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Commissioner

ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION

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ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSIONER ANDY TOBIN VOTES TO APPROVE \$2.2 BILLION RURAL ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT

(PHOENIX) - "Over the past two days, I have heard from rural Arizonans who will be significantly affected by the SunZia project--a proposed \$2.2 billion electricity transmission line that will span 515 miles from northeastern New Mexico to central Arizona.

After much thought and consideration, I voted with the majority in a 3-2 Arizona Corporation Commission decision to issue a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility (CEC) to SunZia. Acquiring a CEC is the last major hurdle for construction of transmission lines in Arizona. The Commission's decision will enable SunZia to move forward with its plans to build these lines that will help rural Arizona and also strengthen the electrical grid without cost to taxpayers. Governor Doug Ducey sent me to the Commission to protect Arizona's resources and grow an economy. The SunZia project aligns with those goals.

A bipartisan coalition of rural county supervisors, including Robert Corbell from Greenlee County, Drew John from Graham County, and Pete Rios from Pinal County, all of whom represent areas through which the SunZia project will impact directly, testified before the Commission how much their counties would benefit from SunZia. Rural state legislators and local Natural Resource Conservation Districts, ranchers, and others felt that the SunZia project was their chance for economic development and job creation--2,200 Arizona jobs--with minimal environmental impact. Even Arizona's own environmental agencies agreed that the proposed SunZia route was the best route for the Commission to approve.

Sadly, President Obama and his Bureau of Land Management provided the Commission with only one route from which to choose and limited the opportunity for Arizonans to have a voice in the process. This Commission listened to all sides over a two-day period, and prior to the Commission's consideration of the SunZia project, Arizonans were also heard by the state's Line Siting Committee for 13 days. Throughout all of this public input, it was clear to me that the SunZia project can provide an opening, especially for rural Arizona, to broaden our state's energy supply and spur economic development."

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