

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 31, 2025

The Honorable Lee Zeldin  
Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Administrator Zeldin,

We write in support of NorthWestern Energy and Talen Montana's request for a two-year Presidential Exemption from the "National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants: Coal- and Oil-Fired Electric Utility Steam Generating Units Review of the Residual Risk and Technology Review" (MATS Rule). We appreciate President Trump's Executive Orders to Power the Great American Comeback and an exemption from this overreaching Biden era rule will allow for continued operation of the Colstrip Steam Electric Station (Colstrip) that is a critical baseload power source for Montana.

We previously criticized the Biden administration's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on this MATS Rule laying out how this ill-conceived rule oversteps congressionally delegated authority and threatens grid reliability. In fact, the Biden EPA admitted that 42% of the burden of the MATS Rule would fall on Colstrip making it clear that this rule specifically targeted this plant. In order to come into compliance with the MATS Rule, Colstrip would be required to install new fabric filters (baghouses) in addition to its current wet venturi scrubbers. This combination is untested and would come with a significant cost of \$500 million for the upgrades making this both technologically and economically "unavailable". Additionally, it is possible that construction would not be completed and operational in time for the MATS Rule's compliance deadlines also making the technology "unavailable" from a timing standpoint. All of this endangers the economic viability of the plant, which if closed, would undermine the region's electric grid as there is insufficient time to plan and construct adequate replacement generation.

Without Colstrip, consumers would bear the burden of higher energy costs and grid unreliability, and its closure would stymie economic development in the region. President Trump, through Executive Order 14156, declared a "national energy emergency" and the Senate on February 26, 2025, voted to affirm that action. This emergency encompasses both energy necessary for military preparedness and defense industries but also for the economic security of the country.

We request that you approve this two-year exemption request to prevent negative impacts on Montana's electric reliability and the increased costs for consumers. Thank you for your work to ensure American energy dominance.

Sincerely,



---

STEVE DAINES  
United States Senator



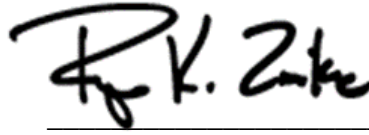
---

TROY DOWNING  
Member of Congress



---

TIM SHEEHY  
United States Senator



---

RYAN K. ZINKE  
Member of Congress