

Monday 15 October 2012

Lisa Depies, Editor
Geneseo Republic
108 W First Street
Geneseo, IL 61254

Re: Letter to the Editor

Lisa Depies, Editor:

The battle is heating up between landowners and farmers defending their land against the incursion of private investors and companies such as Rock Island Clean Line (RICL). RICL has the money and PR to make their proposed high-power lines sound like a good thing for Illinois. Unfortunately, too many of our politicians are being seduced by the Almighty Dollar and are ignoring the following facts:

1. Most farmers love their land more than they do the dollars they are told their land is worth. They will not willingly sell easement rights to any company that wants to run high-voltage lines through their property.
2. RICL's main objective is to get power to the East coast where the need is much higher than Illinois. Illinois should take the same stand against RICL as 10 governors in the East have. We need to develop local clean energy, which will encourage local entrepreneurs and businesses to grow. Any jobs RICL brings to the state will be temporary and much smaller in number.
3. If the ICC determines that we really do need out-of-state power lines to run through our state, then there needs to be a state-wide comprehensive plan on how best to set up this infra-structure so as to do the least possible damage to our state's most valuable resources-agricultural land. RICL isn't the only power company with plans to run power lines across our farmland. Others are planning to do the same thing. We cannot let them take the path of least resistance (i.e. farmers) and put up these lines wherever they want.

We need politicians who have the courage and vision to take the time to examine this issue more carefully, and not make a quick decision to get in bed with these companies – as did our Henry County board this past August - just because “we need the money”.

This is a much bigger issue than simply “not in my back yard”. Please get informed, and then by all means, get out and vote in true public servants who have the courage to do the right thing, even if there is no immediate dollar reward. Those who worship the dollar will fall when the dollar falls. Those who do what it says on our dollar -”In God We Trust” -will fight for His land of which we have been made stewards.

Bruce Jones