



Responsible Electricity Transmission for Albertans • www.RETA.ca • 780.800.0408

Hi everyone,

We're entering the next phase of our fight against the Heartland Transmission Line – we expect the Facilities Application (the official submission from the Heartland Project Team) to be filed with the Alberta Utilities Commission on or around Monday next week.

RETA will be registering to be an Intervener at the ensuing hearing (which could still be as much as 6 months away) and we have retained a very experienced lawyer, *Keith Wilson*, to assist us. Keith has extensive experience and a great track record when it comes to these sorts of events and we've been working with him for many months now preparing our arguments.

For obvious reasons I can't share with you our detailed strategy, but, as always, RETA's position is that if transmission lines are to be built, they need to go underground whenever they go near homes, schools, daycares, hospitals and environmentally sensitive areas. And this is regardless of where the lines are run. It doesn't matter if it's one house or a thousand – the principle is the same. And if the powers-that-be in their infinite wisdom choose not to bury the lines, then impacted people, and we mean *all* impacted people, need to be able to sell their property to the government or transmission facility operators for replacement cost so that they can rebuild their lives elsewhere. It is not reasonable for a society to expect a small number of individuals to be disadvantaged in the name of the "greater good". Full compensation is required.

We all know by now that these transmission lines aren't even required. Endless people have come forward with compelling facts that show there is no need. And yet, the government insists that we're going to be the victims of rolling blackouts unless we spend at least \$14 billion on "reinforcing the grid" (based on the past, this will bloat to \$25 billion). Keep in mind that the total grid which we currently have is valued at \$2 billion and that much more cost effective alternatives to transmission exist (like generating the power near where it is needed).

We will, of course, be fighting this insanity whenever we can, but we've been somewhat constrained by Bill 50 (you know, that Banana-Republic-like piece of legislation that lets the government spend \$25 billion of your money without any justification or competitive bidding process) and will undoubtedly face a bit of a battle when it comes to pointing out the lack of need for this line at the hearing. (Incidentally, as always, put your MLA on notice that if they continue this madness they'll be looking for a new job soon).

RETA has members from all around Alberta and the Heartland Line is just the first in a seemingly endless list of so called "critical infrastructure projects" that RETA will fight. We are fighting this battle for *all* Albertans, so whether you live on a proposed route, an alternate route, a preferred route or no route at all RETA is here to protect your interests. We are determined to make sure we don't build billions of dollars worth of useless

infrastructure and that when we do need transmission lines they are built in a responsible fashion which doesn't adversely impact anyone's health, safety or property value.

We're confident that with Keith's guidance we have built solid arguments and have a very good case on burial, need and public interest. If you have a specific interest that you wish to protect, wish to point out any negative impacts this project will have on you or your neighbours, or wish to point out flaws in the Heartland Project public consultation process or the Alberta Government's approach to transmission infrastructure, we encourage and in fact strongly recommend that you register right away to be an intervenor in the AUC hearings. You can register either as an *individual* or a group together with your neighbours. You can, of course, represent yourself at the hearing but if you wish to retain legal counsel, keep in mind that you can apply for intervenor funding directly from the AUC.

The easiest way to register is to complete the Statement of Intent to Participate form (which can be found at http://www.auc.ab.ca/items-of-interest/heartland-transmission-project/Documents/SIP_Heartland_Form.pdf) and then email it to filings@auc.ab.ca.

One last word. We know it is human nature for people to try and push the line away from their loved ones and toward someone else. We don't for a minute believe that there won't be people at the hearing who are going to take this Nimby approach. But we encourage you to resist going down that dark path and to stem Nimbyism wherever you can. Having someone else's child die of leukemia or someone else lose everything they have worked for their entire lives is a poor exchange. There are more than enough logical arguments – need, alternative technologies, protecting the safety of the public etc. – for us to win this without anyone's children having to die or anyone having to lose half of what they own.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. Incidentally, we can now take donations on our website www.reta.ca (or you can mail them in to the address on the site) so anything you can do to help us with the legal bills and other expenses would be very much appreciated.

Bruce Johnson
President, RETA