

October 12, 2015

IOWA UTILITIES BOARD

STATE OF IOWA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
BEFORE THE IOWA UTILITIES BOARD

IN RE:)
) Docket No. HLP-2014-0001
DAKOTA ACCESS LLC)

DIRECT TESTIMONY OF

Rhiannon Chance Hanson

ON BEHALF OF

The Science and Environmental Health Network

OCTOBER 12, 2015

EXHIBIT SEHN-RH-1

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9 DIRECT TESTIMONY OF Rhiannon Chance Hanson

10 Q. Please tell us your name and where you currently live?

11 A. Rhiannon Hanson, Ames, Iowa

12 Q. Are you an enrolled member of the Mandan, Hidatsa and
13 Arikara Nation otherwise known as the MHA Nation?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Are these tribes known for the hospitality they offered
16 Lewis and Clark and where they met Sakakawea?

17 A. Yes they are known for that.

18 Q. Does the MHA Nation have any experience with fracking and
19 drilling in the Bakken oil fields?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Are you aware of any promises made to the tribes comprising
22 the MHA Nation by the oil or pipeline companies in exchange
23 for fracking tribal lands?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. What kinds of promises were made to the tribe?

26 A. We were promised jobs, economic growth both personal and
27 community wide, educational funding due to community growth,
28 health care improvements, water safety, final decisions in

1 the location and number of sites on reservation land, and no
2 undue intrusions on private residences or properties.

3 **Q. Were those promises kept?**

4 A. Not one.

5 **Q. Please describe the impacts on the poverty rate, murder**
6 **rate, rape rate or any other impacts resulting from the**
7 **fracking and transportation of oil from your tribal lands.**

8 A. The rates of poverty, murder, rape, and suicide have risen
9 in direct relation to fracking and transportation of oil.
10 Poverty levels have risen due to inability to grow enough
11 food or hunt for enough meat. The wildlife is disturbed and
12 chased away from the normal hunting sites, as are the people.
13 Migration patterns of duck and goose have changed due to the
14 constant light at night from the flares. Also there have
15 been deaths of children from the trucks flying along roads
16 that had never before witnessed that amount or speed of
17 traffic. Food is more expensive due to the inability of the
18 land to sustain all of the new population. Health care
19 resources are strained due to the number of injuries and
20 illnesses caused by poverty, rape, suicide attempts, and the
21 requirement of services for the gas and oil workers who are
22 moved into the area.

23 **Q. Are you personally aware of any murders or acts of violence**
24 **against your friends or family?**

1 A.I am aware of the beating and intimidation of an elder who
2 did not want men on her land looking for oil. They forced her
3 into her home and beat her to the point of unconsciousness.
4 Her family had to take her to a place not her home to protect
5 her. Her land is now being fracked. I am aware of the murder
6 of a young man who protested fracking. He "overdosed" on a
7 drug he had never before used at 32 years old. He was last
8 seen in a bar talking to friends about the mood on the
9 reservation toward fracking and the pipeline. I am aware of
10 children intimidated and threatened for not showing the
11 proper respect to an oil worker. I am aware of a gang rape
12 in retaliation for a young woman's brother not wanting to
13 help move drugs for a gang of oil workers. I am still trying
14 to help her find her voice. She is terrified to speak.

15 **Q. Please describe the environmental impacts on areas used by**
16 **your tribe for hunting, fishing, gathering of plants and other**
17 **activities**

18 A. We no longer have access to many areas where we would have
19 once gathered our natural healing roots and herbs and berries.
20 They are protected from the tribes for the protection of the
21 fracking sites. The wildlife has been chased away making
22 hunting something we cannot rely on. That with the increased
23 cost of food adds to the poverty and malnutrition. Our water
24 tables are changing. We do not have access to sacred places

1 of prayer because the pipeline has now run through them and
2 it is protected.

3 **Q. Have there been any lawsuits or criminal activity involving**
4 **politicians stealing from the tribe or indicted for murder in**
5 **order to promote fracking and selling oil from tribal lands?**

6 A. Yes. Murder for hire, fraud, intimidation, assault, theft.
7 A tribal leader is still under investigation for all of the
8 above. A man of power who had the ability to see and make
9 the right decision is now anathema to his own people. Another
10 man, his business partner, has been indicted on charges of
11 murder for hire. His trial was supposed to begin in July of
12 this year.

13 **Q. In your opinion did the fracking and transportation of oil**
14 **benefit your tribe? What is the basis for your opinion about**
15 **the benefit or lack thereof to the tribe?**

16 A. No it did not benefit my tribe. It has forced us to try
17 to sustain a population that we cannot sustain. It has
18 exposed our children to dangers that they had not been exposed
19 to before. It has put us in the position of being the
20 conquered, in our own land. It has changed our ability to
21 gather water and food. It has brought fear into the lives of
22 our elders who have spent their lives teaching us what is
23 right and wrong. And we know it is a threat in and of itself
24 to the future survival of our children and land.

1 **Q. Are you aware of any "promises" made to Iowa regarding**
2 **jobs, taxes and other benefits to Iowa?**

3 A. Yes. Jobs, economic growth both personal and community
4 wide, guaranteed water safety, final decisions in the number
5 and location of sites, and no undue use of Eminent Domain.

6 **Q. Given your experience with the promises made to your tribe**
7 **specifically and North Dakota more generally, do you expect**
8 **Dakota Access' promises to be fulfilled in Iowa?**

9 A. The promises cannot be fulfilled. It is impossible. Water
10 safety is impossible to promise in the face of this pipeline.
11 Jobs will not be locally filled, they can't be, our local
12 workforce does not have the experience.

13 **Q. Based on your observations and experience in the Bakken**
14 **area, why do you oppose the construction of the Dakota Access**
15 **pipeline?**

16 A.I oppose the destruction of land and the immediate imminent
17 threat of failure of the pipeline once it is placed. I have
18 not yet found a pipeline that has been placed and has not
19 failed or caused an environmental disaster.

20 **Q. Are you a mother and grandmother?**

21 A. Yes.

22 **Q. Are you providing this testimony on behalf of your children**
23 **and grandchildren? If so, why?**

1 A. I am. I do this because my responsibility to future
2 generations is to speak for their health and ability to be
3 stewards of the land. Their rights to a land that can sustain
4 life are inarguable.

5 **Q. Does this conclude your prepared testimony?**

6 A. It does.