



Tony Evers

Office of the Governor | State of Wisconsin

April 22, 2026

The Honorable Chris Wright
Secretary
United States Department of Energy
1000 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Secretary Wright:

I write to express my concern with the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) recent decisions to reinvoke section 202(c) of the Federal Power Act to force the extension of operations of expensive coal power plants in the Midwest region, including the J.H. Campbell Power Plant (Campbell Plant) in Michigan and the R.M. Schahfer and F.B. Culley generating stations in Indiana. The action lacks merit and represents a misuse of your emergency order authority, resulting in millions of dollars in unnecessary costs to keep these power plants running. These costs will be passed along to ratepayers throughout the Midwest, including here in Wisconsin. I implore you to rescind these orders and do everything in your power to lower utility bills for Wisconsin families and businesses.

As you know, the Campbell Plant is a coal-powered generating facility owned and operated by Consumers Energy, a Michigan-based utility that independently made the decision to retire the facility in coordination with the regional electric grid operator, the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO), and Michigan utility regulators. Consumers Energy was set to retire the Campbell Plant on May 31, 2025, after conducting a thorough business analysis that concluded it was no longer economically viable to keep the plant operating and that there would be no impact to grid reliability. On May 23, 2025, only one week before the scheduled retirement date, the DOE issued a 202(c) order under the Federal Power Act forcing Consumers Energy to keep the Campbell Plant online.

The sudden decision from DOE to keep the Campbell Plant running presented immediate and costly challenges. Due to the age of the Campbell Plant, having gone into service in 1962, the utility has reported on its ongoing operating challenges, including the need to unexpectedly and quickly restock its coal supply in response to the last-minute DOE order. Unplanned maintenance and coal purchases place costly risks squarely on the backs of ratepayers across the MISO region.

Keeping the Campbell Plant running is causing costs to rise, with no end in sight. In February, the DOE issued its fourth emergency order to extend the life of the Campbell Plant. The latest order extends plant operations to May 18, 2026, nearly a full year since the DOE issued its first order. Prior to this latest order, a February 10, 2026, regulatory filing shows that Consumers Energy incurred \$290 million in costs by keeping the plant online, amounting to more than \$600,000 per day. As a result, in January 2026, Consumers Energy filed a request to recover \$41 million in costs that were a result of the first emergency order alone. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has since authorized a cost allocation method that spreads these costs to

utilities in an 11-state region within the MISO footprint. A significant portion of these costs will be passed along to Wisconsin utility ratepayers.

The increase in costs caused by the DOE-directed extensions will result in higher utility bills for Wisconsin families. It is expensive, unnecessary, and irresponsible to keep the Campbell Plant in operation when there is no threat to grid reliability. The MISO region has robust mechanisms and planning processes for ensuring reliability across the footprint. It was these very mechanisms and processes that supported the retirement of the Campbell plant in the first place.

Additionally, I have concerns that DOE's actions in ordering the Campbell plant to remain open set a precedent that could further impact ratepayers. According to the Organization of MISO States, a non-profit organization representing state utility regulators in the MISO region, this is the first time the DOE has invoked Section 202(c) outside of a severe weather event or emergency, and for the first time, has used the power to suspend a retirement and interfere with established and vetted state and regional planning processes. This means more households and businesses could be on the hook and forced to pay for uneconomic power plants that are well beyond their useful life, with the federal agency facing no accountability.

We are already starting to see this unfold in other states as well. In December 2025, the DOE issued additional 202(c) orders directing two Indiana utilities, the Northern Indiana Public Service Company and CenterPoint Energy, to halt the retirement of coal power plants in their network and extend operations until March 2026. Subsequently, on March 23, 2026, the DOE renewed the orders, which pushes the extension to June 2026. FERC has already issued decisions allowing the Indiana utilities to spread out the costs of operating the two power plants. This is projected to add tens of millions of dollars in costs that will be paid for by the same group of states across the MISO region, including Wisconsin.

It's no secret that energy demand is rising throughout the country. But there are controls and robust planning processes in place to both protect the reliability of the electric grid and ensure ratepayers are not paying for unnecessary utility infrastructure that make these overreaching 202(c) orders inappropriate and unnecessary. At a time when energy affordability is a major concern for Wisconsinites, the Trump Administration must join me in pursuing strategies to bring utility costs down. I ask that you rescind these orders and reverse course on making Wisconsin ratepayers foot the bill for DOE's irresponsible decisions.

Sincerely,



Tony Evers
Governor