

Sen. Larson: We Energies and Alliant break more promises

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Milwaukee, WI - Less than a year after making the promise, We Energies and Alliant Energy this morning unceremoniously announced they are breaking the transition to clean energy commitments they made. We Energies announced its decision to delay the retirement of its coal plants from 2023 and 2024, to May 2024 and 2025 respectively. Similarly, Alliant Energy announced its decision to delay the retirement of its coal plants from the end of 2022 to June of 2025.

“Wisconsin residents can ill afford a game of “maybe later” when it comes to stopping pollution and reducing climate change. Our neighbors demand more of the energy monopolies than more bait and switch. When the promise was made to sunset Wisconsin’s coal power plants, we had great hope that it wouldn’t be another attempt to fool us after years of increased rates of asthma, lung cancer, and other health problems in our communities. The growing concern of climate change demands that we do better than relying on the same old power sources of 60 years ago and instead swiftly transition to clean, renewable energy.

Instead, today’s announcement shows a prolonged dependence on burning dirty coal. As a state that imports all of our coal, oil, gasoline, and natural gas, this is an economic burden as well as an environmental danger to Wisconsin. Determined action is needed to reduce the effects of climate change and secure our energy independence.

Tired excuses have lost their energy and are only fueling skepticism.

“We Energies and Alliant Energy, who continue to charge excessively high rates while falling further behind other states in use of renewable energy, must abide by their promise and hold to their timelines for shutting down these coal plants, if not

work aggressively to accelerate them.

“Every kid that has heard “maybe later” or “not right now” when asking for an ice cream cone understands the danger of delay. But delaying on climate action is not a missed treat, it’s a mounting threat. NOAA analysis indicates that 2020 was the second-hottest year on record and that the seven warmest years in the 1880-2020 record have all occurred since 2014, and now the amount of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in our atmosphere, is the largest it has been in human history. We simply can’t afford to delay taking action.