



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Tuesday, June 17, 2025

Contact: Amy Barrilleaux, Communications Director abarrilleaux@cleanwiconsin.org

Trump's order to keep Michigan coal plant running could mean higher energy costs in Wisconsin

Wisconsiners may soon be paying higher energy bills because of a recent Trump Administration order to keep an aging coal plant running in Michigan. Just days before the 1560-megawatt plant was scheduled to retire, the Department of Energy (DOE) ordered it to keep operating through at least August, citing emergency wartime powers.

"Staff were gone and there actually was no coal left on site. At the last minute, Trump's DOE ordered the plant continue operating through late August because of a fabricated 'energy emergency,' using emergency wartime powers," explains Clean Wisconsin Energy & Air Manager Ciaran Gallagher. "Michigan state regulators, the utility owner, and the Midwest grid operator, MISO, had all agreed that this plant is not needed for reliability."

Consumers Energy, the utility that owns the plant, wants to recoup its costs to bring the plant back online through price increases on customers across the Midwest grid, including families and businesses in Wisconsin. Dan Scripps, chair of the Michigan Public Service Commission, estimates the 90-day order to keep the coal plant open would cost tens of millions of dollars.

Gallagher says the Trump Administration will likely issue similar orders in the coming months to keep other imminently retiring coal plants open. Complying with those orders will come with high costs that ultimately fall to customers.

"The Trump Administration is pushing chaos into our carefully planned energy system. It's expensive, wasteful, and there is absolutely no benefit to customers or utilities. Coal plants are retiring because they don't make economic sense anymore, and the pollution they cause is devastating for the communities where they are located," Gallagher says.

The Trump tariffs are already increasing costs for all energy resource installations including solar, wind, batteries, and gas, and the Administration's focus on increasing natural gas exports has raised electricity costs across the country. Meantime, clean

energy incentives through the Inflation Reduction Act are on the verge of being eliminated in Congress as part of President Trump's budget bill.

"The Trump Administration's actions show that this is a totally manufactured emergency," says Gallagher. "If there was a real energy emergency, we would not be increasing energy exports, and we certainly wouldn't put up barriers to inexpensive, quickly dispatchable resources like solar and wind. Everyone should be concerned about the reckless orders we are seeing from this administration because we will all pay for them."