From: Kerry Kaseman
To: DOH, Air Quality
Subject: Regional Haze Public Comments
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Dear Director Glatt,

As a resident of the State of North Dakota I understand the importance of clean air. There is nothing better than enjoying a summer day on the river with clear blue skies or a night with bright shining stars and clean air to breath, which is normal for North Dakota. Last summer, due to western forest fires, these pleasures were greatly impeded and it was less than pleasant. Smoke filled the North Dakota skies making it both difficult to see the beauty and breath the air.

As an employee of a North Dakota based generation and transmission cooperative I understand the importance of affordable and reliable electricity. As evidenced by the February 2021 weather event, the lack of reliable energy infrastructure imposes significant costs not only on electricity suppliers but on the end use consumer where their supplier was not well positioned with reliable sources of electricity.

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,

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