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WES VIRDELL
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT FIFTY-THREE

January 6, 2026

Texas Public Utility Commission

1701 N. Congress Avenue

Austin, Texas 78701

To the Commissioners of the Public Utility Commission,

I am writing to express my great disappointment and firm opposition to the plan to run the largest power lines in Texas through the Hill Country using eminent domain. Let me be clear: this is not a necessary evil; it is a choice to use the power of the government to sidestep the free market and steal land from Texas citizens.

The only reason to choose eminent domain is because the state knows it cannot win in a fair negotiation. It knows it would have to pay a reasonable price for easements, compensate for the devalued property, and face the unified objection of Hill Country residents. Eminent domain is an egregious act being weaponized by private companies who use the government as a tool for theft.

Every person with a moral compass should be fighting against this. I can only assume that anyone assisting in this process would loudly object if it were their own land on the line. At some point, we need leaders who will quit being "yes men" and start saying, "Not on my watch!"

We saw this same failure of courage during the COVID-19 pandemic, when so many bowed to corrupt mandates that violated human rights and destroyed businesses. I hope we have learned from that mistake. I truly hope people will stand up now instead of taking a knee. We cannot idly sit by while any government tramples on the rights of its citizens.

Life, Liberty, and Property. These are the building blocks of our country. To advocate for the theft of property is to stand against the very moral fiber upon which this nation was built. The PUCT must take a step back and reevaluate whether it wants to be an agent of progress or an agent of theft against its own citizens.



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I have seen the free market work. I watched Florida Power & Light use it to install powerlines in my home county, and it worked great. The free market is a proven solution; it just costs more in the short term than stealing land. In the long term, the theft of property costs our entire country, as it dooms us to failure and destroys all confidence in a government meant to protect our rights.

I implore you to look at existing corridors and utilize the free market. Take this letter and the will of the people seriously before you trample on the rights of your fellow Texans. If you want this country to be here for our grandchildren, it is imperative that you protect every citizen's rights to life, liberty, and property.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wes Virdell", written over a horizontal line.

Wes Virdell
State Representative, House District 53