

Comments by Helen Ortmann, Allegheny

Docket # M-2026-3059601

I absolutely oppose expanding the use of fossil fuels for any reasons, but especially data centers. The public will suffer the health and environmental consequences of increased pollution and worsening global warming while a small number of billionaires and investors will reap the financial benefits.

In 2021, natural gas accounted for 2% of electricity production in Pennsylvania. By 2026, it was responsible for producing approximately 60% of PA's electricity. The surge represents the transition from coal to natural gas. Methane emissions from natural gas production are 86% more powerful than CO<sub>2</sub> at warming the atmosphere, so the trade off was never a solution, but whatever benefits it provided would be erased with the return to coal production. Even worse, natural gas production continues to increase to serve data centers, further exacerbating fossil fuel's climate impacts., The 12 coal plants on the list account for roughly 4,122 MW of the retired capacity under review, or enough energy to power 3 million homes. Pennsylvania currently has 13 operational coal plants that have a combined capacity of 5.22 GW. If redeveloped, the number and total capacity of operational coal plants in the state would nearly double. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), coal is the single largest source of global temperature rise.

Please vote for the health and welfare of PA residents and not for the profit of a handful of billionaires!