

My name is Kathleen Doran-Norton. I am chair of the Bridgewater Township board in Rice County, and I am on the CETF mailing list.

Since we won't know where the high transmission line corridors will be until the very last stage, I won't go on about the Heath Creek wildlife and recreational greenway plan in our township that is shaded by the potential corridor plan. I'm sure those beautiful spaces exist throughout our state and throughout the potential route.

I have gone to two public meetings on the CAPX project. There are some aspects of the plan which sound like excellent ideas, and worth whatever rate increase to rate payers there might be. Upgrading aging sub-stations to allow for routing electricity from source to need is a good idea. I understand old sub-stations restrict energy deployment to one strategy – point-to-point, and that the aging equipment is energy inefficient. We've seen incidents where multiple states are browned-out because of aging grids and sub-stations, and both presidential candidates include grid upgrades in their energy proposals.

But there are aspects of the plan which are confusing. The public meetings I have attended had large posters emphasizing wind on the wires. But the line will only allow a maximum of 25 - possibly 30% - wind energy, even though there is wind energy production many times that requesting transmission.

All the presentations assumed that electrical need would grow, and that increased energy consumption was a given. That makes sense. Power companies know how to make more power. I'm guessing energy conservation was not really included in the plan because power companies don't know how to produce conservation.

In one of the presentations, I heard the wires are hot - 300 degrees. That heat translates to 15-20% power loss. It makes me wonder whether long distance energy distribution is really efficient.

The plan misses some important elements. My community is very interested in alternate energy. The St. Olaf wind turbine is within our township, and the Carleton College wind turbine is just east of us, and there will be more large and small wind turbines and other alternate energy producers built within our community. Interest in community based energy is growing.

Generations ago there was a 'rural electrification' effort. A new version of that would power and empower our small communities, not these plans that start in the Dakotas to send coal power to Wisconsin and Illinois, and bypass the communities in the middle. Where is the plan for local on-ramps in this interstate powerway?

This plan needs a different focus - giving small rural communities some benefit for the cost of this energy plan.