

MISO Board of Directors  
Midcontinent Independent System Operator, Inc.  
701 City Center Drive  
Carmel, IN 46032

September 14, 2023

RE: Support for grid investments to enable Minnesota's 100% clean energy standard

Dear MISO Board of Directors:

We are a diverse group of stakeholders representing a broad cross-section of Minnesota, including renewable energy developers, environmental organizations, racial and economic justice groups, commercial and industrial customers, and energy trade associations. Together, we recognize the urgent need to upgrade our region's electricity infrastructure to achieve Minnesota's 100 percent clean energy standard. MISO has a key role to play in ensuring our regional grid will be capable of enabling Minnesota's clean energy transition while lowering costs and improving reliability. We urge MISO to double down on planning a transmission buildout to keep pace with our state's clean energy goals, update market policies to enable the clean energy transformation, and to ensure all Minnesotans can access the benefits of clean energy growth, including lower-cost, reliable power.

Last February, Governor Walz signed Senate File 4 and House File 7, committing Minnesota to reaching 100 percent carbon-free electricity by 2040. To achieve this goal, we need to put the transmission buildout on the fast-track and include increased energy storage capacity and other grid solutions. We know Minnesota can meet its electricity needs with reliable, low-cost, clean power. Minnesota is relying on our regional transmission organization to ensure the grid is up to the task.

The Long-Range Transmission Planning (LRTP) is a critical first step toward bringing the benefits of avoided costs and enhanced reliability to Minnesota ratepayers and will help accommodate more low-cost, clean electricity from wind and solar. However, the capacity from the first set of lines approved by the LRTP process, Tranche 1, has already been spoken for. Minnesota urgently needs additional transmission capacity, starting with the lines contemplated by MISO's Tranche 2 portfolio of grid projects. These lines need to be planned and approved quickly. Minnesota's 2030 requirement for public utilities operating in the state to be 80% carbon-free is fast-approaching.

There is much at stake. We cannot afford to wait until later this decade to make the investments needed to meet the standard. We urge MISO to move forward swiftly with transmission expansion—starting with a timely approval of an ambitious Tranche 2 portfolio—and other improvements to deliver much-needed reliability and economic gains and to ensure Minnesota residents can access the benefits of 100 percent carbon-free power by 2040. MISO should also consider equity in transmission planning and other critical policy decisions to support an equitable clean energy transition that helps displace polluting energy sources that create environmental injustices, supports workers, and increases grid resilience to climate change.

We're counting on MISO to address grid infrastructure and regional planning gaps that hinder clean energy and hold up its benefits as well as to update market policies to best support a reliable, clean grid. Minnesota's clean energy progress depends on the MISO system being a facilitator, not a barrier. We are calling on MISO to be a creative, solutions-oriented partner on the road to 100 percent carbon-free power in the state and to work closely with the state's utilities, regulators, and stakeholders to meet this moment. We look forward to working with MISO to realize 100% clean energy in Minnesota and across the Midwest.

Signed,

American Clean Power Association

Audubon Minnesota

Center for Rural Affairs

Center for Earth, Energy and Democracy (CEED)

Clean Energy Buyers Association

Clean Grid Alliance

Conservation Minnesota

EDF Renewables

Evergreen Collaborative

Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate

Land Stewardship Project

Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy

MN350 Action

Native Sun Community Power Development

Resilient Cities and Communities

Sierra Club North Star Chapter

Unidos MN

Vesper Energy

Waxwing Consulting, LLC

100% Campaign

Americans for a Clean Energy Grid

BayWa r.e.

Central Minnesota Audubon Society

Citizens' Climate Lobby Minnesota

Clean Energy Economy Minnesota (CEEM)

Climate Generation

Cooperative Energy Futures

Elders Climate Action Twin Cities Minnesota Chapter

Fresh Energy

ISAIAH

League of Women Voters Minnesota

MnSEIA

National Wildlife Federation

NRDC (Natural Resources Defense Council)

RWE Clean Energy

Solar Bear

Union of Concerned Scientists

Vote Solar

Zumbro Valley Audubon Society