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NEW YEAR; NEW MGE?

Activists deliver thousands of petition signatures to Madison Gas and Electric (MGE) calling for them to go coal-free and commit to 100 percent clean energy.

Madison, WI -- Despite blizzarding conditions, a group of concerned residents delivered more than 2,445 petitions demanding that MGE publicly announce a detailed plan to go coal-free.

Speakers highlighted the need for MGE to meet the needs of the community and to move off of coal rapidly, while a spotlight projection shined "NO COAL" onto the side of MGE's headquarters. Concerns about coal included health impacts in the coal plant communities of Oak Creek and Portage, pollution to waterways including Lake Michigan and the Wisconsin River, and carbon emissions that accelerate climate change and risk the future of young people.

One of the speakers was **Madison East High School Student Salomé Pasch**, who brought home the concern about her future and the future of her peers. "MGE needs to open their eyes and realize if they continue burning coal there won't be a safe future for us," Pasch said.

Madison and Middleton, both in MGE territory, have passed resolutions for 100 percent clean energy. Other cities, including Fitchburg, are considering similar resolutions. It's time for MGE to match the goals expressed by its customers.

"MGE calls itself a community energy company, but the people and communities in MGE's service territories made their voices clear when they passed 100 percent clean energy resolutions. MGE's clean energy goals are hindered by its own self-interest." - **Abby Lois, Clean Energy Activist, Sierra Club**

Currently, MGE is 63 percent coal-powered -- twice the national average. Although MGE has offered a goal of 30 percent clean energy by 2030, this is not a strong enough commitment given the environmental pollution and climate change causing emissions from burning coal.

"It's a new year and a new opportunity for MGE to do what's right." - **Heather Driscoll, Community Organizer, Madison East Side**

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The event was hosted by the Madison Beyond Coal Campaign, a coalition of several organizations including Sierra Club, 350 Madison and West High Green Club with the goal to move the Madison area off of coal and onto 100% clean, renewable energy.