

MICHAEL A. BELL
P.O. Box 3263
CRESTED BUTTE, COLORADO 81224
e-mail: michael.michaelbellattorney@gmail.com
TELEPHONE (207) 240-6585

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Ms. Shannon Coleman
Supervisor, Resource Planning & Analysis
Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska
8377 Glynoaks Drive
Lincoln, NE 68516

Attn: MEAN_IRP@nmppenergy.org

COMMENT ON MEAN'S INTEGRATED RESOURCE PLAN

Dear Ms. Coleman:

Please accept this as my comment on MEAN'S draft Integrated Resource Plan [IRP].

I begin with respect to process—specifically **due process**. MEAN has had five years to prepare for its process and has been working on this document for two years. Notwithstanding, it has provided a wholly inadequate time for public review and comment. MEAN has shortened public comment from Nebraska's customary 30-day timeframe for written comment to 25 days. Even then, it has the temerity to claim it is giving a full 25 days when it released its 231-page technical draft IRP at 10 PM on Day 1. Giving a single in-person hearing for public comment in Lincoln, a city which is not even served by MEAN, with a cap of ten individuals, each limited to a maximum of three minutes to speak, is laughable. More saliently, it does not pass constitutional muster for notice and the meaningful opportunity to be heard, the fundamental of due process. **Please extend the comment period long enough to provide reasonable opportunity to comment, consistent with due process.**

With respect to the draft IRP, as a parent and grandparent who breathes the air in Gunnison County and cares about the air of those who will survive me, I have several substantive concerns.

1. Quite apart from its goal of being "carbon neutral" by 2050, there is no interim goal to meaningfully progress toward this objective. MEAN's own board of directors agrees that an interim goal is called for. It cannot help but appear that MEAN intends to keep burning coal as its "business as usual" model until 2038 (IRP p. 14), or even after. I understand current reliance on coal burning is presently 54%. A proposed decrease over the next fifteen years to 50% is hardly sufficient. Moreover, there is no real explanation about how MEAN will suddenly become "carbon neutral" in 2050, a point substantially after 2038. Time is of the essence.

MEAN must begin lowering carbon emissions now with a real interim goal, not wait until after 2038.

2. MEAN clearly has plans to build new capacity to deal with a projected temporary power deficit in the 2024-29 period. MEAN is not being straightforward or transparent about what this new resource might be: MEAN's Power Supply Committee has not released its recommendation yet. The planned release is after the public comment period has expired, with subsequent incorporation into the final IRP (p. 213). This seems a deliberate attempt to exclude the recommendation from public scrutiny and comment. It is essential that the recommendation is not for more carbon, such as a new natural gas electrical generation plant. There is a war going on and natural gas prices will continue to escalate significantly. MEAN should follow the lead of Colorado energy suppliers who are moving from high-priced carbon to lower priced industrial wind and solar energy. **MEAN should not build or contract for new natural gas electrical generation capacity.**

3. MEAN should gather the low hanging fruit of promoting energy efficiency and energy conservation instead of undervaluing their potential. Utility experts who know more about this than I question MEAN's proposed addition of just a single program for energy efficiency and conservation. **MEAN must improve its commitment to energy efficiency and conservation.**

4. The IRP also fails to give appropriate emphasis to managing demand to reduce system peak load requirements. This could be an effective alternative to acquisition of new generating capacity. **MEAN can and should better manage demand to reduce peak loads.**

5. The *status quo* of coal generation over the next fifteen years presented in the draft IRP does not contemplate either the early retirement of owned generation facilities that many utilities nationwide are engaging in, nor divestiture to minimize MEAN's retirement exposure of any of those plants where MEAN holds minority interests. Renewable energy generation is cost competitive and reliable, certainly until a utility reaches high percentages of renewables, as has been factually demonstrated by many utilities. I am mindful of the need to address openly the future of the workers in the coal plants from which MEAN gets most of its energy, but their health and their children's' do not improve under the draft IRP. **MEAN should retire or divest its positions in dirty coal plants.**

6. Finally, the Renewable Resources Pools discussed in the draft IRP appear to represent to their customers in communities such as Gunnison, Aspen, and Glenwood Springs, Colorado that MEAN will provide 100% renewables, or quickly approach these high percentages in Gunnison. I am no physicist, but so long as MEAN's energy portfolio relies on coal burning at 54%, it is impossible to claim provision of 100% renewable energy to any municipality. There is no known

mechanical capacity to separate dirty coal electrons from clean energy ones. The claim can only be accurately made when the entire energy portfolio is renewable. Persisting in this shell game appears to violate the Colorado Consumer Protection Act [CCPA], CO Rev Stat §§6-1-101-115; see specifically §6-1-105 (1) (b), (g), and (n), defining deceptive trade practices including, (n), "'bait and switch' advertising." Actions can be brought by the Attorney General and District Attorneys as well as an "actual or potential consumer" of MEAN's services. **MEAN must stop its shell game and clean up its electrical generation portfolio.**

I hope to have the opportunity to comment further in an extended time period for public comment, as the present time constraints have limited me.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael A. Bell