From: Coleton Ford
To: DOH, Air Quality
Subject: Regional Haze Public Comments
Date: Sunday, May 15, 2022 9:20:03 AM

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Dear Director Glatt,

My family depends on my job in the coal industry as do thousands of other hard working men and women right here in North Dakota. Putting more regulations on the power sectors could make things very difficult for these plants to continue to operate. We all rely on energy everyday and these coal powerplants are at the backbone of what keeps the lights on and prices affordable and low for our communities. I also, grew up in the small town Hazen, ND where I lived there for 12 years, and I can tell you that there was no effects of pollution and other risks living so close to several coal power plants. We need to work together and continue to produce electricity as coal for the main fuel source, because it is very abundant here in North Dakota, and the process and overall effectiveness needs to seriously be a major consideration in whatever policies or regulations come in the future. North Dakota has a very bright future, but we need to keep the coal industry thriving for years to come, as so many other states will soon realize the mistakes they are making now. I lived in Washington State for 2 years and most of the electricity came from coal power plants in Montana, unfortunately these plants are being shutdown and it caused prices for residents in WA to get out of control. Lets work together on these issues and talk to everyday people who live in our great state of North Dakota. Thanks Much!

Coleton P. Ford

As one of the over 14,000 North Dakotans that works in or supports the lignite industry, I am writing to you in support of the North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) State Implementation Plan for Regional Haze. Coal has been and will continue to provide the source of power we can depend on, and it should not be overly burdened with costly and ineffective regulations.

DEQ's visibility plan appropriately recognizes that our industry has significantly invested over $2 billion in the last decade to ensure the state continues to have 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 as a result of 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,

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