

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

The Preservation of Rural Iowa Alliance

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## **THE PRESERVATION OF RURAL IOWA ALLIANCE**

**PRESS RELEASE - 2/13/2015**

### **Iowa Utilities Board Ruling issued an order today denying Rock Island Clean Line's "Motion to Consider Eminent Domain Issue in a Separate Hearing"**

This ruling is an important step in maintaining the rights of property owners across the state of Iowa. If this project were to be approved - the use of eminent domain to take private property would be the largest taking of private property in Iowa's history.

The Iowa Utilities Board (IUB) ruling states:

The constitutional due process concerns alone are sufficient to justify denial of the motion. Even if it is assumed that those concerns could be addressed by clear notices, splitting the hearing would still improve the convenience of a few parties while detrimentally affecting the convenience of many others, particularly the affected landowners. The Board will deny the motion to consider eminent domain issues in a separate proceeding.

The IUB Gold Memo states:

Staff agrees: Clean Line has not demonstrated that the convenience of the parties will be improved by bifurcation. It has, at best, shown that Clean Line's convenience (and costs) would be benefited, but at the same time landowner interests would be detrimentally affected.

Attorney for The Preservation of Rural Iowa Alliance, Justin LaVan states; "Thousands of Iowa landowners appreciate the IUB's extensive review of such motions and ruling issued today. This ruling was significant. If the hearing was bifurcated and the Board issued the franchises and determined the route following the first hearing, RICL's negotiating leverage over the landowners would have been prejudicially powerful."

The Preservation of Rural Iowa Alliance (PRIA), President Carolyn Sheridan states; "Rock Island Clean Line easement acquisition effort has been underway for 18 months for the 375 Iowa miles of its proposed route, but RICL has less than 15% voluntary easements obtained from total parcels (1540) across the 16 impacted counties in Iowa. There is an unprecedented number (1248 and counting) of formal objections filed with the IUB against RICL proposed line.

The Alliance advocates on behalf of landowners, families, businesses and community members and is committed to using the resources necessary to protect private property rights of land owners.

The IUB Ruling can be found at:

<https://efs.iowa.gov/cs/groups/external/documents/docket/mdaw/mjkz/~edisp/293879.pdf>

The IUB Gold memo can be found

at: <https://efs.iowa.gov/cs/groups/external/documents/docket/mdaw/mjkz/~edisp/293935.pdf>