

RE: Reply Comments
Xcel Energy's 2020-2034 Upper Midwest Integrated Resource Plan
PUC Docket Number: E002/RP-19-368

As the federal representative for Minnesota's Sixth Congressional District, I write to convey the concerns expressed to me by my constituents regarding Xcel Energy's Alternate Plan, as described in the *2020-2034 Upper Midwest Integrated Resource Plan Reply Comments (Reply Comments)*, which was submitted to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) on June 25, 2021. This Alternate Plan is a departure from Xcel's original 2019 proposal to build a new Combined Cycle (CC) plant at the Sherco Power Plant (Sherco) in the City of Becker.

In addition to being Minnesota's largest energy producer, Sherco is the main employer and taxpayer in the City of Becker. For decades, Becker's residents and their civic leaders have made major planning decisions based on Xcel's commitment to the area. My constituents are concerned that by departing from the 2019 proposal, Xcel will likely leave Becker with fewer jobs and an unreliable energy supply.

More specifically, I have repeatedly heard the following three major concerns:

- While Xcel proposes more wind and solar power in its Alternate Plan than what it had proposed in its 2019 plan, the Alternate Plan eliminates the CC plant in the 2019 proposal. Because wind and solar power is not as consistent as CC generation, the total energy package in the Alternate Plan is seemingly less reliable than the total energy package in Xcel's 2019 proposal.
- Because the Alternate Plan seemingly offers a less reliable energy package than Xcel's 2019 proposal, Xcel would presumably have only chosen to pursue the Alternate Plan if were being pressured by environmental interest groups. The *Reply Comments* states that "many parties opposed" the Sherco CC plant in Xcel's 2019 proposal, and specific groups, including Clean Energy Organizations and the Sierra Club, appear throughout this document. Yet, the *Reply Comments* does not indicate the entire universe of opposing groups or show the calculations these groups used in their modeling methods. For these reasons, much of Xcel's decision making still remains unclear.
- A CC plant would clearly create jobs and spur other economic development in the Becker area. Now that the CC plant has been removed from the Alternate Plan, Becker stands to lose those opportunities. As a corrective, Xcel has only vaguely pledged to "work with our employees to ensure a smooth transition over the next decade that will bring opportunities for training and new positions throughout the company."

I hope the Commission will fully consider these concerns. My office stands ready to assist in any effort to bring reliable and affordable energy to Minnesota, and to spur economic development around the Sherco facility, for decades to come.

Sincerely,



Tom Emmer
Member of Congress