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April 12, 2021

The Honorable Paul Tonko  
Chair, Subcommittee on Environment & Climate Change  
2369 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable David B. McKinley  
Republican Leader, Subcommittee on Environment & Climate Change  
2239 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Sirs,

I am writing you today to express my very serious concerns about the future of our community. We are a small community located in southwest Indiana. For generations our residents have worked in the energy industry producing electricity for our tri-state area. Seventy percent of the electricity required for the City of Indianapolis has been generated here in Petersburg at the Indianapolis Power and Light power plant. This plant is a coal powered facility that employs approximately 400 full time employees and more than two times that amount as outside contractors on any given day.

The transition from fossil fuel energy to alternative renewable energy will likely be devastating for our community. The loss of tax revenue and job loss has already begun in the coal mining industry. The retirement schedule of the power plant has been accelerated to be completed in the next 8 years.

We are working very hard with the Pike County Economic Development Corporation to attract industrial investment into our community. However, as you know this does not happen overnight and those lost jobs and lost tax revenue may never return. Many coal mining communities are single industry employers and new industries may not choose to relocate there.

Please give the future of communities, such as ours, your serious consideration. Everyone supports clean air, however at what cost? Are we sure that as a nation we are ready for this conversion and absolutely certain the proposed renewable alternatives can perform as needed? There is no room for error as we have recently seen with power outages throughout the country.

Please consider both increasing the timeline for this transition and economic incentives for companies that would invest in communities that are so dependent upon coal powered generating facilities. Our residents have been hard working, dedicated employees providing energy for this country in both good and bad times. They love their community and would like to be able to continue to work and live here.

Thank you for your consideration.

  
R.C. Klipsch, Mayor