



Board of County Commissioners Agenda Request

7A
Agenda Item #

Requested Meeting Date: November 12, 2025

Title of Item: Consider Support for Repealing Minnesota's Moratorium on Nuclear Power

☒ REGULAR AGENDA ☐ CONSENT AGENDA ☐ INFORMATION ONLY	Action Requested: ☐ Approve/Deny Motion ☐ Adopt Resolution (attach draft) <i>*provide copy of hearing notice that was published</i> ☐ Direction Requested ☒ Discussion Item ☐ Hold Public Hearing*
Submitted by: David Minke, County Administrator	
Department: Administration	
Presenter (Name and Title): David Minke, County Administrator	Estimated Time Needed: 10 Minutes
Summary of Issue: Attached is correspondence from Sherburne County seeking support to repeal the current law imposing a moratorium on new nuclear power plants in Minnesota. Minnesota law currently bars the Public Utilities Commission from issuing a certificate of need for construction of new nuclear power electric generating plants. This Statutory restriction was enacted in 1994 and is included in Minnesota Statutes §216B.43. Minnesota is one of about a dozen states to ban or place restrictions significant restrictions on new nuclear power plants. There are 95 licensed nuclear power plants in the United States which generate approximately 20 percent of the nation's electricity. Minnesota currently has three nuclear reactors at two nuclear sites, Monticello and Prairie Island (2 reactors), which generate approximately 20 percent of the state's electrical power. The Monticello plant has a federal license to operate until 2050 and a state license to operate until 2040. Prairie Island reactors have licenses to operate until 2033 and 2034. Xcel Energy intends to submit a license renewal application for Prairie Island in 2026. The Association of Minnesota Counties had a 2025 legislative position in support of repealing the moratorium (attached). Also in 2025 several bills were introduced in the state legislature to repeal or modify the moratorium including HF 2002 (Igo) and SF 350 (Farnsworth). None of the Bills passed. The Sherburne County resolution has a reference to tribal communities. The Prairie Island Indian Community, located adjacent to the Prairie Island nuclear facility, has a position opposed to expanding nuclear power and the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe declared itself a nuclear free zone in 1993. The Mille Lacs Band consults with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission on the environmental review of the Monticello nuclear plant. Sherburne County is seeking support from all counties to repeal the nuclear power moratorium.	
Recommended Action/Motion: 1. Support repeal and request the administrator draft a resolution for Aitkin County 2. Oppose the repeal 3. Take no position 4. Request more information and/or further discussion	
Financial Impact: <i>Is there a cost associated with this request?</i> <i>What is the total cost, with tax and shipping? \$</i> <i>Is this budgeted?</i> ☐ Yes ☐ No <i>Please Explain:</i>	



Sherburne County Board of Commissioners

Sherburne County Government Center
13880 Business Center Drive
Suite 100
Elk River, MN 55330-4668
(763) 765-3001
1-800-433-5229

October 15th, 2025

Administrator David Minke
Aitkin County
307 2nd Street NW
Room 310
Aitkin, MN 56431

RE: County Participation in the Minnesota Nuclear Energy Alliance (MNEA)

Dear Administrator Minke;

Recently, Sherburne County acted to join with the Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA) and the Minnesota Nuclear Energy Alliance (MNEA) in pursuing legislative action to repeal Minnesota's moratorium on nuclear power generation.

In doing so, Sherburne County has agreed to actively support both the repeal of the State's moratorium on, and the siting of, new nuclear power generation facilities; finding that such actions will help ensure safe, clean, and reliable baseload energy for all Minnesotans, especially as the State advances its 2040 goal for 100% carbon-free electricity generation.

Further, the Sherburne County Board has made known its respect for Minnesota's Native American Community concerns regarding siting and operation of nuclear power facilities and the safe storage of waste materials. We welcome earnest consideration of all viable locations, including Sherburne County, for the siting of such new nuclear power generation facilities.

Consistent with AMC's longstanding platform supporting the same moratorium repeal, Sherburne County respectfully requests the Aitkin County Board of Commissioners consider acting to join the MNEA and support our upcoming legislative efforts.

Knowledgeable of the time and energy required to achieve success in this endeavor, we look forward to Minnesota counties collectively and actively supporting the MNEA and its objectives.

Sincerely;

Gary Gray
District 4 Commissioner and 2025 Board Chair

Urging Repeal of Minnesota's Moratorium on Nuclear Energy Production

WHEREAS, while national, state, and regional electrical demand has been historically stable or declining, recent trends in electrification, economic development, and technology demand have resulted in projected increase in electrical power needs; and

WHEREAS, reliance on carbon free-based energy production continues to increase and dependence on traditional fossil fuel-based energy production continues to decrease, despite significant concern over reliable baseline and peak demand energy; and

WHEREAS, in 2023, Minnesota's Renewable Energy Standard statute was amended to include adding a carbon-free standard that requires electric utilities to provide 100% carbon-free electricity by 2040, leading the nation with such an ambitious goal; and

WHEREAS; nuclear energy is uniquely positioned to address America's energy challenges through generation of carbon-free electricity, with a record of over 70 years of safe operation and storage - all with significant federal and state oversight; and

WHEREAS, nuclear energy already generates roughly half of Minnesota's current carbon-free electricity, with nuclear plants safely operating in Minnesota for over 50 years, providing decades of carbon-free affordable electricity for families and businesses; and

WHEREAS, a new generation of advanced nuclear technology offers enhanced safety features, flexibility in siting, and a smaller footprint, making them ideal for future energy needs; and

WHEREAS, thirty-three nations have now pledged to triple nuclear power by 2050, with America leading the charge, all while Minnesota – with a world-class engineering talent and manufacturing base - is the only state with an outright moratorium on all new nuclear reactor construction; and

WHEREAS, lifting this 30-year-old moratorium is the first step in securing the affordable, clean, and reliable energy Minnesotans needs, especially as the state undertakes its energy transition to meet the 100% carbon-free electricity goals while ensuring reliable baseload power; and

WHEREAS, under the umbrella of the Minnesota Nuclear Energy Alliance (MNEA), a diverse coalition of Minnesota governments, businesses, utilities, labor unions, and environmental advocates is calling on state lawmakers to lift Minnesota's 30-year-old moratorium on new nuclear power development; and

WHEREAS, *[insert county-specific goals, objectives, information here]*; and

WHEREAS, *[insert county-specific goals, objectives, information here]*.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the _____ County Board of Commissioners does hereby act to join the Minnesota Nuclear Energy Alliance (MNEA) and actively support the repeal of Minnesota’s moratorium on nuclear energy production to ensure safe, clean, and reliable baseload energy for all Minnesotans, especially as the State advances its 2040 goal for 100% carbon-free electricity generation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that, the _____ County Board of Commissioners urges the Minnesota Governor, State Legislature, and regulatory agencies to accelerate soonest reconsideration of the Minnesota moratorium, cognizant of advancements in available technology, increasing demand for reliable electrical power, and actions being taken by other states to located and support new nuclear power generation facilities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the _____ County Board of Commissioners respects Minnesota’s Native American Community concerns regarding siting and operation of nuclear power facilities, and the safe storage of waste materials, and welcomes earnest consideration of Sherburne County for siting of such new nuclear power generation facility.

Adopted by the _____ County Board of Commissioners on this ____ day of _____, 2025.

By and on behalf of the _____ County Board of Commissioners:

Hon. xx, 2025 Chair, Board of Commissioners

Attest:

xx, County xx

- AMC supports individual access to high quality employment training that leads to greater self-sufficiency and that improves the overall skill level and productivity of the workforce.
- AMC supports the Department of Human Services and County workgroup definition of self-employment income in order to determine eligibility for public programs.

Energy

AMC recognizes there is an ever-increasing need to provide efficient, affordable, clean, renewable and sustainable energy to the people of Minnesota. AMC supports legislation and policies that would help make this possible.

Energy Conservation

- AMC supports methods of energy conservation, improving efficiency, and minimizing the environmental impacts of all methods of energy production, including but not limited to coal; petroleum; natural gas; nuclear; wind; solar; hydropower; geothermal, wood; waste; methane; ethanol and bio-diesel.

Energy Exploration

- AMC supports ongoing, collaborative, statewide efforts in the areas of research and development in the use of all forms of energy.

Energy Independence

- AMC supports well researched, data-based strategies toward the development and implementation of a comprehensive energy independence program.
- AMC supports repealing the prohibition on building nuclear energy facilities.
- AMC supports adding the availability of E85 (ethanol) to the MNDOT highway signage programs.
- AMC supports statewide incentives for alternative energy options, including waste to energy and methane recovery, such as producer payments or credits for technology similar to those granted to the wind, ethanol, and bio-diesel industries.

Energy Transmission and Distribution

- AMC supports greater cooperation and communication between the state, local units of government and private industry for the siting.