

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 4/9/25

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AN RLIJ RESPONSE TO THE BOUSSELOT CO₂ PIPELINE AMENDMENT

Des Moines, IA - The Republican Legislative Intervenors for Justice (RLIJ) express deep disappointment and concern over the recent BousseLOT amendment to HF639, the carbon pipeline bill. HF639's original language made it a strong bill designed to protect Iowa landowners from the unconstitutional use of eminent domain for CO₂ pipelines. However efforts from the Senate amendment, spearheaded by Senator BousseLOT, undermines these protections.

Of top concern, the amendment expands the scope of the original bill beyond CO₂ pipelines to all utilities – including oil and natural gas pipelines, transmission lines, and power generation. This is expected to be largely rejected by Iowa utility companies and rightfully so – it is unnecessary and offers no real landowner protection. This amendment appears to be a poison pill, drawing opposition from common carriers not originally included with the intent to kill the bill.

This amendment also forces the Iowa Utilities Commission (IUC) to make a final decision within one year. This gives Summit an enormous advantage by shortening the time landowners have to organize, understand the project, and prepare a legal defense. Even if IUC members fail to attend meetings as was required in the original bill, Summit could gain automatic approval without a hearing once the deadline passes.

Further still, this amendment allows Summit to seek easements outside the notification corridor without restarting the process, bypassing proper landowner notification and allowing major reroutes without landowner input. This could also allow Summit to utilize easements purchased by Navigator after their project was canceled.

Other key protections that were removed include: defining a common carrier more narrowly to prevent private companies from using eminent domain; requiring carbon pipeline companies to provide insurance for landowners; and allowing citizens with a minimally plausible interest to intervene in proceedings.

Over the last several years, the Iowa House has fought to uphold landowners' rights and prevent the misuse of eminent domain by advancing multiple bills to the Senate, including HF943 and HF639. Despite strong support, these measures have been repeatedly blocked or significantly weakened in the Senate. Their inability to advance HF943, combined with the harmful changes made to HF639, results in a complete failure to address eminent domain abuse. Landowners across Iowa have rightfully dubbed this amendment "Summit's Bill of Rights" because it streamlines the approval process for CO₂ pipelines while removing critical protections for property owners.

Members of the Legislative Interveners will continue to fight for the property rights of Iowans and push to amend HF639 back to its original form while working to incorporate the outright ban on the use of eminent domain for CO2 pipelines. Members of the RLIJ will not accept empty gestures when it comes to protecting the fundamental property rights of the citizens of Iowa.

The Intervenor include Senator Doug Campbell, Representative Judd Lawler, Representative Craig Williams, Representative Samantha Fett, Representative Sam Wengryn, Representative Jennifer Smith, Representative Travis Sitzmann, Representative Jason Gearhart, Senator Kevin Alons, Senator Rocky De Witt, Senator Lynn Evans, Senator Jesse Green, Senator Dennis Guth, Senator Mark Lofgren, Senator David Rowley, Senator Sandy Salmon, Senator Jason Schultz, Senator Jeff Taylor, Senator Cherielynn Westrich, Representative Eddie Andrews, Representative Brooke Boden, Representative Steven Bradley, Representative Mark Cisneros, Representative Zach Dieken, Representative Dean Fisher, Representative Dan Gehlbach, Representative Thomas Gerhold, Representative Cindy Golding, Representative Helena Hayes, Representative Bob Henderson, Representative Steven Holt, Representative Heather Hora, Representative Thomas Jeneary, Representative Bobby Kaufmann, Representative Joshua Meggers, Representative Jeff Shipley, Representative Henry Stone, Representative Mark Thompson, Representative Charles Thomson, Representative Skyler Wheeler, and Representative Derek Wulf.

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