March 4, 2019

Mayor J.C. Cook
City of Clemson
1250 Tiger Boulevard
Clemson, SC 29631

Dear Mayor Cook,

I am writing to address some of the issues that have arisen because of the selected location of Duke Energy's Death Valley substation. As you may recall from the presentation made by Clemson University to Clemson City Council on May 5, 2017, the Death Valley substation and transmission line upgrade project is a system reliability enhancement project needed to support future energy growth for the City of Clemson and the surrounding communities. This new substation will be located on the eastern most point of Clemson University property off Pendleton Road, closest to the load center – a rapidly growing area where the demand for electricity is increasing significantly.

The current site location was selected after the university and Duke Energy considered community opposition and other feedback to the location of a combined heat and power ("CHP") plant and a larger substation on a site closer to residential neighborhoods. Because of that earlier feedback, Duke Energy worked with the university on a plan to relocate the CHP to a more central location. We also decided to relocate the substation. Given various constraints, including the limited site options, it became necessary to construct two rather than a single large substation as originally contemplated. One of the substations will serve the university and the other (the Death Valley substation) the City of Clemson and surrounding communities.

Duke Energy conducted a siting study to determine the best location for the Death Valley substation and determined two sites were the best possibilities. Site A, which was the same site as the location of the original CHP site, and Site B, the armory ballfield. After discussions with Clemson University, Site B met both Duke Energy's needs as well as the university's needs.

Duke Energy's site evaluation process was extensive. We used multiple criteria to identify the best available options with the least overall impacts to the environment, residents, businesses and the community. Our team worked with university representatives to evaluate which site ultimately worked best for all parties. That is not to say any option we evaluated would have zero impacts, but our process balanced all quantifiable impacts -- from environmental to visual -- to identify the best overall option. The intended site off Pendleton Road, on the former armory property, emerged as the only remaining feasible option for this critical infrastructure that struck that balance, met both the university and Duke Energy's criteria and allowed us to bring the much-needed enhancement to the local electrical system in the City of Clemson.

Since plans were shared with the city in 2017, the field investigation as well as final engineering for both the transmission line upgrade and the new substation have been completed. To meet the projected load demand of the local community and to prevent our existing Summey Street substation currently serving this area of the city from becoming overloaded, the project must move forward as planned and remain on schedule. Any substantive redesign of the line or substation would delay the project by at least two years which would not meet Duke Energy's obligations to reliably serve our customers. It should be noted that during the design process,

Duke Energy worked with the university to create landscaping and screening plans to limit visibility and improve the overall appearance as much as possible.

We are taking our neighbors' questions and concerns about the transmission line upgrade and Death Valley project seriously. We have responded to emails and phone calls daily. We have launched a website – www.duke-energy.com/deathvalley - that provides, among other information, the following: frequently asked questions, renderings of the substation with 'before and after' photos, electric and magnetic fields (EMF) information, and contact information for any interested party to contact our project team for additional information. We have mailed letters to our closest neighbors about the project and placed a "Reliability Enhancement" sign on the property which includes the website and contact information for anyone to obtain additional information about Duke Energy's projects. We have held two in-person meetings with some of our closest neighbors to the substation site and other community members to answer their questions.

We are in the early stages of construction for the transmission line project and we estimate starting construction of the new substation in the coming months. We are currently building a temporary transmission line within Duke Energy's existing right-of-way which should be completed this spring. This line will then allow us to take the existing line out of service to rebuild and upgrade it. Concurrently, the substation construction is to begin late spring/early summer such that both related projects will be completed and placed into service by the summer 2020 to meet the city's growing electrical demand.

We are confident that Duke Energy and the City of Clemson will continue to enjoy the productive partnership we have had for many decades, and I know we all want what is best for this rapidly growing community. Our goals are simple: To ensure the economic vitality of the Clemson area by providing the necessary infrastructure (electric capacity) for a growing community, and to ensure that our customers in the region continue to enjoy the comfort of knowing that the energy that powers their lives will be there when they need it.

Many thanks,

Kodwo Ghartey-Tagoe
SC State President