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Meigs County Office of Economic and Workforce Development

238 West Main Street
Pomeroy, Ohio 45769

Voice: 740.992.3034

Fax: 740.992.7942

meigscountyohio.com

director@meigscountyohio.com

May 31, 2011

Todd A. Snitchler
Chairman
Public Utilities Commission of Ohio
180 East Broad Street
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Mr. Snitchler:

I write to you to express my support for the pending case before this distinguished commission involving *AEP Ohio ESP—Case 11-346-EL-SSO and 11-348-EL-SSO*.

As a small rural county we have felt the wrath of the national recession and have a unique understanding of the need for stability in the electric market and the difficulties currently associated with investment in new power generation in Ohio. The AEP Ohio Electric Security Plan provides common sense solutions to both help our economy move forward and to provide security for investors in addressing the issue of long term generation investment in Ohio.

This plan provides rate stability for current industrial customers and certainty in pricing for new industries considering a location in Ohio. As an economic development professional in southeast Ohio for 20 years I have heard time and again from industry that the price of AEP electricity is reasonable. The questions that arise involve the long term perspective and the volatility of future pricing in an uncertain economy. This proposal allows for business to plan and invest in a secure market. One needs to look no further than the current fluctuations in the price of fuel to see the negative impact on business investment that is caused by price uncertainty.

This plan also lays out an intelligent and reasonable path to support the development of new power generation assets in Ohio. It is clear that there is glaring need to build and operate new, efficient, and cleaner power generation facilities in Ohio. Current policies, however, do not provide sufficient risk aversion for investors to make this commitment in Ohio. Our county has had three major announced power generation projects fail to come

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to fruition in the past few years primarily due to do uncertainty in construction issues. I believe this ESP provides a fair and secure plan that will open the doors to these major needed investments in our state.

Further, this plan fully integrates AEP Ohio into economic development in Ohio with the Ohio Growth Fund, the Economic Development Mini Grant Program, and the Rate Stabilization Plan Grants. All of these provide valuable tools to help our communities attract and retain jobs in Ohio with AEP as a partner in our efforts.

I would encourage the adoption of the AEP Ohio Electric Security Plan and believe it will have a positive impact on economic development in Ohio.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Perry Varnadoe', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Perry Varnadoe
Director
Meigs County Economic Development Office