

FILE

FILE

BEFORE THE  
OHIO POWER SITING BOARD

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In the Matter of: )  
The Application of American Transmission )  
Systems, Incorporated and The Cleveland )  
Electric Illuminating Company for a )  
Certificate of Environmental Compatibility )  
and Public Need for the Geauga County )  
138 kV Transmission Line Supply Project )

Case No. 07-0171-EL-BTX

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INITIAL DIRECT TESTIMONY OF

CHARLES V. LAUSIN

ON BEHALF OF

CITIZENS ADVOCATING RESPONSIBLE ENERGY

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document delivered in the regular course of business  
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1 Q. Please state your name and address.

2 A. Charles Victor Lauslin. 7240 Ledge Road, Thompson, Ohio 44086.

3 Q. Do you own the property located at this address?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. How long have you resided at this address?

6 A. Since 1965.

7 Q. How long have you resided in Geauga County?

8 A. My entire life.

9 Q. Do you hold any governmental positions?

10 A. I am a member of the Geauga County Planning Commission.

11 Q. Are you involved with any other organizations or groups?

12 A. I am a District Representative for the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation Board

13 of Trustees. I represent District 4, which covers the areas of Lake,

14 Geauga, Ashtabula, and Trumbull Counties. I am also a member of the

15 Upstate Niagara Dairy Cooperative and the Western Reserve Farm

16 Cooperative.

17 Q. Have you previously held any other governmental or non-governmental

18 positions?

19 A. Yes. I was formerly the Chair of the American Farm Bureau Dairy

20 Committee for approximately four years and was a member of the Board

21 of Directors of Milk Marketing, Inc. I also served as a member of a local

22 farm supply cooperative for 24 years and was a township trustee for

23 Thompson Township.

- 24 Q. What is the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation?
- 25 A. The Ohio Farm Bureau Federation works on legislation, regulations, and  
26 issues that affect agricultural land use and rural areas.
- 27 Q. What is the American Farm Bureau?
- 28 A. The American Farm Bureau is a national, non-governmental organization  
29 that has the goal of making farming more profitable and strengthening  
30 agricultural communities.
- 31 Q. Are you familiar with the farms and farming practices in Geauga County?
- 32 A. Yes.
- 33 Q. How long have you been farming at the property located at 7240 Ledge  
34 Road?
- 35 A. I have worked on the farm since I was a child. The farm has been in  
36 operation and in my family since the 1800's I started working there full  
37 time after high school and I took over operation of the farm in the mid-  
38 1970's. Currently, I am the president of Lausin Farms, Inc., which is a  
39 family farm that I operate at the property.
- 40 Q. What type of farm is Lausin Farms, Inc.?
- 41 A. It is a dairy farm.
- 42 Q. How big is the property located at 7240 Ledge Road?
- 43 A. The property is 650 acres.
- 44 Q. How many head of livestock do you have on your farm?
- 45 A. 275.
- 46 Q. What kinds of crops do you grow?

47 A. I grow corn, small grains, and hay.

48 Q. Have you had any special training related to farming practices?

49 A. Since 1956, I have continuously taken courses through the Ohio State  
50 University Extension Service on various agricultural topics, such as dairy  
51 herd management and crop production.

52 Q. Do you subscribe to any journals or publications related to farming?

53 A. I subscribe to a number of agriculture publications to stay up to date on  
54 farming practices, including *Ohio Farmer*, *Hoards Dairyman*, *Midwest*  
55 *Dairy Management*, *Farm Journal*, *Successful Farmer*, and *Northeast*  
56 *Farmer*.

57 Q. Do you hold any professional licenses or certifications?

58 A. I am certified by the Ohio Department of Agriculture as a Pesticides  
59 Crop Protection Applicator.

60 Q. Have you won any awards in connection with your farming operation?

61 A. I was awarded the Distinguished Service to Agriculture Award by the  
62 Geauga County Farm Bureau. I was also awarded a service award by the  
63 Ohio Cooperative Extension Service. My farm has also won numerous  
64 quality awards for its dairy marketing cooperatives.

65 Q. Will your property be affected by construction of an electrical transmission  
66 line along the Preferred Route, which is one of the proposed routes  
67 identified in the application filed by American Transmission Systems,  
68 Incorporated and the Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company?

69 A. Yes. It is my opinion that the Preferred Route is not the best route due its  
70 effects on agriculture land.

71 Q. What adverse effects will construction of an electrical transmission line  
72 along the Preferred Route have on agricultural land?

73 A. There will be soil compaction due to construction vehicles traversing the  
74 property during construction of the line. Soil compaction is one of the  
75 most severe things that can happen to agriculture land because it affects  
76 the soil's ability to absorb water. When soil is compacted, it reduces the  
77 amount of crops yielded by the plants growing in the compacted soil.

78 Q. Have you experienced soil compaction?

79 A. Yes. In the 1980's, a utility company constructed an oil and gas well  
80 on my farm property. The utility company promised to replace all of the  
81 affected top soil and eliminate soil compaction, however, it has been  
82 over 25 years since the soil was compacted during construction of the  
83 well and the soil is still not the same as it was before the construction.

84 Q. How long do the adverse effects of soil compaction last?

85 A. It largely depends on what the soil and weather conditions are when the  
86 soil is compacted. It can take a significant number of years.

87 Q. In what other ways will agricultural land be affected by construction of  
88 an electrical transmission line on the land?

89 A. The poles placed in the land to hold the electrical transmission line, and  
90 any wiring constructed on the land to support the poles, may prevent one  
91 from using farming equipment in certain areas. Such poles and wires

92 would affect how quickly and efficiently you can maneuver certain  
93 equipment in the area of the field where those poles and wires are placed.

94 Q. What other adverse effects will construction of the electrical transmission  
95 line along the Preferred Route have on your farmland?

96 A. There is the possibility that my property and fields will be destroyed and/or  
97 damaged by trespassers. It is common in Geauga County for individuals  
98 to use utility corridors for recreational purposes. I have personally  
99 experienced this type of damage on my property. Individuals using snow  
100 mobiles have trespassed on my property and damaged my crops in the  
101 past.

102 Q. How do these trespassers damage crops?

103 A. When individuals are using the right-of-way for any sort of recreational  
104 purpose, they may trespass onto the property and damage crops and soil.  
105 During the winter months, when vehicles or snowmobiles are passing over  
106 the snow, the weight of the equipment packs the snow down. When the  
107 snow starts to melt, the packed snow creates a blockage of water. The  
108 water cannot run-off and sits on the ground, saturating the soil and  
109 forming puddles. This excess water is not beneficial for the soil.

110 Q. Does this impact crop production?

111 A. Yes. The crops and plants might be destroyed and the soil may be  
112 degraded due to compaction, which then results in a decrease in crop  
113 yield.

114 Q. Are there any other impacts construction of an electrical transmission line  
115 might have on agricultural land?

116 A. Construction of the line may damage subsurface drainage systems that  
117 farmers have in place. Damage to or disruption of a drainage system  
118 could affect the drainage system and create water build up, which affects  
119 the crops and compacts the soil.

120 Q. Would any of these impacts you have described be different for a produce  
121 farm?

122 A. These impacts would be even more severe for a produce farm  
123 because such farms utilize every inch of the land to grow produce.  
124 Are there any potential impacts that have not yet been addressed?

125 A. Construction of the electrical transmission line along the preferred route  
126 will also require the removal of trees. When you have a group of trees, it  
127 is important to leave the perimeter trees in place because these trees  
128 have adopted a deeper root system and have the ability to withstand  
129 strong winds. Trees within a wood lot do not have this capability and  
130 cannot withstand heavy winds. In addition, removing trees in an area will  
131 increase erosion.

132 Q. Is there anything else you would like to add?

133 A. Not at this time.

### CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a true and accurate copy of the foregoing Citizens Advocating Responsible Energy's Initial Direct Testimony of Charles V. Lausin was served this 8<sup>th</sup> day of September 2008, via regular U.S. Mail upon the following:

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