From: Tyler Schafer
To: DOH, Air Quality
Subject: Regional Haze Public Comments
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Dear Director Glatt,

I am proud to live and work in a state that has allowed the energy industry to be a good steward of the resources we are blessed to have. Coal, in particular, has provided an economic source of electricity for decades, while supporting thousands of jobs directly, tens of thousands indirectly, and everyone else in some form or fashion. There is a reason developed and thriving nations are that way…it is due to the constant, reliable and economic availability of electricity. Because of the former, we enjoy clean water, clean air, enough energy to produce whatever we can dream up and the resources we need to thrive. Countries and regions that don't have constant, base-load energy available on demand are stuck in the third world as they have no means to advance their society out of poverty. The USA, and the world, are demanding more reliable power, more energy, not less. Coal has, currently does and will into the future, provide humans the constant, reliable and economic energy we need to electrify everything. You want more electric cars, lawnmowers, bikes, phones, tvs, smart homes, etc…you need constant, always on, always ready, dispatchable power. Coal has proved it can and it will. We cannot continue to throw good money after bad to prop up intermittent power, such as wind and solar, while also regulating out of existence, coal. North Dakota has both some of the cleanest air and water in the country, while, at the same time, some of most coal-based generation, per capita, in the country. It is absurd to continue removing coal, while also demanding exorbitant costs to the coal industry that remains. Coal, if left alone, versus solar and wind, not propped up by tax credits and preferential treatment, wins…every time! Can you plug in and charge millions of electric cars when you get home at night using a grid built with solar and wind? No, it always dark and usually much less windy at night. Can you do the same with a grid built on coal? Yes, it is always there and ready for you. Please stop messing with a good thing. Make coal legal again!!

I am writing to you as a supporter of abundant, balanced, reliable, low-cost energy. A diverse set of energy resources is crucial for our region, and coal-based electricity must continue to be part of the equation. I support retaining coal as a regional energy source that will help keep electric rates low, jobs plentiful, and our economy robust. Coal has been and will continue to provide the source for power we can depend on.

More importantly, North Dakota's coal industry is a good neighbor. In accordance with DEQ's visibility plan, the industry has significantly invested in its power plants over the last decade to ensure the state continues boasting the cleanest air in the country. These investments reduced emissions by 66% and put the state well ahead of the path to eliminating visibility impairment in its parks by 2064-the goal set by the United States EPA.

State researchers report that wildfires and international emissions are the primary causes of visibility impairment. In 2020, North Dakota experienced long episodes of visibility impairment throughout summer and fall due these emissions, which the state cannot control. Due to the continued drought in far western regions, state experts believe this trend could continue. Costly new regulations imposed on power plants will not address this concern-instead, resources should be dedicated to reducing the fires that are the source of the haze.

I understand DEQ may be under pressure to impose new controls on power plants, even though power plants are not the primary cause of visibility impairment and new controls would not meaningfully improve visibility. Therefore, I urge support for the implementation plan developed by the North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) that ensures our region continues to benefit from clean and clear air along with reliable, affordable electricity supply, today and in the future.

Sincerely,

Tyler Schafer

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