

**PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17120**

**Pennsylvania Public Utility
Commission v. Trans-Allegheny
Interstate Line Company
(TrAILCo).**

**Public Meeting November 13, 2008
1204960-OSA
Docket Nos. A-110172 et al
G-00071229**

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER ROBERT F. POWELSON**

Before this Commission are five separate Applications of Trans-Allegheny Interstate Line Company (“TrAILCo” or “Company”), including (1) an Application for a Certificate of Public Convenience to offer, render, furnish and/or supply transmission service in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; (2) an Application for authorization to locate, construct, operate, and maintain certain high-voltage electric substation facilities; (3) an Application for authority to exercise the power of eminent domain along the proposed transmission line routes in Pennsylvania; (4) an Application for approval of an exemption from municipal zoning regulation with respect to the construction of buildings; and (5) an Application for approval of certain related affiliated interest agreements.

I am pleased that the Commission today approved TrAILCo’s Application for the 502 Junction Facilities. The complexities of this case speak to the need for regional planning on transmission projects. This case deserves to have our complete and full support for a number of reasons. First, I believe that we need to view transmission on a regional, rather than provincial, basis. Transmission has become a matter of interstate commerce and, as a regulatory body, we must consider the needs of our neighbor states and the RTO in which we reside.

More importantly, there is a great need to improve the infrastructure of this Commonwealth and our country. This need extends well past improving our roads and bridges, but also to the facilities that transmit our necessary public utility services to us whether they be gas or water mains, telephone cables or electric transmission facilities. As a nation, the United States spends less than 2% of the country’s gross domestic product on infrastructure, compared to China, which spends 9% and India, which spends 6%. As policymakers, we play an important role in reversing this historic failure to invest, and that role starts with approving projects such as these. In my view, infrastructure investment is imperative for us to grow our economy. Further, without greater spending, Pennsylvanians will face increasing reliability issues and the policy goals set forth in 2004’s Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act will not be met. After all,

investment in new wind farms and solar panels is meaningless without a way to transport the green power generated.

Lastly, I am very cognizant of the fact that there were many parties opposed to all or parts of the proposed TrAIL project. I weighed the positions of all sides carefully before arriving at my decision, but I believe that, on balance, the Commission's decision today is the proper one.

DATE: November 13, 2008

**ROBERT F. POWELSON
COMMISSIONER**