

State Representative of
Boyd (part) and Greenup

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Aaron Thompson
State Representative
98th District

January 23, 2026

Ms. Angie Hatton, Chair
Public Service Commission
211 Sower Boulevard
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

Re: PSC 2025-00257

Dear Members of the Public Service Commission:

As you consider the future of Kentucky Power, I ask you to consider economic development in your decision making. The lack of jobs is at the core of most challenges Eastern Kentucky faces.

My legislative district and the Greater Ashland area has been hit hard with the job losses of Ashland, Inc. in 1999, AK Steel Coke Plant in 2010, AK Steel's Ashland Works Plant in 2019, and Our Lady of Bellefonte Hospital in 2020. In other portions of our region, the story isn't much different with significant economic challenges due to the demise of the coal industry.

Our population numbers have slipped significantly as industry has left. The population within Kentucky Power's service territory has dwindled from approximately 510,000 people in 1980 to approximately 435,000 people as the of 2020 Census. The 2024 Census Estimate figures a further population decline to approximately 420,000. Imagine losing all of the population of Greenup and Boyd Counties at once. That is what has slowly happened in the region in the past 45 years.

These numbers are simply not sustainable for our local governments, school systems, or the distribution system costs across the Kentucky Power service territory. Our problems will continue to compound if not addressed.

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**PUBLIC SERVICE
COMMISSION**

For the region and Kentucky Power's territory to be more successful moving forward, it has to start with good paying jobs that parents can raise a family on and pay for a mortgage. As the key utility for the region, it has a primary role, alongside local officials and the Cabinet for Economic Development, for bringing more jobs to the region. As it works in this area, higher paying jobs (not retail or low-paying positions) should be the main focus. Kentucky Power has been doing this, but it, and all partners across the region, should triple down on these efforts and leave no stone unturned in helping to create opportunity for our future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Aaron Thompson', written in a cursive style.

Aaron Thompson
State Representative
District 98