

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

July 11, 2025

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

### **Re: Letter of Support for Xcel's Blue Lake Energy Storage Project in Scott County, Minnesota (E002/ESS-25-214)**

Dear Commissioners,

On behalf of the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 49 and the North Central States Regional Council of Carpenters, which represents nearly 42,000 members across six states including Minnesota, we write to express our strong support for the application of Xcel Energy's 135.5 MW battery energy storage system permit in Scott County, MN.

As a union representing skilled tradespeople across the state, we recognize the critical importance of reliable, modern infrastructure to support Minnesota's energy needs. The proposed Blue Lake Battery Energy Storage Project, to be sited at the existing Blue Lake Peaking Plant in Shakopee, represents a quality investment in the flexibility of our regional grid. By storing electricity generated during periods of low demand and providing it during peak times, this project will help balance the supply and demand while using more renewable energy resources.

The Blue Lake site is currently a key component of Minnesota's energy landscape with their natural gas and solar generation facilities. Adding battery storage will maximize the value of these assets, reduce dependence on fossil fuels during peak periods, and support the state's greenhouse gas reduction goals. This directly aligns with Minnesota's commitment to a cleaner, more sustainable energy future.

From a workforce perspective, the construction and ongoing maintenance of the Blue Lake Energy Storage Project will create high-quality, middle-class, union jobs for local carpenters and operating engineers. Our members are ready to contribute their expertise to ensure the project is built safely, efficiently, and to the highest standards. Projects like this not only support good-paying jobs but also provide opportunities for apprenticeship and training while strengthening our local economy and workforce for years to come.

We urge the Commission to approve the Blue Lake Energy Storage Project application. This project is a win for reliability, sustainability, and working families in Minnesota.

Thank you for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require further information.

Sincerely,

Richard Kolodziejewski, Director of Government Affairs, North Central States Regional Council of Carpenters

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