



September 27, 2024

Via email: lara-mpsc-commissioners2@michigan.gov
Michigan Public Service Commission
P.O. Box 30221
Lansing, MI 48909

Re: Case #U-21534

Dear Michigan Public Service Commissioners,

Since 1982, Corby Energy Services, Inc. (CES), a Michigan-based and woman owned (WBE-certified and Detroit based) company, has proudly partnered with DTE Energy to further our shared mission to improve and modernize Michigan's energy infrastructure. When CES first began as a small family-owned business, DTE took on the role of a mentor, providing invaluable guidance and support that helped us grow into the thriving company we are today, with hundreds of employees hired from local communities. This longstanding partnership has allowed CES to contribute to the expansion and improvement of Michigan's gas and electric infrastructure. It is from this unique perspective that we stand in full support of DTE Energy's proposal to adjust rates for their customers in Michigan.

A rate increase, while often a sensitive topic, is a necessary step to ensure the stability and progress of Michigan's energy systems. As we explore the reasons why this proposal is justified, we will also highlight how DTE's mentorship has empowered CES to play a vital role in helping to achieve these shared goals.

Modernizing Aging Infrastructure

Michigan's energy infrastructure, much of which was built decades ago, is in critical need of modernization. Outdated systems are prone to outages, inefficiencies, and increasing maintenance costs, posing risks to the reliability of essential energy services. CES is and has been actively involved in addressing these challenges, working alongside DTE to upgrade and maintain vital components of both its electric and gas grids.

2021 S. Schaefer Hwy.
Detroit, MI 48217
(734) 547-9237

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The growth of Michigan’s economy, coupled with the increasing adoption of electric vehicles and other technologies, is driving up demand for electricity. DTE Energy has been at the forefront of planning for this increased demand, but meeting it requires significant investment in expanding grid capacity and upgrading outdated systems.

Thanks to DTE’s mentorship, CES has grown from a small business into a company capable of handling large-scale energy projects. As a result, CES now employs hundreds of Michigan workers. This growth has allowed us to contribute meaningfully to the essential task of modernizing Michigan’s energy infrastructure. We believe the proposed rate increases are necessary for these crucial infrastructure upgrades. Continued investment in infrastructure is vital to prevent service interruptions, create a resilient energy grid, and continue to meet the demands of Michigan’s growing economy. The rate increase will ensure that DTE can continue to lead these efforts to modernize our energy infrastructure, creating a solid foundation for Michigan businesses and residents to thrive.

Supporting the Transition to Renewable Energy

DTE’s mentorship has been instrumental in positioning CES to play a key role in the state’s shift toward renewable energy. As Michigan moves toward reducing carbon emissions and embracing clean energy, the demand for infrastructure to support renewable energy is increasing. Through DTE’s guidance, CES has been able to expand our capabilities and expertise to renewable energy projects. CES is now involved in the engineering, procurement, and construction of wind powered installations, solar installations, and energy storage systems.

The transition to renewable energy is an ambitious and essential goal for Michigan. It requires substantial investment in both infrastructure and technology. DTE’s proposed rate increase will provide the necessary resources to continue building out renewable energy capacity while maintaining the current grid. As a company that has grown through our partnership with DTE, CES is committed to supporting these efforts, helping to ensure that Michigan’s energy future is both clean and sustainable.

In addition, renewable energy integration requires a modernized grid capable of handling variable energy flows. A rate increase would allow DTE to continue upgrading its transmission and distribution networks, ensuring they are compatible with the unique needs of a renewable energy grid. CES, with hundreds of locally hired workers, stands ready to

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assist in these infrastructure projects, further driving Michigan's transition to a cleaner energy future.

Enhancing Energy Resilience and Reliability

As Michigan continues to face more frequent and severe weather events, the need for a resilient energy system has never been more apparent. CES has extensive experience working with DTE to restore power and repair infrastructure in the wake of extreme weather. These experiences have underscored the importance of building a robust energy grid capable of withstanding the impacts of climate change.

When CES was first founded, we did not have the capacity to respond to large-scale disruptions caused by extreme weather. However, with DTE's guidance and partnership, we have grown to become a company with the skills and manpower necessary to contribute to Michigan's energy resilience. As a result, we have developed a skilled workforce that is capable of taking on critical projects that enhance the durability of the energy grid.

DTE's proposed rate increase will ensure further investment in building a resilient grid, including hardening vulnerable transmission lines, undergrounding power lines, and improving emergency response capabilities. These measures are necessary to ensure that Michigan's residents and businesses continue to receive reliable energy services, even during severe weather events.

Economic Growth and Community Impact

One of the most significant ways DTE has supported CES is by fostering our growth into a company that can create meaningful job opportunities for Michigan workers. Our longstanding partnership has allowed us to expand our operations, hiring, developing, and training hundreds of skilled workers. Our employees are proud to work on projects that directly benefit their communities' energy infrastructure.

The proposed rate increase will have a positive effect on the economy, as it will allow DTE to undertake large-scale infrastructure projects that create well-paying jobs and stimulate local economies. These projects not only improve the energy system but also provide substantial economic benefits to the communities in which they are carried out. CES is a testament to this dynamic: through our work with DTE, we have been able to grow and contribute to both the state's energy infrastructure and its economic vitality.

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Conclusion

Corby Energy Services' support for DTE Energy's rate increase proposal is rooted not only in our professional expertise but also in the deep and enduring mentorship that DTE has provided us since 1982. This mentorship has transformed CES from a small, family-owned business into a major contributor to Michigan's energy infrastructure, with hundreds of employees working to ensure a reliable, resilient, and sustainable energy future.

The proposed rate increase is a necessary step in ensuring that DTE can continue to modernize the grid, support renewable energy development, enhance resilience, and meet growing energy demands. These investments are essential for Michigan's future, and CES is proud to support DTE in making the case for this rate increase. Through our shared efforts, we will continue working together to improve the energy systems that power Michigan and foster economic growth in our communities.

Please contact us for any further discussion.

Thank you,

Corby Team

M. Scott Wilfong

Vice-President

Corby Energy Services, Inc.

A Certified Woman-Owned Business

WBENC 2005119629

swilfong@corbyenergy.com

office: (734) 547-9237

mobile: (313) 350-7979

fax: (734) 547-0340

2021 S. Schaefer Hwy.
Detroit, MI 48217
(734) 547-9237

www.corbyenergy.com