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Mr. Bill Storm  
State Planning Director  
Minnesota Department of Commerce  
85 7<sup>th</sup> Place, Suite 500  
St. Paul, MN 55101-2198

Dear Mr. Storm:

I have lived on the Iron Range most of my life and have experienced the "roller coaster" economy tied to mining. I know the importance of creating jobs in our area and support efforts to do so. However, when it comes to the proposed Mesabi Energy Project, I am not convinced that the benefits created from new jobs will outweigh the possible negative consequences to our environment. I am concerned that decisions made will not only affect those of us that live here today but future generation as well. I have a few comments and questions concerning this project.

1. We are about to expand mining operations with such projects as Minnesota Steel, Polymet and Franconia Minerals, which will bring new types of mining and additional waste products to our environment. These new mining projects along with the current taconite plants use a natural resource that is here, it comes out of the ground where we live. However, the Mesabi Energy Project is proposing the hauling of a natural resource, coal, from a different state to where we live. This project could be done where the coal comes out of the ground or anywhere. Has the proposed Mesabi Energy Project been evaluated with all these new mining methods as to a future change in our environment?

In particular air quality, will it bring additional mercury, soot and carbon dioxide into the air that we breathe? We currently have Mesothelioma studies taking place so air quality and industry related illnesses are important to us.

2. Have all the costs for the Mesabi Energy Project been included in the equation? Such as the costs of transporting the coal ( both fuel and carbon dioxide emissions) from train travel. Have the costs involved with carbon sequestration, the costs to bury and maintain the carbon dioxide in the earth been considered? How many years will this carbon dioxide need to be monitored? What about small leaks? Has the possibility of a future carbon dioxide tax been added to the costs?

3. I think that there are too many unanswered questions. I feel that these ideas of coal plants with or without carbon sequestration are bad ideas. Those of us living near the plants will be taking the most risk. And I hope that future generations will not be stuck with tons of carbon dioxide waste buried in the ground.

4. Now is the time to put our money and efforts into cleaner, renewable energy. This is the direction that the people of Minnesota should be going. I think that it holds the key to the creation of jobs and our future well being.

Thank you for reading my comment.

Sincerely,

Mary Erickson