

New UN Pact Bans All Fossil Fuels (Not Just Coal) on an Accelerated Phase-Out Schedule...Also Greatly Increases the Power of UN Secretary General Guterres ...Ottawa County Needs to Respond By Working to “Save The Campbell” in a United Way and Exerting Local Control by Legal Methods

(Speech Before the Ottawa County Board on 9/24/2024)

I am Joseph Parnell McCarter from Georgetown Township and lead the “Save the Campbell” effort. People can read about our effort at SaveTheCampbell.com.

A new UN Pact bans all fossil fuels (not just coal) on an accelerated phase-out schedule. Quoting a NPR article: “The United Nations General Assembly adopted a global pact on Sunday that included explicit calls to phase out fossil fuels — which has been a stubborn sticking point in climate change talks for decades...the U.N. said the agreement was years in the making...The pact called for...countries to “tripl[e] its renewable energy capacity globally and doubling the global average annual rate of energy efficiency improvements by 2030...”¹ In advance of this pact’s signing, The Guardian had reported that the UN hoped to “galvanise summit talks by persuading world leaders to commit to stop burning coal, oil and gas, despite industry lobbying”,² and now they have succeeded. The pact also greatly increases the power of UN Secretary General Guterres to enforce this and many other world powers.³

This UN mandate comes at a time our regional grid operator MISO projects “a growing [electric] capacity deficit beginning in the 2025/26 planning year”, when the County’s Campbell plant is scheduled for closure and demolition. We cannot afford to let Consumers Energy close and demolish the Campbell in 2025. It provides electric to 1 million in our region reliably, affordably and safely, and it generates it right here in Ottawa County- something none of the alternatives can substitute for anytime soon. This plant and the infrastructure feeding it is worth billions of dollars, and we should not let it be demolished in 2025 as now planned.

Grid operator MISO recommends “to delay resource retirements to reliably manage the anticipated growth in electricity demand.” Consistent with this MISO recommendation, the Jamestown Township Board has approved a letter requesting Consumers Energy delay the closure of the Campbell. The Georgetown Township Utilities Committee of the Township Board unanimously approved drafting a request letter to delay the closure of the Campbell plant as well, and we anticipate its receiving Township Board approval there. We are receiving positive indications from other town boards in the county. Also, Rep. Meerman now indicates he supports saving the Campbell and requesting delay of closure, as does commissioner candidate Estrada. Will this county board join these town boards and others approving such a request letter? There is no good reason the closure and demolition of the Campbell plant should happen any sooner than the closure of East Michigan's Monroe plant in 2032.

Hopefully Consumers Energy will agree to delay the closure of the Campbell plant at the united request of Ottawa County. But if it does not, there are a range of options that Ottawa County has. These options include possible legal action, the County effectively stepping into the role of regulator of Consumers Energy, municipalization of the Campbell plant and placing it in an electric cooperative, and others. An option would need to be chosen which would receive broad support in the county. Becoming a charter county opens more options. But before worrying about the next step, our focus now should be getting every town and county board in the county requesting delay of closure.

We cannot afford to prostrate ourselves to the UN agenda, which will do huge damage to Ottawa County. We need to take united local action in a wise, legal way and pray that God would bless it.

¹ <https://www.npr.org/2024/09/22/nx-s1-5122497/united-nations-fossil-fuels-vote-2024>

² <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/sep/09/phase-out-fossil-fuels-cop-28-un-summit-coal-oil-gas>

³ <https://zenit.org/2024/05/26/analysis-towards-a-one-world-government-general-assembly-negotiates-the-future-of-the-un/>