



Michigan Interfaith Power and Light

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Tuesday March 11, 2014

Dear Sen. Nofs and members of the Senate Energy & Technology Committee:

The MPSC's report on Energy Efficiency finds that utilities are on track to make the efficiency targets mandated by PA 295. The MPSC further found that there is great potential to expand energy efficiency measures beyond the current targets.

As a non-profit organization with a track record of working with utility companies and energy efficiency businesses to implement energy optimization in houses of worship, Michigan Interfaith Power & Light urges the committee to support the expansion of the current efficiency standards. The churches and other houses of worship we have helped demonstrate the benefits of the 2008 efficiency standards, and show us the potential for future success.

Michigan's high energy prices coupled with the large size and draftiness of traditional church architecture mean that there is great opportunity to help houses of worship reduce energy waste and save money. In challenging economic times, when faith-based ministries provide critical community services, this imperative is even stronger. For example, in partnership with DTE, Michigan IPL helped Detroit's Pilgrim Baptist Church save 25% on its considerable energy costs through energy efficiency measures. The church used this money to restart their computer classes and to begin developing a program to provide transitional housing for veterans. Through the DTE partnership, we helped a total of 48 congregations save an average of 11% on their bills. By reducing energy waste, houses of worship can devote more resources to their vital missions.

Furthermore, by taking steps toward energy efficiency, houses of worship are becoming better stewards of God's creation and are fulfilling God's wish for us to love our neighbors, especially the least of us.

As you know, Michigan gets more than 50 percent of its electricity from coal. Since coal plant emissions are linked to heart disease, childhood asthma, lung disease and premature death, cutting back on our consumption of energy through efficiency improvements will result in a healthier state. While reducing pollution-related healthcare costs, it is also a way of loving our neighbors, especially the most vulnerable.

Michigan can and should do more to curb energy waste. We urge you to seize this opportunity to save families money, protect Michiganders' health and preserve God's creation, all through energy efficiency.

Sincerely,

Julie Lyons Bricker, LEED AP O+M
Executive Director
Michigan Interfaith Power & Light