



August 31, 2020

Mr. Will Seuffert
Executive Secretary
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
121 7th Place East, Suite 350
St. Paul, MN 55101-2147

**In the Matter of Minnesota Power's Revised Petition for a Competitive Rate for Energy-Intensive Trade-Exposed (EITE) Customers and an EITE Cost Recovery Rider
PUC Docket No. E-015/M-16-564**

Dear Mr. Seuffert:

On behalf of the 16,000 hardworking men and women who work creating the iron ore that makes the things that Americans use everyday, thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback in this docket. The Iron Mining Association proudly represents northeast Minnesota's largest private industry - iron mining.

We strongly encourage the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission to extend the Energy Intensive Trade Exposed rate beyond its February 1, 2021, expiration date.

Like Minnesota's forest products industry, iron mining is essential to the economy in rural areas. Both industries are energy intensive and both are subject to substantial competition from producers outside the state.

These industries have been here for more than a century, supplying America and the world with essential products for our everyday lives. The EITE rate schedule has helped protect nearly 100,000 direct and indirect jobs in Minnesota.

Minnesota has traditionally been seen as a high-cost state for doing business. Industrial electric rates have increased 86 percent here since 2003. These factors combine to make outside companies reluctant to relocate to Minnesota. We need to ensure we retain the great industries we already have.

Extending the EITE-Rate Schedule would be consistent with the EITE statute, which specifically notes that state energy policy is to ensure competitive electric rates for EITE ratepayers like the members of IMA.

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Extending the existing EITE-Rate Schedule would also be consistent with the Commission's mission "to create and maintain a regulatory environment that ensures safe, adequate and efficient utility services at fair, reasonable rates consistent with State telecommunications and energy policies." For the thousands of employees of large power users, fair and reasonable commercial rates, and rates consistent with the intent of the EITE, ensure the ability of mine employees to pay individual residential electric bills each month as a result of ongoing paychecks from healthy, competitive employers.

It is not a hypothetical question to ask if low-margin industries can survive without the EITE rate in Minnesota. One of the general managers of the iron mines said upon the restart of a long-idled taconite plant that he attributed its restart to the passage of the EITE rate - putting 400 hardworking men and women back to work.

The five percent rate reductions for EITE businesses have worked well for the past five years. Those rates have helped taconite mines remain competitive in a global market while retaining thousands of family-sustaining jobs and stabilizing local economies in northern Minnesota. The MPUC should extend this wise investment in our state and its people.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "KJ", written over a light blue circular background.

Kelsey Johnson
President
Iron Mining Association of MN

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