Information

Cardinal Hickory Creek

It's our money. Which energy investment path shall we take?

Right-Sizing our Energy Costs and Priorities

Electricity use in U.S. homes has been dropping since 2007-- not from a slower economy or the surprising growth in solar, but from more efficient appliances, improved building practices and states shifting ratepayer spending from new power plants and transmission lines into "Accelerated" Energy Efficiency benefits that are steadily reducing demand. [1]

Electricity use in the Midwest is dropping at a very fast clip of 2.2% per year according to data recently supplied by regional utilities. [2]

In 2012, 75% of the reduction in carbon emissions realized in the U.S. came from state and federally encouraged energy efficiency incentives. [3]

Due to dropping use and excess power capacity, requests for new power plants in the U.S. in 2013 were down 50% from 2012. 22% of the new plants granted in 2013 are solar compared to 8% for wind. [4]

Every year since 2005 when Wisconsin utilities began adding charges for a greatly enlarged transmission system, our electricity rates have ranked either the highest or second highest in the Midwest. Though once below national average, by 2013 only seven states faced faster climbing rates than Wisconsin's. [5]

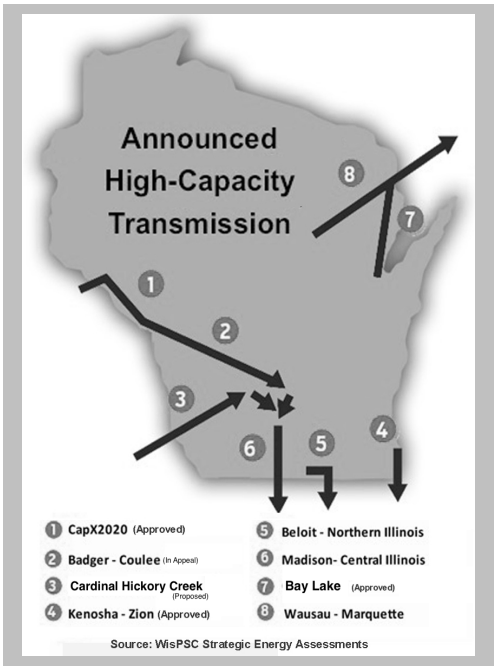
From 2007 to 2012, as states collectively doubled their investments in Energy Efficiency, Wisconsin's allocation dropped to 75% of the 2007 amount. [6]

Access footnotes at http://bit.ly/FtNotes

As Wisconsin's electric rates and fees race to keep up with the debt created by these transmission additions, the shortages in efficiency incentives to improve our homes, farms and businesses force us to pay hundreds of millions in unnecessary electricity expenses each year. [7]

What is in the Utility EXPANSION path

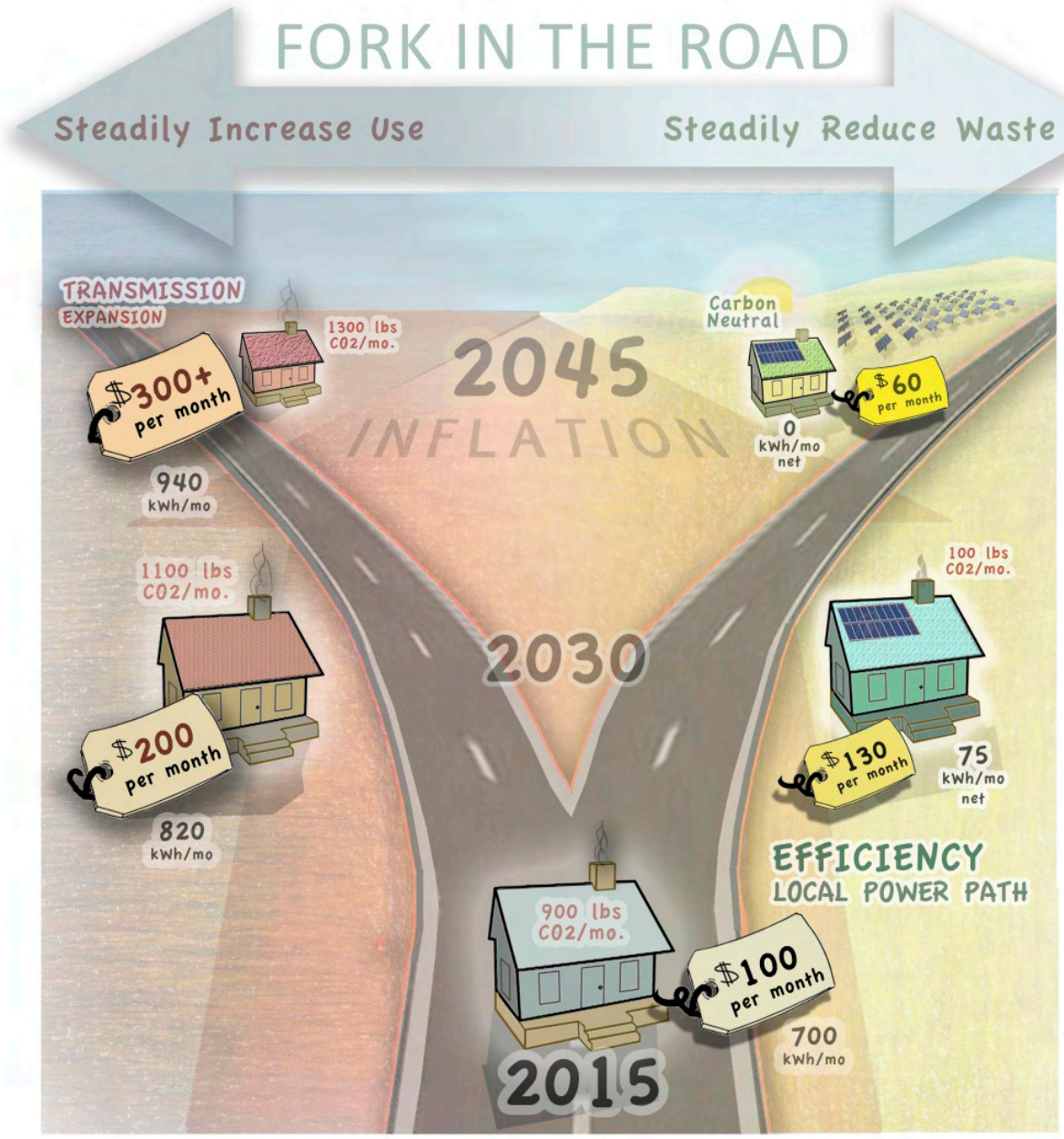
A sweeping package of new, expansion transmission lines adding 30 to 40 years of ratepayer debt at 10-12% guaranteed interest with 15 more lines slated in other states. Utilities have refused to provide complete estimates of costs, but they likely dwarf the cost of an adequately funding Energy Efficiency and Solar incentives in Wisconsin. [8]



Long-term energy "planning" that roundly rejects the option of accelerated energy efficiency investments in in favor of increasing consumption and extending the life of fossil fuel power plants while dramatically increasing the carbon footprint in Wisconsin and within the region. [9]

Short-sighted economic "planning" that commits Wisconsin to shipping hundreds of millions of our renewable energy dollars out of state to utility-favored developers rather than helping Wisconsin families and communities develop on-site and community solar facilities saving Wisconsinites hundreds of millions of dollars creating local jobs and lowering emissions faster and more cost effectively. [10]

Lots of additional statistical Information here



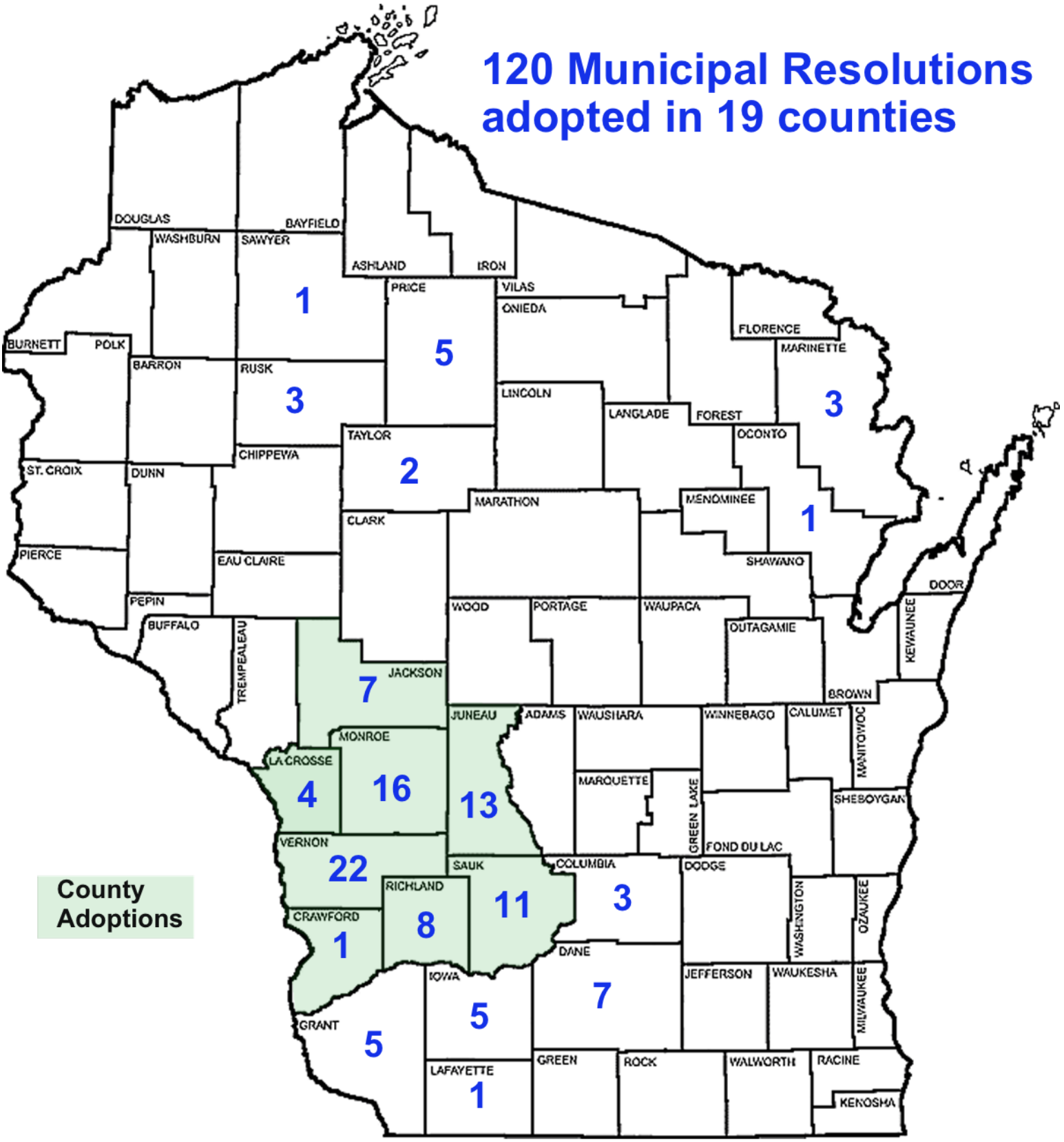
Regional utility transmission expansion planning that features many large lines in Wisconsin and surrounding states ignores the option of comparable dollars being invested in energy efficiency and local power. The omission allows utilties to assume a rise in use of 1% per year averaged across their six energy future scenarios.

In conrast, a household energy taking the Efficiency-Solar path based on successful programs in other states can easily lower onsumption at the rate of t 1.5% per year.

In this illustration, a Wisconsin household with average use in 2015 invests $9000 in efficiecy improvments and 15 community solar panels as recently offered in Vernon County. (Smaller investments in solar will also produce savings.) The solar panels which offset electricity costs initially at 50% are paid for by 2030. From 2031 to 2045, the monthly utility bills for the increasingly efficient, solar and nearly carbon neutral home drop from $70 per month to just the $60 facility fee.

The savings returned over 30 years from the Efficiency-Solar path is about $40,000 with $20,000 gained from Energy Efficiency alone. An industry accepted inflation rate of 3.5% per year has been applied to both paths.

120 Municipal Resolutions adopted in 19 counties



County Adoptions

More than 100 of the Resolutions are *PSC Information Request* type asking applicants and the PSC to conduct cost-benefit analysis of *Non-Transmission Alternatives* including energy efficiency, load managment and local renewable power. Applicants are asked to conduct the analysis *during the pubic information stage* for inclusion in their application and sharing with local governments for statutory energy planning consideration and making informed feedback . The PSC is requested to indpendently conduct the analysis and include its study in the EIS of current and future 345 kV transmission proposals. see EIS Table G1-1, PSC REF#:223845

For fair allocation of electric grid costs, apply the golden rule

by Rob Danielson, Aug 24, 2016

http://bit.ly/FairGridCosts-Danielson

I appreciate former Public Service Commission Commissioner Mark Meyer's recent commentary about resolving goal differences between Wisconsin electric utilities and electric customers so that more households, farms and businesses can afford to adopt solar power (Aug. 2 Tribune). However, I disagree greatly with his assertion that fair distribution of utility grid costs can be achieved by "getting the rate right" for solar energy. This narrow emphasis hides fundamental advantages the Public Service Commission now awards to utilities at the expense of electric customers — the deserving parties who pay all grid expenses. The commission is required by law to ensure balance, but the Badger-Coulee transmission appeal and other challenges clearly demonstrate the commission's allegiance to electric customers is in doubt.

As Public Service Commission reports have commented, a sustained, 18-year spending spree on power plants and transmission expansion is the primary source of Wisconsin's region-leading electricity rates and fixed fees. Recent commission decisions force families who practice conservation to confront exorbitant, fixed fees, yet effectively give high-use households bill reductions with small rate reductions. Totaling up the fee increases for escalating grid costs since 2012, Wisconsin households will pay $7 billion more over 30 years — a small fraction of accumulated utility debt.

By practicing "waste not, want not" values, Wisconsin electric customers are collectively using less and less power, even with meager rebates for energy efficiency and solar compared to adjacent states. So why are the utilities heavily committed to "waste more, want more" utility infrastructure?

Pin this on your 1990 refrigerator: Foremost, for-profit electric utilities seek to keep customers on-grid paying down the massive debt they profit from. Every time the commission permits a new transmission line, substation or power plant, utility interests are guaranteed 10 to 13 percent interest, plus operation, maintenance and other collections over the 30- to 40-year mortgage periods. The commission does not report the billions in debt amassed and allows utilities to hide long-term indebtedness by publicizing only initial construction costs.

Records show that energy efficiency and solar are, by far, the most cost-effective measures to slash CO2 emissions and control costs and utility debt. Wisconsin lawmakers must create precise Public Service Commission policy that allows these end-user improvements to fairly compete with utility infrastructure proposals and do their collective magic. Legislators can ensure that all electric customers pay their fair share of the accumulated utility debt through these goals:

- Stop adding nonessential utility debt;

- Triple available rebates in our energy efficiency and renewable energy program with $1 per month to dramatically reduce use and return billions in net savings. If Wisconsin lawmakers approve the same Focus on Energy increase they did in 2009 (rejected by the commission in 2010), we would meet more than 50 percent of the Environmental Protection Agency's CO2 reduction goals, save $16 billion in energy costs, spur $50 billion in economic benefits and create 380,000 new jobs over the next 30 years; and

- Stop fee increases. Apply the golden rule to utility debt with customers paying proportionally to the amount of electricity they consume. This requires much smaller rate increases over the next five to seven years than those mandated by new debt and waste. Solar customers would pay their fair share of debt in the cost of grid power they use at night and on cloudy days.

Most non-solar households greatly prefer buying clean power produced by their solar neighbors instead of fossil fuel-laden grid power. Home, business and community solar improvements add no collective debt, lower grid costs and so deserve the same retail rate utilities are paid. Wisconsin's energy future shines bright, if we admit to our mistakes and recommit to the golden rule.

Rob Danielson is secretary of S.O.U.L. of Wisconsin (Save Our Unique Lands), a nonprofit organization that promotes efficient and responsible management of electrical power for the public good, while protecting the natural, social and economic environments and citizens of Wisconsin.

Petition to the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin, American Transmission Company, ITC Transmission Holdings Corporation and Dairyland Power Cooperative regarding "Cardinal Hickory Creek" proposal, docket 05-CE-146, with a high voltage transmission option between Dane County, Wisconsin and Dubuque County, Iowa. In signing this petition I hereby request the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin and applicants ensure that the application for this proposal include a clear, consumer-friendly, comprehensive, cost-benefit analysis of non-transmission alternatives based on equal investment in accelerated energy efficiency, development of local renewables and load management evaluated both as stand alone resources and to improve the performance of the low voltage transmission facilities applicants claim would be avoided by the high voltage line. Funding for the alternatives should match that ratepayers would pay over 40 years including construction, financing, operation, maintenance and securitization costs for high voltage line. I request the Commission to ensure this information with estimates of CO2 emission reductions over time be made available for public evaluation before the application is deemed complete or move to close the docket. *[Petition collector: By signing below, you are acknowledging that you have witnessed the below signatures. Mail to SOUL of WI, PO Box 146 La Farge, WI 54639]*

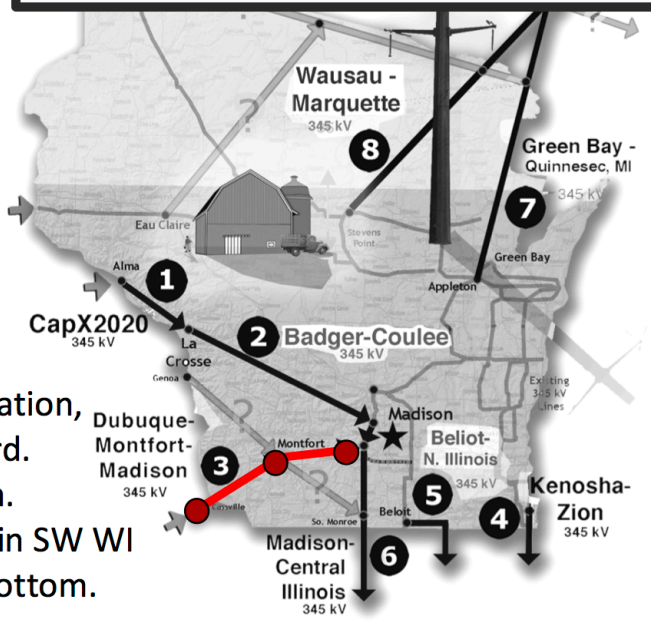
Date	Signature	Name	Street Address City and Zip	Email

Printed Name of Petition Collector_____ Signature _____ Date _____

SOUL OF WISCONSIN

Ask us about our CHC Community email list!

SOUL's ability to defend Wisconsin communities and ratepayer energy priorities is boosted by robust membership numbers when we seek PSC funds to hire the best experts to testify on behalf of ratepayer interests in capital utility cases including the "Cardinal Hickory Creek" 345 kV transmission line proposed to extend between Middleton, Wisconsin and Dubuque Co., Iowa.



Lifetime memberships in SOUL, a 501(3)C organization, are $5 each or another amount that you can afford. Donations above $5 are eligible for tax exemption. Please consider assisting the families, businesses in SW WI by signing to support the WI PSC request at the bottom.

MAIL TO: SOUL P.O. Box 146 La Farge, WI 54639 Info: 608.625.2339 info@soulwisconsin.org

1 or 2 Members

Name _____ Date _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ $5 Membership ____ Donation _____

I support the request to the PSC (signature) _____

Name _____ Date _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ $5 Membership ____ Donation _____

I support the request to the PSC (signature) _____

PSC REQUEST: I hereby request the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin in cooperation with the co-applicants to ensure that the application for docket 05-CE-146 includes a clea, comprehensive, cost-benefit analysis of non-transmission alternatives including equally valued investments in accelerated energy efficiency, load management and distributed generation both as stand alone resources and in combination. The funding amounts for the alternative investments should match the total Wisconsin ratepayers would assume over 40 years for high voltage transmission Project. I request that the above information with estimates of total carbon emissions for the MISO north region and Wisconsin over a 10 year period be made available in complete form for public evaluation before the application is deemed complete or else the Commission is hereby instructed to not issue notice of proceeding for this docket.