

Re: Case # 07-0171-EL-BTX

As the President of Masco Retail Cabinet Group, I am writing in support of the new transmission line that FirstEnergy is proposing to build in Geauga County.

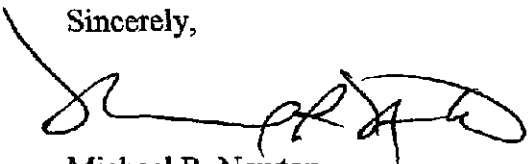
Over the years our business has grown at a steady rate. Our manufacturing facility in the Middlefield area employs several thousand workers and we cannot afford to have them idled for any reason. Now more than ever, our precision equipment demands reliable electric service, as even momentary outages, voltage spikes or low voltage conditions can cause product line delays having to restart or repair damage to sensitive manufacturing equipment or cause the quality of our products to be impaired. In addition to helping existing businesses, improved electric reliability and capacity will be a selling tool in bringing new development to the region.

Representatives from FirstEnergy have explained to us that without this new transmission line, providing reliable electric service to our area will be a challenge. Their existing circuits and substations are becoming overextended because of higher usage and growth, and it will be increasingly difficult to maintain voltage levels within the acceptable ranges our equipment demands.

We think the company has done its homework in selecting the proper route for the new power line. While we can understand the concerns of residents who live near the proposed routes, we believe the project is necessary and should be built. Our region has struggled for years with electric service that we believe to be less than satisfactory. We believe this new project will help improve the quality of the electric service and hope you expedite the approval process. Certification of either the "preferred" (cross-country) route or "alternate" (Clay St.) route is the best way to bring a new supply of energy. The OPSB needs to certify either the "preferred" or "alternate" route without further delay.

For years we have asked the utility to do something to improve the situation. Now that they have proposed a solution, how can we be against it?

Sincerely,


Michael R. Newton
President
MASCO Retail Cabinet Group (KraftMaid)

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Masco Retail Cabinet Group

15535 South State Avenue · PO Box 1055 · Middlefield, Ohio 44062 telephone: 440.632.5333 fax: 440.632.5648

www.kraftmaid.com

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