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Always On Energy Research (AOER) is a 501(c)(3) dedicated to ensuring that every state in America has the affordable, reliable energy needed to power the nation and to fuel a robust, rapidly growing economy now and into the future.

AOER believes that Assembly Bill 25 and Senate Bill 28 establishing a Right of First Refusal for incumbent monopoly utilities to build interregional transmission lines is an unnecessary and potentially unlawful policy that misses the true cause of skyrocketing electricity rates in Wisconsin.

Electricity prices in America's Dairyland are surging. Data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) show electricity prices for Wisconsin families have increased by 20 percent since 2016 and energy intensive industries like manufacturing and the paper industry are struggling to keep up with rising electricity prices.

Prices are surging because Wisconsin's government-approved monopoly Investor-Owned Utilities, are prematurely retiring their affordable coal plants and replacing them with an expensive combination of natural gas, wind, and solar facilities to bolster corporate profits for their shareholders.

These monopoly utilities, which are raising the price of electricity for your constituents and unnecessarily increasing the cost of living, are now asking for the right to build interregional transmission lines without being subject to competition.

It's worth noting that these transmission lines are not needed. They are only being built to facilitate the construction of more unreliable wind and solar resources that will undermine the reliability of the regional grid and supercharge the increase in electricity bills for everyone. Without the Green New Deal, there is not a need for these interregional transmission projects.

Lastly, these laws are being struck down in court in states throughout the country because they violate federal competition principles and interfere with interstate commerce. Courts in Texas, Indiana, and Iowa have ruled these laws unconstitutional.

Reversing the upward trend of electricity bills is essential to improving the lives of Wisconsinites. The lawmakers in this body would do better by the ratepayers of Wisconsin to reign in the power of its monopoly utilities to unilaterally retire reliable, depreciated assets

without the approval of the Public Service Commission and to deny their wind and solar spending spree than to enact legislation that stifles competition and is possibly unconstitutional.

Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on these issues.

Isaac Orr

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