



March 5, 2021

Chairman Kreun and Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Members,

On behalf of the members of the Lignite Energy Council, I am submitting testimony today in support of House Concurrent Resolution 3025. This resolution describes the status of the lignite industry and its contributions to the State of North Dakota, and factors impacting its ability to continue providing reliable, environmentally responsible, and affordable power to the Upper Midwest.

However, the real focus of this resolution is to urge our federal leaders to work with the state and industry to continue to develop real technological solutions to enable the continuation of coal-based generation in North Dakota. Under past administrations, the industry was put in a defensive position with respect to an onslaught of federal regulations, some well-intentioned but unworkable, and some intentionally aimed at stopping the mining and use of our coal resources. In the past six weeks, under the current administration – through executive orders targeting the fossil fuel industry – appears poised to resume the war on coal.

The coal industry is not anti-regulation, and the State of North Dakota has proven that government can balance responsible coal development with environmental stewardship and the needs of the people. We believe that the federal government should follow the example set by this state and its commonsense regulation of the lignite industry, and this resolution would effectively deliver that message.

The Lignite Energy Council appreciates Representative Nehring and the cosponsors of this resolution, and the North Dakota legislature for their continued support and recognition of the lignite industry’s strong track record of success in providing affordable and reliable electricity, 13,000 jobs, and billions in economic activity to the State of North Dakota and the region.

For these reasons, the Lignite Energy Council supports HCR3025 and we respectfully ask that the committee provide this legislation with a favorable “Do-Pass” recommendation.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jonathan Fortner

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