

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

June 22, 2026

The Honorable Chris Wright
Secretary
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Secretary Wright,

I write to express my strong opposition to Emergency Order 202–26–29 forcing the Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO) to maintain operations at two coal-fired generating units in Wheatfield, Indiana. At a time when ratepayers in Northwest Indiana are already facing skyrocketing utility bills, this action will continue to place burdensome and unnecessary costs on families and businesses throughout the region. I urge you to reverse this order and instead work to lower utility costs for my constituents.

Maintaining operations at NIPSCO's R.M. Schahfer Generating Station has already come with exorbitant costs. Since the Department of Energy (DOE) issued its original orders in December 2025, NIPSCO has estimated losses of approximately \$11.5 million.¹ According to the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis, the cost to keep coal-fired power plants operating past their retirement dates nationwide has reached \$300 million, and this number is rising by \$30 million per month.²

Placing these additional costs on families already struggling to pay their utility bills is cruel and unnecessary. On average, families in Northwest Indiana have seen their utility rates jump more than 26 percent over the last year, one of the highest rate increases in the country.³ The millions of dollars shouldered by ratepayers to keep the Wheatfield plant in operation will only make it more difficult for seniors, families, and hard-working Americans to keep their lights on.

Additionally, Northwest Indiana represents the nation's largest concentration of steel production, as well as robust manufacturing industries. This DOE directive will result in increasing input costs for these vital industries that support our nation's economy, energy security, and national defense.

¹ https://nwitimes.com/news/local/article_aba7316f-ee55-4ccb-8c7c-6367c00f97ef.html

² <https://ieefa.org/resources/cost-coal-plant-emergency-orders-already-more-300-million>

³ <https://wsbt.com/news/local/nipsco-electricity-rate-hike-electric-bill-high-monopoly-power-provider-state-approved-citizens-action-coalition-nuclear-power-indiana>

During your testimony in front of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water on April 15, 2026, you committed to reversing this directive should DOE find that continuing to operate NIPSCO's coal-fired units is "not net-beneficial to ratepayers." To be clear, this action is not beneficial and will only continue to drive up energy costs for families and businesses throughout Northwest Indiana. I ask that you immediately rescind these orders and join me in pursuing strategies to drive down energy costs.

Sincerely,



Frank J. Mrvan
Member of Congress