



## The Secretary of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

March 27, 2020

The Honorable Kristi Noem  
Governor of South Dakota  
500 East Capitol Avenue  
Pierre, South Dakota 57501

Dear Governor Noem:

As the United States continues to respond to the spread of COVID-19, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is keenly focused on ensuring lifeline services like electric power are available throughout the Nation. We have been working diligently with our industry partners to reduce the impact of this crisis; focusing on sequestering control center personnel in generation, transmission and distribution facilities; and reducing any outage that may adversely impact citizens, regardless of cause.

Indeed, just last week the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency developed a list of "Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers," which included the electric industry, to help state and local officials prioritize accessibility as they work to protect their communities. This was done in recognition of the industries that the electric power sector supports, which include medical and healthcare, telecommunications, information technology systems, defense, food and agriculture, transportation and logistics, energy, water and wastewater, law enforcement, and public works.

I am writing to request any assistance that you can offer to ensure that all of South Dakota's critical electric infrastructure remains fully operational during the crisis. The engineers, skilled craftsmen, and other essential personnel required to maintain the infrastructure are considered by DOE and DHS to be critical electric infrastructure workers and should be permitted by state and local authorities to travel to worksites to undertake the vital jobs. Plant operators and control center operators should take special measures to protect and monitor their health, including pre-screening prior to the required work and daily screening of individuals once operations are underway. These measures are necessary and part of a larger effort to ensure that operations go forward safely and expeditiously to benefit the surrounding communities and the state as a whole.

Thank you for your consideration as we work together to combat and mitigate the impacts of COVID-19. We stand ready to assist you to ensure that all of South Dakota's critical electric infrastructure remains fully operational during the crisis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Dan Brouillette". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Dan Brouillette