

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 20, 2024

The Honorable Jennifer Granholm
Secretary, U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Secretary Granholm,

As members of the Iowa and Illinois Congressional delegations, we are writing to you today in support of the joint application between the Iowa Economic Development Authority, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, and SOO Green HVDC Link Project Co LLC for Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnerships (GRIP) Program funding under the Grid Innovation Program. The applicants have requested that the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) provide 10% of the project cost, \$500 million, with a commitment from SOO Green to provide the remaining 90% of the funds.

The SOO Green HVDC Link is an underground high-voltage direct current (HVDC) transmission line project seeking to connect MISO (Mid-Continent Independent System Operator) and PJM (Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland), the two largest electricity markets in the country. SOO Green's project is uniquely capable of meeting the funding requirements set forth by the Department of Energy for the Grid Innovation Program. In fact, SOO Green's efforts are in sync with all five of the grant program's primary objectives.

The SOO Green HVDC Link accomplishes the program's first three objectives by elevating grid reliability, increasing collaboration between eligible electrical entities, and strengthening grid resilience in the following ways. First, the project offers PJM customers the opportunity to purchase low-carbon electricity when local demand exceeds production. As outages from severe weather and other events remain a concern around the country, SOO Green's HVDC Link will serve as a trustworthy and reliable lifeline. Second, this linkage of MISO and PJM represents a first-of-its-kind advancement in interconnection and grid collaboration and one that can serve as an example and catalyst for future projects based on this model. Third, SOO Green's project offers a path to improved resilience by burying such a major transmission line multiple feet underground, meaning the risk for operational failure from extreme weather events drops to almost zero.

Fourth, independent analysis suggests the project could provide a total of direct and indirect benefits of \$13.7 billion for the state of Iowa, increasing the state's economic output by \$1 billion during construction and almost \$74 million in annual economic growth. Further, Iowa residents could see \$725 million in new earnings during construction and over \$11.3 million in new long-term earnings annually from transmission line operations. State and local taxing districts will also generate over \$46.1 million over 30 years.

In Illinois, the project is estimated to unlock over \$34 billion in social benefits, including: \$13.5 billion in wholesale power savings; \$9.8 billion in health benefits to Illinois residents; and \$9.7 billion in emissions reduction in Illinois. It could also increase economic output by \$783 million during construction and over \$74.7 million in annual economic growth. Further, Illinois residents could see \$515 million in new earnings during construction and over \$17.3 million in new long-term earnings annually from transmission line operations. State and local taxing districts will also generate over \$3.7 million over 30 years.


Fifth and finally, the DOE has prioritized decarbonizing the broader energy system. By providing low-carbon wind energy to large population centers throughout PJM's footprint, SOO Green's project will enable MISO to do its part in meeting these goals.

SOO Green has worked in partnership with landowners and communities along the proposed route, including outreach to disadvantaged communities along the pathway to include them in the process and ensure they equitably benefit from the

project. Agreements have been negotiated with Canadian Pacific Railway to run the transmission line along the railroad rights-of-way. Finally, SOO Green is on track to acquire all necessary permits and approvals from state and federal authorities.

The benefits of this project are significant; we request that the Energy Department seriously consider approving the SOO Green HVDC Link application for grant funding through the Grid Innovation Program, in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



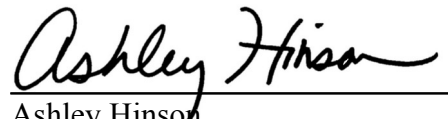
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Member of Congress



Randy Feenstra
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