

June 21, 2016

STATE OF IOWA
BEFORE THE IOWA UTILITIES BOARD **IOWA UTILITIES BOARD**

IN RE:)
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) DOCKET NO. RPU-2016-0001
MIDAMERICAN ENERGY COMPANY)
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)

DIRECT TESTIMONY
OF
T. M. FRANKLIN COWNIE

On Behalf of

Environmental Law & Policy Center
Iowa Environmental Council

June 21, 2016

1 **Q. What is your name and business address?**

2 A. My name is T. M. Franklin Cownie (Frank). My title is Mayor of the City of Des Moines.
3 City Hall is located at 400 Robert D. Ray Dr., Des Moines, Iowa 50309.

4

5 **Q. On whose behalf are you testifying today?**

6 A. I am testifying on behalf of the Iowa Environmental Council and Environmental Law &
7 Policy Center.

8

9 **Q. Please describe your background.**

10 A. I have served as Mayor of Des Moines since January 2004. Prior to being elected as
11 Mayor, I was an at-large member of the Des Moines City Council for two years. I am the
12 longest serving Mayor of Des Moines.

13

14 I have been in leadership roles in a number of national and international efforts. I am
15 currently a Trustee for the U.S. Conference of Mayors and in that capacity also serve on
16 the Executive Committee. In the past, I have been on the U.S. Conference of Mayors
17 Advisory Board and several task forces.

18

19 During my time as Mayor, I have been particularly active on environmental and
20 sustainability issues. I created and led the Mayor's Task Force on Energy and
21 Environment, which brought together representatives from across the community to
22 collaborate on environmental and energy efficiency issues. I served on the President's
23 Task Force on Climate Preparedness and Resilience as a local official representative. I

1 am currently on the North American representative on the Global Executive Committee
2 for the global association of ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability previously the
3 International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives). I was a local delegate
4 representing America's cities and the United States at the International Climate Change
5 Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark in 2009. More recently, I was in Paris in December
6 2015 as part of the United Nations Conference of Parties climate negotiations that
7 resulted in the historic Paris Climate Accord.

8
9 **Q. What is the purpose of your testimony?**

10 A. The purpose of my testimony is to support MidAmerican's proposal to construct 2000
11 MW of new wind generation in Iowa and to highlight the need for renewable energy
12 projects such as this one. I am not providing testimony on every aspect of the Wind XI
13 proposal.

14
15 **Q. MidAmerican Witness Fehrman pointed to the agreement reached at the Paris
16 Climate Change Conference as evidence that society is transitioning to a renewable
17 energy future. What is your response?**

18 A. I strongly agree that we are seeing society moving in the direction of a renewable future.
19 The agreement in Paris represented national leaders coming to consensus on that vision
20 for the future. From my perspective, local government leaders from around the world
21 have also been actively pushing for a transition to a renewable future. Local governments
22 around the world are on the frontline of the impacts of climate change and do not have
23 the luxury of inaction when the effects of climate change are directly felt by their

1 constituents. As a consequence, local leaders have embraced efforts to reduce emissions
2 and transition to a renewable future as a response to climate change. While at the Paris
3 conference, approximately 450 local governments including the City of Des Moines
4 signed a separate agreement as part of the Compact of Mayors to reduce emissions.

5
6 **Q. Please explain the Compact of Mayors and Des Moines' participation in more detail.**

7 A. The Compact of Mayors is a global coalition of mayors and city officials committing to
8 reduce local greenhouse gas emissions, enhance resilience to climate change and track
9 their progress publicly. The Compact recognizes that cities are on the frontline of the
10 impacts from climate change and also the frontlines of actions to address it by building an
11 energy future with renewables, energy efficiency and conservation.

12
13 As Mayor of Des Moines, I signed the Compact of Mayors on December 4, 2015. This
14 demonstrates the commitment of Des Moines and its approximately 210,000 residents
15 and businesses to reducing emissions and working towards a clean energy future.
16 Specifically, Des Moines has committed to reduce carbon dioxide emissions 25% from
17 2012 levels by 2020 to reduce carbon emissions by 50% by 2030 and to be carbon neutral
18 by 2050. We are also committed to tracking our progress and making it clear how we are
19 doing on reaching these goals.

20
21 **Q. How will Des Moines meet these emission reduction targets?**

1 A. The City of Des Moines recognizes that we cannot meet these emission reduction targets
2 on our own. It will take partnerships and collaboration with all sectors of our community
3 from our businesses to our residents.

4
5 The City of Des Moines believes that it is important to lead by example. We have done
6 significant work on energy efficiency and conservation. As we add and update city
7 buildings, we look to energy efficiency to reduce our energy consumption and now have
8 several LEED Certified Buildings. We also work with our businesses to do the same. The
9 Wellmark BlueCross BlueShield headquarters is a great example of the business sector
10 stepping up and implementing an energy efficient LEED platinum building. In addition,
11 we know that many businesses have aggressive climate change pledges and clean energy
12 goals. Our ability to provide clean energy and help companies meet sustainability goals is
13 part of why the Greater Des Moines area has been able to attract companies like Google,
14 Microsoft, and Facebook to the area.

15
16 We know that meeting strong emission reduction goals such as the ones the city has
17 adopted will require significantly more renewable energy generation. One of the reasons I
18 am confident that we could meet these ambitious emission reduction goals is that we have
19 a strong utility partner. MidAmerican Energy is the utility for Des Moines residents and
20 businesses. When I started as Mayor, MidAmerican's energy mix was dominated by coal
21 with some nuclear and a small amount of wind and natural gas. In the past decade,
22 MidAmerican has begun to make the transition to clean energy to the point where wind
23 generates 40% of MidAmerican's energy. MidAmerican has done this while keeping

1 rates for customers stable. We have only had one rate increase during my twelve year
2 tenure as Mayor while this transition to more clean energy and fewer emissions has
3 occurred.

4
5 We will not be able to meet our emissions reductions goals without MidAmerican
6 continuing to add more renewable generation to their portfolio. We know that Iowa has a
7 strong wind resource. Projects like the proposed 2000 MW of wind generation in Wind
8 XI will help meet this goal. With the extension of the federal production tax credit, there
9 is additional benefit to ratepayers to adding wind generation now. Furthermore, we would
10 expect MidAmerican to look at wind for any future projects as well as explore solar as
11 costs continue to come down.

12
13 **Q. What are your recommendation regarding MidAmerican’s Wind XI proposal?**

14 A. I support the timely approval and construction of Wind XI. Wind XI provides important
15 economic and environmental benefits to MidAmerican ratepayers, to the City of Des
16 Moines and to the state of Iowa. The City of Des Moines will not be able to meet its
17 ambitious emission reduction goals without getting significantly more of our electric
18 generation from renewable energy sources. Wind XI is exactly the type of project that we
19 need to meet our emission goals. I support Wind XI and hope to see additional renewable
20 energy proposals from MidAmerican in the future.

21
22 **Q. Does this conclude your testimony?**

23 A. Yes.

STATE OF IOWA)
)
COUNTY OF POLK)

I, T. M. Franklin Cownie, being first duly sworn, depose and state that the statements contained in the foregoing prepared direct testimony are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief, and that such prepared direct testimony constitutes my sworn statement in this proceeding.

/s/ T. M. Franklin Cownie_____

T. M. Franklin Cownie

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 14th day of June, 2016.

/s/ Taylor Anderson_____

Notary Public in and for the State of Iowa