



## STATE OF MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

September 24, 2013

Representative Paul Thissen, Speaker of the House  
Chair, Legislative Commission on Planning and Fiscal Policy  
463 State Office Building  
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Speaker Thissen:

In order to facilitate the proceedings of the Legislative Commission on Planning and Fiscal Policy at its September 30, 2013 meeting, you asked the Public Utilities Commission (the "Commission") to submit information on two identified Commission-affiliated Task Forces set forth in Statute, both of which are governed by the provisions of Minnesota Statutes § 216E.08.

### **Power Plant Siting Advisory Task Force**

As part of its siting and routing proceedings, the Commission is authorized to appoint a task force of public members to evaluate possible sites or routes for the location of an electrical power facility. [This would be in addition to the normal process of holding hearings for the public to provide testimony on various proposals.] The purpose of the public advisory task force is to assist in the scoping decisions that arise during the course of the relevant proceedings.

One such a proceeding is initiated, the Commission makes a case-by-case determination if such an advisory task force would be useful in that specific proceeding. Currently, the Commission does not have such a task force in operation. Members of this entity would not receive compensation; but only receive reimbursement for expenses, similar to a state employee. There is no budget for this type of work group.

Since the Commission is not presently working with such a task force, there are no scheduled future meetings of the same. The Commission most recently utilized this type of task force in connection with the route proceedings in the Hollydale transmission line project (Commission Docket No. 11-152) in western Hennepin County. [As you know, by law enacted during the 2013 Legislative Session, this proceeding is suspended pending a decision on whether or not to grant a Certificate of Need for the project.]

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These advisory task forces do not issue reports or recommendations to the Governor or the Legislature, but only to the Commission itself. Functionally, these recommendations are not free-standing reports, but rather become part of the official record of the respective Docket (which are publically available in that Docket through the Commission's e-Dockets system). Such a task force does not have its own website.

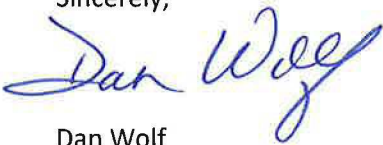
#### **Power Plant Siting Scientific Task Force**

In connection with the same process of determining a route or location for an electrical power facility, the Commission is authorized to appoint a task force composed of technical and scientific experts to conduct research and make recommendations concerning generic issues such as health and safety.

The Commission has not to date appointed such a task force for these purposes. Nonetheless, we believe it would be appropriate to retain this authority in Statute in case the Commission determines such scientific and technical input would be useful in a future proceeding.

If you or the Legislative Commission on Planning and Fiscal Policy would like any additional information, please let us know. We look forward to assisting your considerations by whatever means you would find most helpful.

Sincerely,



Dan Wolf

Assistant Executive Secretary