

**Comments from Operating Engineers Local 49 and North Central States Regional Council
of Carpenters**

October 25, 2024

Mr. Will Seuffert
Executive Secretary
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
121 7th Place East, Suite 350
St. Paul, MN 55101

*In the Matter of the Application of Birch Coulee Solar LLC for a Site Permit of up to 125 MW
Birch Coulee Solar Project in Renville County, Minnesota (23-477)*

Dear Mr. Seuffert,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on this matter. As the Public Utilities Commission (Commission) is aware our members help build and maintain energy infrastructure around the state. We appreciate the opportunity to weigh in on the Environmental Assessment (EA) scoping.

This past year, Minnesota strengthened the permitting law regarding local economic impacts, requiring the Commission to consider the facility's local employment and economic impacts in determining whether or not to grant a facility a permit. As the Commission is aware projects like this have the opportunity, if done right, to provide good paying opportunities for workers. We would encourage the Department of Commerce (DOC) to include the study of local economic impacts in their EA. We look forward to having future discussions with the developer to discuss this topic as the project moves forward through the permitting process.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

Sincerely,

Nathan Runke, Regulatory and Political Affairs Coordinator, International Union of Operating Engineers Local 49

Richard Kolodziejski, Public Affairs Director, North Central States Regional Council of Carpenters