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COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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July 29, 2025

The Honorable Chris Wright
Secretary
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Secretary Wright:

I write to request information regarding the Department of Energy's decision to terminate the conditional loan guarantee made to the Grain Belt Express—an interregional transmission project that has been in development for more than a decade. The Department's decision to abruptly terminate the conditional loan guarantee raises serious questions about the legality of the termination and this Administration's commitment to bringing down energy costs for millions of Americans. The decision to cancel the project's loan guarantee appears to not have been based upon the merits of the project but rather comes as the result of a nonsensical witch hunt.

The Grain Belt Express transmission project is designed to meet the surging energy demands facing the country. Once complete, the project will deliver clean, affordable energy generated mostly from wind farms in Kansas across the Midwest—spanning four states, stretching over 578 miles, and connecting three regional grids.¹ The project is expected to deliver 5 gigawatts of power to Missouri, Indiana, and the Mid-Atlantic and save consumers more than \$52 billion over 15 years.² Additionally, the project is a jobs creator. The project is expected to create over 4,000 jobs³ and has reportedly already secured buyers for the power it expects to deliver.⁴ Grain Belt

¹ "LPO Announces Conditional Commitment to Grain Belt Express to Construct High-Voltage Direct Current Transmission Project," U.S. Department of Energy, November 25, 2024. <https://www.energy.gov/lpo/articles/lpo-announces-conditional-commitment-grain-belt-express-construct-high-voltage-direct>; "Energy Dept. Cancels Loan Commitment to Contested Transmission Project," The New York Times, July 23, 2025. <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/07/23/climate/grain-belt-express-energy-department-loan.html>.

² "Major Midwest transmission line gets a big but uncertain federal boost," Canary Media, December 3, 2024. <https://www.canarymedia.com/articles/transmission/major-midwest-transmission-line-gets-a-big-but-uncertain-federal-boost>; "A \$7B power line from Kansas to Indiana moves closer to reality," Canary Media, October 20, 2023. <https://www.canarymedia.com/articles/transmission/a-7b-power-line-from-kansas-to-indiana-moves-closer-to-reality>.

³ "Grain Belt Express Awards \$1.7B to U.S. Contractors Quanta and Kiewit to Build Largest Transmission Line in U.S. History," Grain Belt Express. <https://grainbeltexpress.com/grain-belt-express-awards-1-7b-to-u-s-contractors-quanta-and-kiewit-to-build-largest-transmission-line-in-u-s-history/>.

⁴ "Major Midwest transmission line gets a big but uncertain federal boost," Canary Media, December 3, 2024. <https://www.canarymedia.com/articles/transmission/major-midwest-transmission-line-gets-a-big-but-uncertain-federal-boost>.

Express has also awarded \$1.7 in contracts to help develop the transmission line.⁵

Recognizing the importance of clean, reliable, and affordable energy, in November 2024, the Department's Loan Program's Office announced a conditional commitment for a loan of \$4.9 billion to the Grain Belt Express project. At the time, the Department explained its decision to extend the conditional commitment, stating, "[d]eveloping [high-voltage direct current] transmission is essential to helping us add more energy to the grid faster and expanding transmission capacity across the nation."⁶ However, just days ago and without explanation, the Department announced that it had terminated the conditional loan guarantee, contending "the conditions necessary to issue the guarantee are unlikely to be met and it is not critical for the federal government to have a role in supporting this project."⁷ I am troubled by the Department's decision to terminate the conditional commitment. A conditional commitment represents a legally binding contract, on behalf of the U.S. Government, to deliver obligated funds. Not only am I concerned that this move is illegal, but I am concerned that the federal government is eroding what little trust the private sector has in our ability to be reliable partners.

Transmission lines are not built overnight and can take over a decade to complete.⁸ It is no secret that the country is in dire need of transmission infrastructure.⁹ At a hearing last month, you conceded as much, stating, "the United States needs to build more energy infrastructure of all kinds and certainly including transmission lines."¹⁰ Given this need and the length of time it takes to complete a transmission project, it is inexplicable that the Department would terminate the Grain Belt Express after more than a decade in the making.

⁵ "Grain Belt Express Awards \$1.7B to U.S. Contractors Quanta and Kiewit to Build Largest Transmission Line in U.S. History," Grain Belt Express. <https://grainbeltexpress.com/grain-belt-express-awards-1-7b-to-u-s-contractors-quanta-and-kiewit-to-build-largest-transmission-line-in-u-s-history/>. See also "Grain Belt Express awards \$1.7B to build largest transmission line in U.S. history," Columbia Daily Tribune, May 9, 2025. <https://www.columbiatribune.com/story/news/state/2025/05/09/grain-belt-express-to-build-largest-transmission-line-in-u-s-history/83512056007/>.

⁶ "LPO Announces Conditional Commitment to Grain Belt Express to Construct High-Voltage Direct Current Transmission Project," U.S. Department of Energy, November 25, 2024. <https://www.energy.gov/lpo/articles/lpo-announces-conditional-commitment-grain-belt-express-construct-high-voltage-direct>.

⁷ "Department of Energy Terminates Taxpayer-Funded Financial Assistance for Grain Belt Express," U.S. Department of Energy, June 23, 2025. <https://www.energy.gov/articles/departments-energy-terminates-taxpayer-funded-financial-assistance-grain-belt-express>

⁸ "Western transmission line breaks ground after 18-year wait," E&E News, <https://www.eenews.net/articles/western-transmission-line-breaks-ground-after-18-year-wait/>. See also "Building Transmission Takes Forever. The Biden Administration is Pushing to Change That," Missouri Independent, December 19, 2023. <https://missouriindependent.com/2023/12/19/building-transmission-takes-forever-the-biden-administration-is-pushing-to-change-that/#:~:text=Generally%2C%20it%20can%20take%2010%20years%20or,nearly%20two%20decades%2C%E2%80%9D%20Politico's%20E&E%20News%20reported.>

⁹ "National Transmission Needs Review," U.S. Department of Energy, <https://www.energy.gov/gdo/national-transmission-needs-study>.

¹⁰ "House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy Holds Hearing on Fiscal Year 2026 Department of Energy Budget Request," House Committee on Energy and Commerce, June 10, 2025.

To better understand the Department's decision to terminate the Grain Belt Express conditional loan guarantee, please provide the following information by August 12, 2025:

1. In announcing the termination of the conditional loan guarantee, the Department stated, “[a]fter a thorough review of the project’s financials, DOE found that the conditions necessary to issue the guarantee are unlikely to be met.”¹¹ What conditions are unlikely to be met and why have you come to that determination? In responding to this question, please also provide the following information:
 - a. A copy of the conditions precedent established in the loan agreement;
 - b. A detailed and justified explanation of the specified conditions precedent that the Department has determined the project to have failed;
 - c. A copy of the agreed upon timeline that the project had to meet the conditions precedent and a confirmation of the amount of time remaining for the project to meet its obligations; and
 - d. The length of time the Department conducted the review and the factors it considered.
2. Please describe whether the Department conducted an analysis to understand the implications on energy reliability, prices, and jobs before terminating the conditional commitment. If the Department did conduct such an analysis, please provide a copy of the analysis to the Committee. If the Department did not, please explain why the decision was made to not conduct such an analysis.
3. According to the Department, it is “conducting a review of every applicant and borrower – including the nearly \$100 billion in closed loans and conditional commitments LPO made between Election Day 2024 to Inauguration Day 2025.”¹² Please provide a comprehensive list of all closed loans and conditional commitments the Department is reviewing.

Should you have any questions, please contact my staff at (202) 224-4971.

Sincerely,



Martin Heinrich
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

¹¹ “Department of Energy Terminates Taxpayer-Funded Financial Assistance for Grain Belt Express,” U.S. Department of Energy, June 23, 2025. <https://www.energy.gov/articles/departments-energy-terminates-taxpayer-funded-financial-assistance-grain-belt-express>

¹² Id.