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Base Opinion Of Power The Future On All The Facts

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Mike John

Joe I Rogers' opinion piece in the May 13 edition of The Capital Times ("Power plan would take us for fools") attempts to describe the entire Wisconsin Energy "Power the Future" plan, though he comments on just a small portion of the plan's details. We believe it is important to look at the overall plan before making a decision about whether Power the Future is a wise or unwise approach to meeting the state's growing energy needs.

The goal of the Power the Future plan is to build new electric generation powered by a variety of fuel sources (coal, natural gas, alternative sources); make improvements to existing generation, especially in terms of environmental performance; and upgrade the electric distribution system to provide the high-quality power that digital technology requires. While Mr. Rogers may call the plan "stupid" in his opinion piece, a wide range of key constituencies were consulted and did provide input to the plan, which became known as Power the Future II. For example, significant contributions to the plan were made by the Customers First! Coalition, the Citizens' Utility Board and labor leaders, to name just a few of the organizations and leaders that commented on our proposal.

While not every detail was agreed upon by every organization, there was a broad, general agreement on the overall direction of the Power the Future II plan before it was submitted to the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin for regulatory review and approval. This broad agreement became the foundation for Power the Future -- a plan based on the use of diverse fuel sources to generate power; the advantages of using domestic fuel resources; and the need to balance economic, environmental and energy-supply goals.

* Wisconsin Energy believes important decisions concerning state energy policy can be made after gathering and reviewing all the information. That's the job of the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, which will conduct a thorough review of the entire Power the Future plan before making a decision.

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