



# Phil Montgomery

Serving the Communities of Allouez, Ashwaubenon, De Pere and Green Bay

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
For further information contact:

March 24, 2005  
Rep. Phil Montgomery  
888-534-0004

## *Illinois Politician Weighs in On Wisconsin's Power Needs*

Dear Editor:

Next week, the Wisconsin Supreme Court will hear oral arguments from participants in a lawsuit to decide whether the Public Service Commission (PSC) properly exercised its authority in allowing We Energies to construct and operate a new coal-burning power plant in Oak Creek. While I am confident that the state's highest court will look out for the best interests of Wisconsin and its citizens, I am troubled by the intervention of Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan in the case.

In a "Friend of the Court" brief, Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan criticized the review process used by the PSC for failing to evaluate alternative fuel sources for the new Oak Creek plant. She asserts natural gas or other renewable sources are preferable to the clean-coal technology utilized by We Energies for the proposed Oak Creek plant. Putting aside the exhaustive environmental review, public testimony and cost-benefit analysis conducted by the PSC in the siting of the new power plant, I question Attorney General Madigan's true commitment to protecting the environment given her past record.

Before her election as the Illinois Attorney General, State Senator Lisa Madigan voted to authorize millions of dollars in state taxpayer subsidies to utility companies that burn high-sulfur Illinois coal to generate electric power – a position she highlighted in her campaign for Attorney General. Unlike Wisconsin, Illinois state law does not require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement before siting a coal-burning power plant. This issue came to light when the State of Illinois recently approved a coal plant that will emit twice the amount of mercury as We Energies' proposed Oak Creek facility. Attorney General Madigan had the opportunity to intervene in this matter, but chose not to act.

Give credit where credit is due. Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan is a skilled and shrewd politician. Standing up for Illinois' coal industry while at the same time criticizing Wisconsin's decision to authorize a clean-coal power plant provides her cover among the Illinois business community and helps her curry favor with environmental advocates. Using Wisconsin's Supreme Court as a forum to carry out her political agenda befits Illinois-style politics practiced by Attorney General Madigan, but it has no place in the deliberative review of our state Supreme Court.

Sincerely,

Phil Montgomery  
Chair, Assembly Energy and Utilities Committee