



June 25, 2021

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

VIA ONLINE SUBMISSION ONLY

RE: Reply Comments - In the Matter of Xcel Energy's 2020-2034 Upper Midwest Integrated Resource Plan, Docket No. E002/RP-19-368

Dear Mr. Seuffert and Commissioners:

Please accept the following reply comments in relation to the above stated matter respectfully submitted by Becker Township.

After learning about Xcel's "Alternate Plan," filed today, June 25, 2021, removing the combined-cycle unit at the Sherco Plant from the company's preferred plan, the Township feels it is important to submit additional comments to this docket. In light of recent discussions that have taken place within and surrounding this docket, this decision was not unexpected, but it is no doubt devastating to the socioeconomic future of the City of Becker and the surrounding region, including our surrounding Becker Township. As the company notes in its filings, the full retirement of Sherco coal units combined with the decision not to construct the combined-cycle plant will mark the end of an era. The City of Becker, and truly the entire Becker community, has hosted a central power station since the 1970s.

The Township supported the construction of a combined cycle natural gas facility in our comments filed on February 11, 2021 because of the significant positive contribution the facility would make to the local economy. The combined cycle plant was also viewed as a central component in the city's, and the larger community's, efforts to weather the socioeconomic impacts of retirement of all three Sherco coal units.

As has been stated by the City of Becker, Becker Township is also still working to understand and process the full economic consequences that Becker City and Township as well as Sherburne County will face as a result of today's announcement. For now, Becker Township shares in emphasizing the following: if the Sherco combined cycle plant is not included in the final, approved plan, it is now more essential than ever that all stakeholders, including the Commission, Xcel Energy, and numerous other participants in this docket, use every tool at your disposal to support communities like Becker, both the City and Township.

In their earlier submittals, the City of Becker and the Coalition of Utility Cities discussed the significant contributions that large baseload facilities have on the communities that host them, through taxes, jobs, and myriad indirect benefits that extend beyond what can be quantified, and Becker Township would

argue those benefits extend beyond the city limits of those host communities and into the surrounding townships and counties.

With those socioeconomic impacts in mind, the Township is encouraged to see the extension of the Monticello Nuclear Plant still included in the Alternate Plan. Not only is this extension essential to support the local tax base, economy, and hundreds of jobs in the City of Monticello, extension is necessary to avoid the worst consequences to the region. In addition to encompassing the City of Becker, Becker Township also borders the City of Monticello so the impacts to those two host cities directly impact the economy of the Township. Simultaneous retirement of both the Becker and the Monticello facilities would devastate the *regional* economy in ways that they may never fully recover from.

Finally, given the substantial nature of today's filing, the Township would appreciate additional opportunity to review Xcel's Alternate Plan and provide additional comment. As stated previously, the Township appreciates the work the PUC does and throughout this process we have felt the Commission has truly listened to and taken our concerns into account in your discussions and deliberations. We thank you, and trust that consideration will continue. Thank you for your time, and if you have questions please do not hesitate to reach out to myself or Lucinda Messman, Town Clerk at 763-261-5301; bkolbinger@beckertownship.org or clerk@beckertownship.org.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Kolbinger', is written over the printed name.

Brian Kolbinger
Becker Town Board Chair