



March 13, 2025

Chairman Patten and members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of the Lignite Energy Council in strong support of House Concurrent Resolution 3015. The reliability of our electric grid is at a crossroads, and this resolution highlights the urgent need to preserve baseload generation resources like coal. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and the North American Electric Reliability Corporation have warned that the rapid retirement of dispatchable generation, combined with delays in replacing capacity and an over-reliance on intermittent energy sources, is putting the grid at serious risk. North Dakota cannot afford to experience the same grid failures and rolling blackouts seen in other states that have abandoned reliable power sources.

Coal-fired power plants provide essential grid-stabilizing attributes—availability, fuel security, ramping capability, and voltage stability—yet they are being forced into early retirement due to market distortions and federal regulations. The Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO), which serves much of North Dakota, is already facing projected capacity shortfalls within the next five years, while the Southwest Power Pool (SPP) faces similar reliability concerns. If this trend continues, we risk not only higher electricity costs but also a grid that cannot support businesses, hospitals, and homes when power is needed most.

North Dakota has long been a leader in responsible energy development, ensuring a balanced mix of coal, natural gas, and renewables. However, maintaining this balance requires fair market treatment for baseload power sources. MISO alone is expected to see over 30 gigawatts of dispatchable generation retirements by 2030—losses that cannot be easily replaced. House Concurrent Resolution 3015 calls on MISO and SPP to act now, valuing reliability in their markets and preventing premature capacity retirements from endangering grid stability. North Dakota must send a clear message that we will protect our energy security. The Lignite Energy Council urges the committee to support this resolution and uphold the reliable, affordable electricity that powers our state.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jonathan Fortner  
VP of Government Relations  
Lignite Energy Council