

Cathleen L. Hadley-Samia
Joseph M. Samia
6800 Clay Street
Thompson, Ohio 44086
April 19, 2007

The Ohio Power Siting Board
180 East Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio 44215

Dear Madam/Sir:

We are writing to strongly and vehemently protest the proposed installation of 138kV power transmission lines in Geauga County.

The summary provided about the proposed project states that "multiple routes were identified, and their potential impacts scored and ranked to identify the more favorable routes." We ask--which "multiple" routes were identified, and how can it be that the proposed installation on either Clay Street or east of Route 528 is "more favorable"? *More favorable to what?*

We live on Clay Street in a house that was built in 1848; although the house has been thoroughly remodeled several times, hand hewn beams are still visible in the stone basement. My (Cathleen's) grandparents bought this house with a sixty-acre farm in 1947. Now the farm is owned entirely by family members. My parents bought a parcel and built a house in 1966 and we (my siblings and I) grew up there. We moved back to Thompson in 1994, after living in New York City for 10 years. We still love New York, but chose to return here to raise our kids, live close to parents, and live in my grandparents' house which we bought in 1999. We value living in a small RURAL community still possessed of much natural beauty and small town values. All Thompson, Montville, and Huntsburg residents share these values and have either moved here or remained here for those reasons.

We fail to see how installing power lines that will forever and permanently degrade our property--either on Clay Street or east of Route 528--is "favorable" to anyone but the power company's pocketbook.

- **Aesthetically, the project is horrible;** the raping of our countryside by felling any and all kind of vegetation along the proposed route is unforgivable and just plain ugly.
- **Conservation-wise, the project is grossly unsound.** Simply the removal of so much vegetation should be against the law--many of the trees that will be removed have been standing for 50 to 100 years. Additionally, many landowners have worked long and hard to provide sanctuary to wildlife and preserve the rural character of their land. Power lines ripping through their woods and fields will destroy what many have spent

a lifetime--of time and money--preserving.

- **As for health concerns, the project is unwise.** We understand that the link between leukemia and high voltage lines is has not been "proven". Does First Energy or the power siting board really want to take a chance that such a link might eventually be proven? Why should the public--who pays for electric service and basically provides the power company's record-making profits--also be a guinea pig?
- **The economic impact will be unbelievably negative.** Property values will go down. There is no doubt about it, and we don't need to look at tables or studies to figure that out. It's just plain common sense. And what about the people who will lose their homes? There is no way that First Energy can adequately "compensate" homeowners for tearing down their houses. A house, for people who live here, is a lifetime commitment, both emotionally and financially. Residents of these communities, by and large, do not buy and sell their homes on a whim or to make quick profit. Additionally, the many farms affected by either route will have valuable farmland swallowed up by the path created for the poles. Not only will their workable land be reduced, but the value of their farmland will decrease too--basically a "double whammy." *Very importantly, the economic impart on the communities because of falling property values will be far-reaching.* Both the Ledgemont and Cardinal school districts have struggled for many years because of financing issues. In the State of Ohio, schools are still mostly paid for by property taxes and small income taxes. When the property values fall--and they will--and the income tax base falls because people don't want to live here anymore--who will make up the difference in our school revenues? Or support our road departments or small police forces (both financed by property tax revenue) for that matter?

I attended a community meeting in Montville on March 31, from which any representative from First Energy was glaringly absent. Other sites were proposed. One proposal was to install the lines down Route 11; the vegetation is already cleared and there would be little or no impact to homeowners as the area is currently undeveloped. Montville Township Trustee Alexa Holbert stated she was told that Route 11 is "too far east." I ask "too far east" of what? Additionally, at the same meeting, Mr. Jim Galm proposed using an existing right of way on Mayfield Road to tap into the wire on the Thompson Township/Lake County border. Another citizen proposed installing the wires underground.

This proposal is monumentally short-sighted and insensitive to the people who will be most affected. How about some long-range thinking and planning--what will the electricity needs be in 10 or 20 or 30 years? What about conservation measures? Maybe some real thought and discussion about the current impact on our communities and our future needs are in order.

The sites proposed for installation of these power lines are unacceptable for many reasons, some of which we have enunciated here. In short, the power company and the

siting board must, if this project is really necessary (and we have seen some data suggesting that it isn't as necessary as we would be lead to believe) find an alternate route that has less impact on people who already live here and have a lifelong commitment to their communities.

Sincerely,

Cathleen L. Hadley-Samia

Joseph M. Samia

cc: American Transmission Systems, Inc.
Mia Moore, First Energy Area Manager
State Senator Tim Grendell
Geauga County Commissioners
Matthew Dolan, State Representative
Steve LaTourette, U.S. Representative
Thompson Township Trustees ✓
Montville Township Trustees
Huntsburg Township Trustees