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**BRANDON W. PHELPS**  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
118<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT

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**RECEIVED**  
**CLERK'S OFFICE**

**JUN 07 2012**

**STATE OF ILLINOIS**  
**Pollution Control Board**

June 5, 2012

Mr. John Therriault, Clerk  
Illinois Pollution Control Board  
James R. Thompson Center  
Suite 11-500  
100 West Randolph Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60601

*PC# 8*

RE: Public Comment in **Support** of the Granting of Ameren Energy Resources' Petition for Variance, Docket Number 2012-126 (Air-Variance)

Dear Honorable Members of the Illinois Pollution Control Board:

I write to you today to share my support for Ameren Energy Resources' (AER) Petition for Variance currently pending before the Illinois Pollution Control Board. The seriousness of the request, and possible extreme consequences should relief not be granted, compels me to share my views and ask you to grant AER the temporary relief requested.

I currently serve as the state Representative for the 118<sup>th</sup> District and the Joppa Energy Center is located within my District. Although AER has shared with the Board the economic impact the Joppa Energy Center has on the local and State economy, the Joppa Energy Center also serves as a vital economic engine for my District, the State and the southern region in Illinois. Not only does the Joppa Energy Center support hundreds of well-paying jobs in our community, but AER employees also spend that money right here in southern Illinois helping to boost household income for all. The plant further serves as an important source of property tax revenue to help support important public services, including support for our cash-strapped schools.

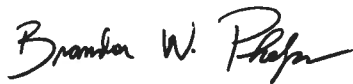
Our economic development and area elected officials are constantly working to recruit and attract businesses to come to Massac County, but are hampered by high workers comp rates and the overall business climate here in Illinois. While their hard work has surfaced many leads, Massac County has only been successful in securing a few new jobs.

According to many reports surrounding states do not currently mandate the stringent pollution control requirements that Illinois is trying to impose on coal fired plants. It is also my understanding that federal rules were to be implemented that would mirror the new Illinois regulations but as of today, those rules are still not in place. We all believe in clean air and protecting our natural resources but with the current electric demand and prices well below normal, now is probably not the time to fully implement these higher pollution control standards.

The Joppa Energy Center has already invested millions of dollars toward their necessary improvements to become compliant. In addition AER is not asking the board to relieve it of its obligation to install the remaining equipment. They just need additional time and resources to complete the project and I feel they are doing their very best to meet their environmental obligations under these very trying circumstances.

I ask the Board to please give through consideration to their request and to give careful thought to the devastating impact the closure of this facility would have on Massac County and the city of Joppa.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brandon W. Phelps". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "B".

Brandon Phelps  
State Representative - 118<sup>th</sup> District