

Dynegy Multi-Pollutant Standard Hearing: Springfield, IL, April 16, 2018

I want to thank the Pollution Control Board for, once again, giving me an opportunity to voice my concern about the proposed changes to Dynegy's Multi-Pollutant Standards. I feel that changing Dynegy's MPS is a mistake. My opinion is shaped not only by a growing concern for the health and wellbeing of Illinois citizens; it comes from the history of inaction by the company itself.

During the recent hearing in Edwardsville, I heard you ask Dynegy at least three different times, if there was a possibility that lowering the MPS would lead to a potential shutdown of its cleanest and most costly plants in order to run dirtier, cheaper plants to increase company profit. After much hedging and vague responses, Dynegy finally admitted that it was possible the company could close clean plants to run dirtier ones. So, if the MPS is lowered, we are at the mercy of Dynegy's word that this dangerous, polluting scenario would not come to pass.

I have little faith in Dynegy's word because the company has failed to make good on its promise to clean up the unlined coal ash ponds in its closed Wood River facility near my home. This is important because the shuttered Wood River plant sits on a floodplain, and heavy rain and rising river levels, typical for spring in our region, can cause the coal ash ponds to overflow, causing carelessly left contaminants to spill into nearby waterways, and potentially reaching down-river communities that pull from the Mississippi River for drinking water. Meanwhile, coal ash with heavy metals such as arsenic, mercury and lead are left sitting in a pit, leaching into the groundwater.

As of today, I know of no actions on Dynegy's part to make good on their promised cleanup, a promise now nearly two years old. So why would I trust Dynegy to keep its word about keeping clean plants open if the MPS is lowered? Perhaps, more importantly why should you?

I think it is also important to keep in mind that Dynegy merged with Vistra Energy last week, making it the largest coal company in the US. At the very least, this rulemaking process should be halted until Vistra can participate as the new owner. Currently, we do not even have the right players at the table. Thank you once again for allowing me to speak today.