RESOLUTION NO. 2026-27

Opposing the Proposed Midcontinent Grid Solutions (MGS) Transmission Line Routes Through Jefferson County

Executive Summary

Midcontinent Grid Solutions (MGS) has proposed a 765-kilovolt transmission line – known as the BECI project – intended to run approximately 190 miles across southern Wisconsin, including potential routes through Jefferson County. Jefferson County officials along with affected property owners were contacted with information about the project in August. MGS has requested public input on their proposed route alternatives before submitting to the Public Service Commission (PSC) for approval.

The Executive Committee discussed the BECI project at its meeting on August 26, 2026. After receiving public comment and following the committee's deliberation, the Executive Committee directed the County Administrator and Corporation Counsel to prepare a Resolution opposing the current route alternatives and requesting additional consideration on a series of topics. A motion to bring this Resolution to the full County Board of Supervisors passed unanimously.

WHEREAS, the Executive Summary is incorporated into this Resolution, and

WHEREAS, the Jefferson County Board of Supervisors has reviewed the proposed routes for the 765-kV BECI transmission line project, and

WHEREAS, the proposed transmission corridors would require the construction of steel towers roughly 175-200 feet tall and easements approximately 180 feet wide, posing significant and permanent impacts to Jefferson County's agricultural lands, natural resources, rural character, historic and cultural sites, residential properties, and tourism assets, and

WHEREAS, MGS has acknowledged that no final route has been selected, and has requested detailed public and local government feedback to inform route adjustments before its Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) application is filed with the PSC in early 2027, and

WHEREAS, the County recognizes that early engagement is the most effective means of preventing harmful route placement and ensuring that County concerns form part of the record before the PSC's route-review process begins in earnest, and

WHEREAS, Jefferson County staff have already communicated written concerns regarding county lands and county operations to MGS, and

WHEREAS, through multiple plans, policies, ordinances, and practices, Jefferson County is committed to protecting farmland, groundwater resources, wildlife habitat, property values, and the health, safety, and welfare of its residents, all of which may be adversely affected by the

placement of new high-voltage transmission corridors where reasonable alternatives exist, and

WHEREAS, counties across the project area have begun adopting formal resolutions expressing opposition to the proposed MGS transmission line routes, including concerns that such routes may create new high-impact corridors instead of using existing utility, roadway, or railroad rights-of-way, and

WHEREAS, Wisconsin Statutes § 1.12 (6)(a)-(d) states that: "...[I]t is the policy of this state that, to the greatest extend feasible that is consistent with economic and engineering considerations, reliability of the electric system, and protection of the environment, the following corridors should be utilized in the following order of priority: (a) Existing utility corridors. (b) Highway and railroad corridors. (c) Recreational trails, to the extent that the facilities may be constructed below ground and that the facilities do not significantly impact environmentally sensitive areas. (d) New corridors." and

WHEREAS, Wisconsin Statutes § 196.491 (3)(d) states conditions that must be determined to be met by the PSC before a CPCN can be issued, such as "the design and location or route is in the public interest considering alternative sources of supply, alternative locations or routes, individual hardships, engineering, economic, safety, reliability and environmental factors," that this proposed line must "[provide] usage, service or increased regional reliability benefits to the wholesale and retail customers or members in this state," that "[the] proposed facility will not have undue adverse impact on other environmental values such as, but not limited to, ecological balance, public health and welfare, historic sites, geological formations, the aesthetics of land and water and recreational use," and that "[the] proposed facility will not unreasonably interfere with the orderly land use and development plans for the area involved," and

WHEREAS, Jefferson County believes that any transmission system expansion should minimize harm by prioritizing existing corridors, avoiding sensitive environmental areas, and thoroughly evaluating less disruptive alternatives.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Jefferson County Board of Supervisors formally opposes any proposed MGS transmission line route that would create new high-impact corridors through Jefferson County, including routes that would:

- Disrupt agricultural operations, farmland preservation areas, or ag-enterprise zones;
- Impact residential neighborhoods or cause avoidable reductions in property values;
- Cross environmentally sensitive areas, including wetlands, groundwater recharge regions, wildlife habitats, and cold-water streams;
- Impair the scenic, cultural, historic, or recreational resources of the County;
- Create health, safety, or emergency-services burdens on Jefferson County communities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Jefferson County Board of Supervisors urges MGS to:

1. Prioritize existing transmission, utility, transportation, and rail corridors;
2. Conduct comprehensive environmental, cultural, property-value, and public-impact analyses;
3. Meaningfully incorporate County and landowner input into route removals and

adjustments;

4. Engage in transparent communication with Jefferson County officials and residents throughout all stages of route development.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Jefferson County Clerk is hereby directed to provide a copy of this Resolution to the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin, the Governor of Wisconsin, members of the Wisconsin State Legislature who represent Jefferson County, and Midcontinent Grid Solutions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Jefferson County Administrator provide this Resolution to PSC as part the CPCN application once the docket on this project opens.

Fiscal Note: Passage of this resolution has no determinable fiscal impact.

Strategic Plan Reference: YES



Highly Regarded Quality of Life: Continue developing recreational, historical, and cultural resources that build on emerging recreational trends and enhance positive user experiences; Promote Jefferson County's historical, cultural, and natural assets to attract tourists and stimulate local businesses
Intentional Economic Growth: Strengthen support systems for existing businesses, which includes farming/agricultural businesses
Transformative Government: Develop an inclusive, proactive, and efficient government to drive positive change; Support health and wellbeing of staff and citizens of all ages

Voice Vote - Passed

Referred By:
Executive Committee 09-08-2026

REVIEWED: Corporation Counsel: DHT Finance Director: MAD