

PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17105-3265

PPL ELECTRIC UTILITIES CORPORATION (PPL)

PUBLIC MEETING: January 14, 2010
2082652-OSA
Docket Nos. A-2009-2082652
A-2009-2082832
A-2009-2088297
A-2009-2088337
A-2009-2088327
A-2009-2088340
A-2009-2088312
A-2009-2088360

STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER ROBERT F. POWELSON

Before the Commission today for disposition is the Application of PPL Electric Utilities Corporation ("PPL") for Approval of the Siting and Construction of the Pennsylvania Portion of the Proposed Susquehanna-Roseland 500 kV Transmission Line.


I would first like to commend all parties who have been involved in this process throughout the last year. The diligent work of PUC staff with regard to the review process, the efforts of PPL to provide comprehensive information, and the involvement and input by those affected by the proposed line has given the Commission the information needed to fully consider all sides of the issues.

On a national scale, it is abundantly clear that the United States must make significant investments in its infrastructure. We are at a critical juncture as it relates to infrastructure planning and investment, and if we continue down this path of inaction we will never meet our goals of incorporating renewables, implementing smart grid technologies, and becoming an energy independent nation.

Pennsylvania, specifically, is faced with the daunting challenge of updating its more than 70-year-old infrastructure while maintaining reliability for its 12 million residents. One needs to look no further than the Wallenpaupack-Bushkill portion of the line PPL proposes to replace as part of the Susquehanna-Roseland project. This portion of the line was erected in the 1920s, and its useful life expired in the early 1980s, at which time PPL replaced all the conductor splices due to deterioration.

However, despite this "patchwork" approach to avoiding service interruptions, PJM Interconnection has been blessed with strong reliability for decades. In an effort to continue this trend, more than \$3.4 billion in transmission system additions and upgrades have been approved by PJM in recent years. However, this is only the beginning of what I hope will be continued investment in a critical facet of the Commonwealth. While I fear that Pennsylvanians have taken the Commonwealth's relatively strong electric reliability for granted, I hope that our citizens will continue to be able to take it for granted. For this to happen, though, we need continued investment in our electric grid. The Susquehanna-Roseland Transmission Line is one such investment that will serve to mitigate the potential overloads and blackouts projected by the PJM Interconnection should upgrades to the system not be made within the near future.

DATED: January 14, 2010


Robert F. Powelson
Commissioner