

In the Matter of Minnesota Power's Petition for Approval of Modifications to its Large Power Tariff

PUC Docket Number: E015/M-26-126

LIUNA Minnesota and North Dakota submits this letter to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission ("Commission") in support of the request by Minnesota Power to withdraw a proposed very large customer class petition without prejudice; and to oppose requests by the Minnesota Department of Commerce ("DOC"), Minnesota Office of the Attorney General ("OAG"), Citizens Utility Board of Minnesota, CURE, and Large Power Intervenors for the Commission to condition withdrawal on changes to, or delayed consideration of, Minnesota Power's proposed Electric Service Agreement ("ESA") with Google for a new data center in Hermantown.

Last year, the Minnesota legislature enacted landmark legislation that set parameters for the Commission's consideration of tariffs and ESAs for new very large customers, as well as Carbon-Free Standards for obligated utilities that serve such new customers. Importantly, the law does not direct the Commission to evaluate all proposals to serve new data centers exclusively under new tariffs, but instead makes it clear that the Commission may do so through a tariff "or electric service agreement". (216B.1622 Sub. 2) The only procedural mandate imposed by the legislature is to "the definition and appropriate characteristics of a very large customer class or subclass for each public utility providing electric service" by December 15, 2026, and the Commission is allowed to do so in a rate case "or another proceeding." (216B.1622 Sub. 1)

In our view, development of a tariff appropriate to data centers and other new very large users may assist consideration of a proposed ESA for a new large data center, but it should not be a precondition for the Commission to approve an ESA that meets the standards established by the legislature and advances the public interest. The Commission has broad authority to use an iterative process that has served the public interest well over many areas of the Commission's jurisdiction.

In this case, an ESA that has been filed with the Commission covering Google's proposed data center in Hermantown provides a chance to help stabilize Minnesota Power's finances, fund the utility's carbon-free transition, attract billions of dollars worth of investment and thousands of jobs to Northern Minnesota, and save customers \$600 million to \$800 million over the next 15 years. The parties objecting to Minnesota Power's request for withdrawal have provided neither proof of a legislative requirement nor a policy justification for delaying the Commission's prompt consideration of the ESA. The Commission has full authority to decide when and how each proposed ESA will be reviewed, and we encourage Commissioners to prioritize timely evaluation of what could be a time-limited and historic opportunity for Northeast Minnesota.

We thank the Commission for your consideration and ask you to approve Minnesota Power's request to withdraw the current petition without prejudice and without conditioning the Commission's consideration of the proposed Google ESA.

Dated: June 2, 2026

Respectfully Submitted,
LIUNA Minnesota & North Dakota

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