



Over A Century Strong

May 30, 2022

John J. Kim
Director, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
1021 North Grand Ave. East
P.O. Box 19276
Springfield, IL 62794-9276

Dear Director Kim:

As IBEW Local 702 Business Manager of the members working at the Newton Illinois Vistra Power Plant, and the thousands more in our union membership, I am offering you my opinion on the Vistra plan to “Close in Place” their ash ponds as they propose to do. As the lead Representative of our membership onsite at Newton, Illinois, I encourage you to consider **SUPPORTING** Vistra’s coal ash surface impoundment closure plans submitted by Vistra Corp.’s Illinois subsidiaries.

I know that you are aware that our IBEW membership working within the coal-fired power plants in Illinois have much to worry about in these turbulent times. As a matter of fact, our members are the ones who are constructing much of the new 100% carbon-free energy being produced in our state, and hope to push this state to 100% carbon-free generation by 2045. Vistra is critical to making that happen with the large investment plans they have already committed to by making significant reinvestment in renewable technologies at retiring power plant locations.

We hope to see our membership continue to benefit from these infrastructure upgrades and technological changes in our state. With your support of Vistra’s plan, we hope to experience continued job creation with the potential to have even more renewable energy being produced on these Vistra sights. We believe that there is the possibility to double the renewable output of Vistra’s current plan.

We do support Vistra Corp.’s Illinois subsidiaries’ efforts. We believe they have developed a safe and responsible method of closing their coal ash ponds, while at the same time creating opportunities for Illinoisans, our members. This plan helps solidify the effort to produce clean energy while at the same time creating job opportunities, as was made clear in The Climate & Equitable Jobs Act.

This is a complex matter, and we recognize the challenges with such a difficult decision you must choose for the citizens of this state. We do believe that Vistra’s plan can uphold safe environmental standards that provide safe groundwater protection standards, and at the same time offer Illinois opportunities to advance employment levels on the many acres of land reclaimed from previous ash ponds at these sites.

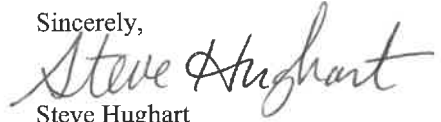
Closure by removal is not a simple solution. This option requires the deliberation of many factors related to public health, safety, transportation challenges, community engagement, and of course the environmental impacts of transporting materials out into the neighboring communities, all while guaranteeing the loss of tax revenues and job opportunities that would be created by an expansion of Vistra’s renewable energy footprint.

I again ask for your **SUPPORT** of this “Close in Place” plan by Vistra, and look forward to seeing the job creation that would likely come in the future. I also believe that this would ultimately provide the safest method of closure of these existing ash ponds in these often-remote existing facilities that have existed for many years within these communities.

Thank you for your sincere consideration of this proposed plan.

The IBEW Local 702 supports the impoundment closure plans submitted by the Illinois subsidiaries of Vistra Corp. for their plant sites.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Steve Hughart".

Steve Hughart
Business Manager
IBEW Local 702

Cc: Michael Clemmons, IBEW Intl. VP 6th Dist.
Jason Woolard, IBEW Local 702 Bus. Rep.
Patrick Peyton, Vistra