



Washington State Senate

Senator Kevin Ranker
40th Legislative District

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September 11, 2015

Mr. David Danner
Chairman
Washington State UTC
PO Box 47250
Olympia, WA 98504

Mr. Philip Jones
Commissioner
Washington State UTC
PO Box 47250
Olympia, WA 98504

Ms. Ann Rendahl
Commissioner
Washington State UTC
PO Box 47250
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Chairman and Commissioners,

We are writing to convey our support for the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission to commence a proceeding to review the costs and risks of continued investment by Puget Sound Energy in the Colstrip coal plant. We support the petition filed on July 31, 2015 by Sierra Club, Climate Solutions and Washington Environmental Council calling for a “Colstrip proceeding” to review the costs related to Colstrip Units 1 and 2, which are jointly owned by Puget Sound Energy and Talen Energy.

This proceeding will provide an opportunity for Puget Sound Energy, your Commission, and other stakeholders to develop a thorough record on the costs associated with continued reliance on a distant Montana coal plant. We further recommend that you proceed with the proceeding as soon as possible. This issue is ripe for consideration, and further delay will only risk wasting more ratepayer money on Colstrip.

As you know, the Washington State Legislature attempted to address a Colstrip transition with SB 5874 and HB 2002 in the last legislative session. After many attempts at re-drafting this legislation to address the many concerns about the bill, we were never able to find a pathway forward. Through this process, too many questions arose that remained unanswered. That is why we believe the Colstrip proceeding will be useful. You will be able to dive deep into the facts with expert witnesses, full disclosure of information, and an adjudication proceeding to impartially assess the risk to Washington ratepayers. The results of your work will help inform any future legislation that may be considered by the legislature.

We also applaud your recent announcement of the investigation into the decommissioning and remediation costs for Colstrip. Again during the legislative process, the cost of cleaning up the toxic coal ash waste ponds became a primary concern for legislators. This investigation is a strong complement to the Colstrip proceeding, and we look forward to the results of both proceedings. Together, an assessment of the costs and risks related to Colstrip combined with an accounting of the decommissioning and remediation costs will provide a clear picture for an orderly transition off of coal power.

We hope that you are able to move forward expeditiously with the Colstrip proceeding.

Thank you for your diligence in moving quickly with this matter to address a very complicated issue.

Sincerely,



Senator Kevin Ranker
40th District



Senator Rosemary McAuliffe
1st District



Senator Bob Hasegawa
11th District



Senator Christine Rolfes
23rd District



Senator Maralyn Chase
32nd District



Senator Pramila Jayapal
37th District



Senator John McCoy
38th District



Senator Jamie Pedersen
43rd District



Senator David Frockt
46th District



Senator Annette Cleveland
49th District



Representative Derek Stanford
1st District



Representative Jessyn Farrell
46th District

CC: Governor Jay Inslee