sprawl has lead the way by changing the productive heavy clay land into commercial and residential structures. Because of the rapid growth rate, town lagoons have had to be expanded, also taking up prime agricultural land. And please let us not forget where our food comes from. And I'm hoping that nobody in this room

will say from the supermarket.

The consequences will be great for this poor decision. Every person who uses hydro will be affected by much higher rates. Unfortunately the people who live underneath these lines will have the highest drawbacks. My family is one of them. To my knowledge, there is insufficient research on health issues with these types of DC lines. The research has been short-term, which will not indicate long-term effects. No one here can stand up and guarantee me that my family or livelihood will not experience negative effects, health or any other side-effects from this mega project. Manitoba Hydro states, and I quote, "There are no known adverse health effects." We have heard this today already. But I just want to relate this to some other issues that have historically stated that some people, sometimes we don't know everything, okay. For instance, Ford Pinto was concluded to be a safe car. And I ask was it really? Smoking was completely accepted and marketed and encouraged, making tobacco very profitable. Now tobacco companies are having to pay for the damage it has done to people's health. Or our healthcare

is also paying. Is Hydro willing to pay for human damages caused by this high voltage line? What does any compensation do for me or my family if someone falls ill because of this overpriced, over travelled electric monster of a line. We will live excessively close, practically under these lines.

My last example I would like to give you is asbestos. That is yet another example of insufficient knowledge and research being done before it was used in many applications. Human lives and families were broken because of a poor, unwise decision that was something -- it was deemed to have no side-effects. It is clearly the smart wise decision to put more thought and research into this project before potentially putting families' lives at risk.

Having these skyscraper towers of power over the top of the dairy facility is also not advisable. Responsible Electricity Transmission for Albertans have published a fact concluding an average decrease of about 5 percent in milk yield, 16.4 per cent decrease in milk fat among Holstein cows in Quebec. More side effects include breathing problems, higher mortality

rates, undersized heifers and some afflicted with hemorrhages or abortions and 10 percent loss in milk. In this particular case I just stated, the French civil court ruled in the family's favour and ordered the power company to pay for the damages. Personally I have no interest in putting my livelihood or family at risk due to an impulse, improper, incorrect plan of Bipole III.

Producing field crops has been addressed, so I'm not going to spend much time. I completely agree with what has been said today. And I agree that it will make farming under these lines, especially with two lines, very difficult. Any aerial work will not be possible and avoiding these lines is very difficult with large equipment especially during long working hours. We, as farmers, must make the most progress when the weather allows us to.

So I'm here today to make a simple suggestion, and that has to deal with exploring the east side more thoroughly. The facts are that the land is more or better suitable for this type of project. It is less populated, meaning safer for Manitobans. It is much lower cost overall, meaningless hydro rates to all Manitobans. And

lastly, history reveals less hazardous weather on the east side. Why, I ask, risk human health or expropriate some of the best agricultural land in Manitoba used to grow the food we eat.

Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Wiens. Just a question. The Responsible Electricity Transmission for Albertans study that you talk about with the decrease in milk yield, milk fat, et cetera, was that from stray electricity, stray voltage, or was that from being under transmission lines?

MR. T. WIENS: That's from being around or near or under high voltage electricity lines.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Any questions? Thank you very much, Mr. Wiens.

MR. T. WIENS: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Next on our list is Jennifer Plett.

MS. JOHNSON: Could you please state your name for the record.

MS. PLETT: Jennifer Plett.

MS. JOHNSON: We just want to make you aware that it is an offence in Manitoba to

knowingly mislead this Commission. Do you promise to tell only the truth during proceedings before this Commission?

MS. PLETT: I do.

MS. JOHNSON: Thank you.

Jennifer Plett: Sworn

THE CHAIRMAN: Go ahead.

MS. PLETT: My name is Jennifer Plett and I live on 4th Street East in Landmark. That's the outer eastern perimeter of Landmark.

There are many freedoms that we take for granted in Canada. We live in a democratic society and are the envy of many nations.

In the case of Bipole III, Manitoba Hydro and the current provincial government are not giving me the freedom to choose whether or not their massive hydro line should run so close to the Community of Landmark that has been my home for the last 15 years.

There have been many instances in our lives where things didn't seem to pose a threat. For instance, tobacco companies were allowed to include cigarettes in the GI rations during World War II. Families sent soldiers cigarettes in care packages. Would the government or the families of

GIs have considered doing this if they had known what the ramifications would be to the lives of the soldiers who became addicted to the cigarettes? Would they have encouraged smoking so that someday the government would have to spend millions of healthcare dollars to combat cancers and heart disease that would follow?

What about the news stories that you see where people who were once happy to take income offered to them by having a wind turbine on their property? These people suffer headaches, stress and many health conditions that they can only attribute to the turbine that is now so close to their homes. Would they have turned their homestead into a place of stress and illness if they had known? Would they have considered the cash payout worth it? I doubt it. My guess is that those who suffer from chronic, debilitating or terminal illnesses would glady choose their health over any payout offered to them.

Both of these examples, while seemingly harmless at the time, were choices that people could make. They could choose to smoke and they could choose to allow wind turbines on their property and then suffer any potential negatives

that came their way.

If you put these hydro towers on people's properties close to their homes, what choice do they have? I suppose they could move. But now who is going to want to buy their farm or their home that is occupied by these huge towers? I doubt it will be a selling feature. It may make the property so unattractive that prospective buyers will move onto the next property or next community that doesn't have a tower on it.

Another concern of mine is that Bipole III will threaten any future growth in Landmark. The following is an excerpt from a letter that was written to local politicians in August 2001. This is a quote from the Landmark high school principle:

> "The community population of Landmark has become stagnant. Unlike other southeast communities, there has been no new growth and therefore the school population has been shrinking. Due to staffing formulas, fewer students mean fewer teachers, and fewer teachers mean fewer courses and options for students. This makes for a less

attractive school. And as a result, students will and have been seeking larger venues to attend. With no additional students next year, we will be scheduled to lose a teacher. This will make for the smallest the school has been, including teachers and students since I began working at the LCI 18 years ago."

This situation was occurring because of a water infrastructure issue in Landmark. We believe that this has finally been overcome and Landmark was poised to grow again due to the interest of several developers on all outer perimeters of the town. If Bipole III makes Landmark less attractive to developers, we will again be in the position of watching our school shrink. My youngest children are in grade four and grate six. I want them to continue to have the option to go to school in Landmark and not have to consider the possibility of being bused to another community.

Some of you may be familiar with a new land development called Sage Creek on the east side of Lagimodiere Blvd. in Winnipeg. I have

been told of at least two families who want to move into a new home but will not consider Sage Creek because of the hydro lines so close to the development. They aren't asking for scientific studies, they simply don't want to risk their family's health for something that hasn't had repeated, long-term studies definitely proving that there will be no risk. They don't have to move to Sage Creek if they don't want to, they can look elsewhere. They have that choice. Since I am currently in my home and the towers are coming to me, I don't have that choice.

It stands to reason that we as taxpayers will be footing the extra billion dollars that is being spent to run Bipole III down the west side of the province. As Manitoba Hydro has already applied for and received two rate increases in 2012, it seems that we are already starting to pay down this debt.

I feel very strongly that Manitoba Hydro and the current government need to stop playing hardball with Manitoba farmers. They need to listen to organizations like the Bipole III coalition, many professional engineers, other experts, retired Hydro executives and a growing

number of concerned Manitoba citizens. And they need to listen to people like me who don't want to be so close to Bipole III that I'll see it out my living-room window.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Ms. Plett. Questions? Thank you very much. Next is Irmgard Kames.

MS. JOHNSON: Could you please state your name for the record.

MS. KAMES: My name is Irmgard Kames.

MS. JOHNSON: Are you aware that it is an offence in Manitoba to knowingly mislead this Commission?

MS. KAMES: I do.

MS. JOHNSON: Do you promise to tell only the truth during proceedings before this Commission?

MS. KAMES: I will.

MS. JOHNSON: Thank you.

Irmgard Kames: Sworn

THE CHAIRMAN: Go ahead, please.

MS. KAMES: My name is Irmgard Kames. My parents immigrated to Canada in 1978 and located their farm south of Domain just off of 330 Highway. This is where my mother still lives on

the farm. And I along with my husband and three children, Ali 19, A.J. 15, and Daniel 14, farm. Our farm is a true family farm since everybody in the family works on the farm and has chores and responsibilities. All my children are active on the farm from cleaning out grain bins, which they don't enjoy, to operating farm machinery like swathers and combines in the field. It is for this reason that I have my greatest concern regarding Bipole III monstrosities on our land. Our family alone has eight quarters that would be affected by this proposal. There is an increased risk that would be present at those locations where Manitoba Hydro intends to locate these structures and therefore an increased risk to my employees and my family. Who will compensate us if there is an accident, or even worse, if somebody gets hurt? Who will insure us for that?

When my parents purchased the farm, the previous owner had signed an agreement with Manitoba Hydro for a one-time payment of $60 for every two pole structure. This is an AC line to the U.S. which goes past our main yard and has several more going through our fields that we have to negotiate around every pass over the field.

Our equipment has become larger over the years and which makes it even more difficult to farm this land. If we would just have to pass once or twice a year around these poles, but we can say that is no longer the case. For example, the number of passes on the field could be one for seeding; two, for spraying herbicides which sometimes are two times depending on what weeds are present; spraying fungicide; spraying insecticide depending if there is insects present and what level the infestation is; five, desiccation of the crop which we don't always do; six, swathing; seven, combining; eight, cultivating; nine, harrowing; 10, ditching; and then sometimes we get to fall fertilize; and 12 is, and we do use aerial application at times, and the increased time. And sometimes the aerial applicators don't consider us because they have land that's free of poles that they can spray more easily.

Nobody realizes the amount of extra time it takes to go around these poles, resetting GPS and trying to come close enough to control these weeds without it coming into contact with the poles all while being under time pressure to get the field work done. The added time, fuel,

fertilizer, chemical and effort come out of our pockets. There has been some close calls with accidental contact regarding the poles on our land as well as our neighbour's.

There definitely is an annual cost to us to farm around these poles and there is no compensation for that increased cost that we incur. Or does anybody think the $60 paid out over 40 years would cover the cost that we have to carry annually?

My 70 year old mother this year had to once again load up her backpack sprayer with herbicide, drive to the poles and manually spray to control the weeds between these two pole lines as she has done for 30 years with no compensation from Manitoba Hydro. Does that seem fair to you?

In 2005, Manitoba Hydro wanted to put a fibre optic cable underneath the existing pole structure on our land to increase the profit using the right-of-way that was signed in 1968 by the previous owner and did so without consent or compensation to our family.

Then in 2010, once again Manitoba Hydro contacted us that they were going to destroy the trees in my mother's yard not just growing

underneath the poles, but growing in the vicinity of the poles, although after negotiation agreed to cut them back and replant shrubs to replace the damage. The trees were cut, however no low growing shrubs have been replanted to this date.

However, when we needed to move our hydro pole in our yard to provide power to our house and shed, an earlier estimate about 12 years ago was $2,000. Then to over $12,000 last year yet our house and shed did not move. Why is it that Manitoba Hydro can raise their price to be compensated for their time and effort and we farmers can't?

So I hope that this commission realizes that Manitoba Hydro does not operate in good faith. And once you sign this agreement, you are out of luck. Manitoba Hydro, along with the NDP government, does not care about farmers.

This is why I find it unconscionable by Manitoba Hydro to put this Bipole III line through the most cultivated and productive land in the whole province when there is less productive land available.

Another grave concern to us is that the Bipole III line would be able to be located

two and a half miles south of the Z-Dyke. That's the side that floods. By the way, all our lands where Manitoba Hydro wants to put these lines were under water in 1997 and we were evacuated. Why would this even be considered? How can this make sense with so much power going through those lines when it just seems very dangerous and careless?

Even if I understood why this Bipole III line needs to come on the south side of Winnipeg, how can it be justified to impose on us farmers to incur these increased costs annually without being compensated to make a living to feed our families?

This Bipole III line will change the way we can farm our land, not only for the rest of our lives, our children's lives and many generations to come. How can a one-time payment be adequate to compensate us for that?

Just to add, I didn't have this in my speech, but when the consultants mentioned that they had talked to the farmers that we would rather have one-time payment as opposed to having a lump sum, I was never nor was anybody in my family asked that. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Questions?

Thank you very much, Ms. Kames. I have another name, Emile Morin.

MS. JOHNSON: Could you please state your name for the record.

MR. MORIN: Emile Morin.

MS. JOHNSON: Mr. Morin, are you aware that it is an offence in Manitoba to knowingly mislead this Commission?

MR. MORIN: Yes.

MS. JOHNSON: Do you promise to tell only the truth during proceedings before this Commission?

MR. MORIN: Yes.

MS. JOHNSON: Thank you.

Emile Morin: Sworn

THE CHAIRMAN: Go ahead, sir.

MR. MORIN: My name is Emile Morin of Otterburne, Manitoba. I am here today to speak against the Bipole III plan. The proposed route would adversely affect my farm that has been in our family for many generations. I have a unique situation that my land is in river lots and not in quarter sections. Even though I will have no towers on my property, but I will be not able to aerial spray north and south for over half my farm

because of this transmission line, north of the Tourond drain. If you put it next to the 52 highway, it's the continuation of the 52.

River lots are long and narrow and not square that I can change like the direction of my farming operation. I have no choice but to seed and spray lengthwise. So I need the aerial planes to control weeds, disease, insects to protect my crops. This Bipole III line will seriously affect my farm for row crop because I need to go straight up and down north and south.

How is Hydro going to compensate me? I have no towers on my land and I am still affected by this project.

I do not appreciate Hydro's first plan. They were going to go down the 305. I went to the meetings. I went in support of my neighbours that did not want this at 305 but to find out that they are going to move it to my place. So now what I don't like is it's almost as if putting farmers against farmers, neighbours against neighbours, don't put it on mine, go two miles north, go two miles south. It's not good for our community.

Hydro should not be going in the prime

agricultural and most expensive land area. If the government and Hydro say we need this for future export sales, why are we going through the expensive route and purposely adding on the estimated like $1 billion more to the cost of the project? This would be foolish to spend taxpayers' dollars and saddle ourselves and children with this long-term debt. We are lucky to have cheap hydro in our province. But I believe we will be personally paying for this project for a life time and our kids' lifetimes.

In summary, do not let this project go ahead as planned. If it needs to be built, build it in the shortest and cheapest way. Do not go in the most productive farmland areas. Do not saddle us and our kids with future debt that is unnecessary if there is a cheaper route.

If this commission's job is not to suggest that alternate route, I hope you guys reject Manitoba Hydro's current proposal. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, sir. Any questions?

MR. MOTHERAL: Mr. Morin, you did bring up one point that escaped me and I thank you

for bringing it to my attention today, was the long narrow river lots that don't experience towers but are still affected by the adjacent towers.

MR. MORIN: Yes.

MR. MOTHERAL: Thank you.

MS. MacKAY: Just to clarify that last point, how far away from your property is Bipole III currently?

MR. MORIN: It will be basically across the drain, like just a municipal drain. So basically I get no benefits, like not that I'm interested in any tower money, but airplanes will not come near me now to spray my crop.

MS. MacKAY: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Morin. Now that comes to the end of the list of those who indicated they wanted to make presentations today. Are there any other people in the room who would like to make a presentation? Well, we won't adjourn just yet. We'll take a break for about 15 minutes and see if anybody changes their minds or if any other people arrive. So we'll break for a little while and see if others wish to make presentations.

Just a note. If some of you choose this opportunity to leave, I would like to thank you for making your presentations today. There have been very good presentations. It gives us a lot of food for thought. I can guarantee you that we will consider all that you said. I can't guarantee you that we will give you what you would all like, but we will certainly seriously consider what you have told us today. So thank you.

(Proceedings recessed at 2:47 p.m. and reconvened at 3:07 p.m.)

THE CHAIRMAN: I'd like to reconvene for a couple of minutes. A couple of the panel members have had questions arise out of some of the presentations this afternoon, in particular out of the last presentation by Mr. Morin. So once everybody has taken their seats, I will first ask Mr. Gibbons and then Ms. MacKay to ask some questions.

MR. GIBBONS: Actually, the question is inspired by Mr. Morin's commentary. I think it reflects in a more specific way because of the river lot issue I think, but nonetheless some general questions that have come up here and at Portage from others as well. And it really puts

me in mind of a question for Manitoba Hydro. And I understand that the answer to this may not be immediately available, it may have to be an undertaking, I'm not even sure then if an answer is possible. But if it is, I would like to find out. And that is Mr. Morin and others, but particularly in that last case with Mr. Morin, has raised the issue of the impact that having towers on neighbours' lands might have on individuals who, at least from the perspective of the talk that we heard earlier, would not, at least on the surface, appear to qualify for compensation. Now there may be an aspect of this, one of my colleagues I think will ask this kind of question, by which this compensation could be acquired. And I know, Mr. Morin, that you are not seeking compensation, that's not the issue. Or I shouldn't say you're not seeking it, but that wasn't the maybe the issue for you. But nonetheless, can we get some sense from Hydro as to in the agricultural regions where Bipole is intended to cross if it gets the go-ahead, how many properties and how many farmlands will be affected by that kind of situation where a tower on a neighboring land is going to affect things

like aerial spraying on land on which there is no tower?

MR. GRAY: We'll try to have something for next week.

MR. GIBBONS: Okay, thank you. Like I said, I didn't think that would be something on the tip of anyone's tongue. It's possible we might have an answer by next week, thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Just related to that, we had a few presenters today speak of having more than one hydro line on their property, or at least when Bipole III is constructed, there will be more than one hydro line on their property. And in some cases, sort of crossing each other at angles. Would it be reasonable to know how many times that happens?

MR. PENNER: For all hydro lines, we're looking at the number around 110 crossings throughout the province. That's one of the things that we're working on to figure out and to plan how we're going to get across all those hydro right-of-ways as well as all the right-of-ways.

THE CHAIRMAN: How about just on individual private property, farmlands where there might be crossings which would entail two sets of

towers going off in different directions and potentially further complicating their carrying out their farming business?

MR. PENNER: Yes. So that's something that we could determine the number of those. And there's going to be a variety of different ways that they cross in terms of the angle that they cross, it may not be perpendicular. Some of the other transmission lines nay not be running north/south, east/west.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am curious about it but I don't need a hugely defined number. If you can provide me not today obviously but with a ballpark of how often this might happen?

MR. PENNER: We'll undertake to do something for you on that.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Penner. Ms. MacKay, you had a question?

MS. MacKAY: I'm not sure that Mr. Gibbons' question doesn't cover mine already, but I'll ask it anyway. This is of Manitoba Hydro and it's around ancillary damage compensation which is the compensation that would cover things like an inability to use aerial spray.

Would someone like Mr. Morin, who does

not have towers on his land but cannot spray or cannot contract aerial sprayers because of adjacent towers, would he qualify for ancillary damage compensation?

MR. GRAY: The answer is yes. Ancillary damages are available to farm operations that are impacted by Bipole III. And it can be whether there is an actual structure or an easement taken on the property or if a landowner can demonstrate that there is reasonable or special issues that do affect the operations, we would definitely consider that, yes.

MS. MacKAY: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you for that response. I think that concludes the questions we have for Hydro at this time. I think we'll wait around another 15 or 20 minutes unless anybody else has changed their mind since earlier and would now like to make a presentation? Nobody is leaping up. We'll wait about 15 or 20 minutes and see if anybody else shows up who wishes to make a presentation, although I suspect that most if not all of the very concerned people have been sitting here all day. So we'll wait a little bit longer and if nobody comes by about 3:30 or shortly

thereafter, we will adjourn the hearing for today.

So we'll take a break and in about 15 or 20 minutes, we may adjourn for the day.

MS. JOHNSON: Mr. Chairman, may I suggest we take this time to put the rest of the presentations on the record?

THE CHAIRMAN: Please do.

MS. JOHNSON: Okay. Number 7 will be Ms. Wiens' presentation. Number 8, Ms. Peters'. Number 9 is Mr. Gerald Lapointe's. Number 10 is Mr. Yves Lapointe's, number 11 is Mr. Alvin Wiens, number 12, Mr. Tim Wiens. 13 will be Ms. Plett, 14 is Ms. Kames and 15 will be Mr. Morin.

(EXHIBIT NIV-7: MS. H. WIENS' PRESENTATION)

(EXHIBIT NIV-8: MS. PETERS' PRESENTATION)

(EXHIBIT NIV-9: MR. GERALD LAPOINTE'S PRESENTATION)

(EXHIBIT NIV-10: MR. YVES LAPOINTE'S PRESENTATION)

(EXHIBIT NIV-11: MR. ALVIN WIENS' PRESENTATION)

(EXHIBIT NIV-12: MR. TIM WIENS' PRESENTATION)

(EXHIBIT NIV-13: MS. J. PLETT'S PRESENTATION)
(EXHIBIT NIV-14: MS. I. KAMES' PRESENTATION)
(EXHIBIT NIV-15: MR. E. MORIN'S PRESENTATION)
THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. So we'll break for a few minutes.
(Proceedings recessed at 3:15 p.m. and reconvened at 3:30 p.m.)
THE CHAIRMAN: Last chance. Anyone wishing to make a presentation here today, please say so now or forever hold your peace. There will be opportunities in the City of Winnipeg on the 1st and 8th of November as well as other times by arrangement.
So again, I want to thank you all for coming out here today. We have had a full day with a lot of very good presentations. So thank you all. We will adjourn. We reconvene Monday morning, nine o'clock at the Fort Garry Hotel. See some of you there. Yes, Mr. Wiens?
MR. WIENS: Mr. Sargeant, I'd like to thank you and the other commissioners for listening to us and treating us respectfully.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you for that, sir. We are adjourned.

(Proceedings adjourned at 3:31 p.m.)

OFFICIAL EXAMINER'S CERTIFICATE

I, DEBRA KOT, a duly appointed Official Examiner in the Province of Manitoba, do hereby certify the foregoing pages are a true and correct transcript of my Stenotype notes as taken by me at the time and place hereinbefore stated.

Debra Kot

Official Examiner, Q.B.