

Vote “YES” on SB26-182: Municipally Owned Utility Updated Clean Energy Plan

Senators Simpson & Snyder | Representatives Caldwell & Paschal

This bill creates a pathway for Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) to continue to operate its Ray Nixon power plant until December 31, 2032, and commits CSU to cease its coal operations at Nixon by that date. CSU is a not-for-profit, community-owned utility, serving over 260,000 customers in the Pikes Peak Region, including four critical military installations. Because CSU is a cost-of-service utility, customers exclusively bear the burden of rate increases.

- This bill represents months of hard work between CSU, the Governor’s Office, the Sierra Club of Colorado, and other environmental stakeholders, and is a tough but fair compromise on an emission reductions pathway that protects reliability and affordability.
- This 3-year extension gives CSU time to develop access to new electric transmission resources needed to access replacement power supplies in the Southwest Power Pool Regional Transmission Organization (SPP RTO).
- CSU will file a new clean energy plan (CEP) by December 31, 2026, that achieves an 80% GHG emissions reduction by December 31, 2032, and will annually report on its progress toward achieving its target.
- CSU will continue to seek emissions reductions after 2032, including exploring ways to reduce its GHG emissions 95% by 2040 without impacting electric reliability standards.
- The enforcement authority of the APCD and AQCC that currently exist in Title 25 will be carried forward, and the enforcement dates will be aligned with the new targets.

Why has CSU moved away from SB26-022?

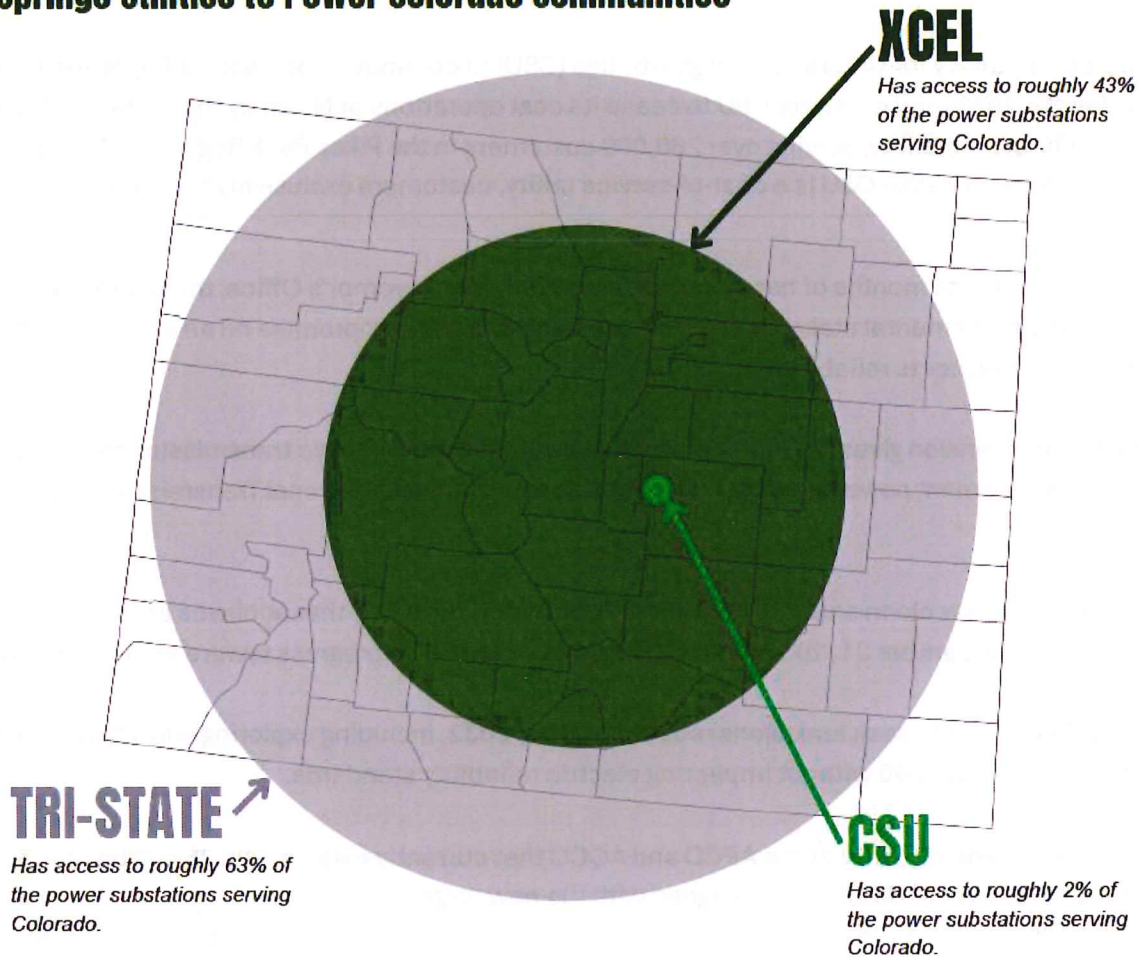
CSU’s electric transmission system is constrained to the Pikes Peak Region, and this makes access to affordable replacement power supplies outside the region very difficult. CSU sought SB26-022 to grant time for new lines to be built to enable it to access affordable replacement power for Nixon.

When CSU officially joined the newly expanded SPP RTO on April 1, a brand-new pathway opened for CSU to access the new transmission projects SPP will build to connect to the West. The planning for these projects won’t begin until 2027 and will likely not result in completed transmission lines until the early to mid 2030s.

Though CSU is carrying some risk with Nixon coming offline before these transmission projects are operational, our early experience with SPP has demonstrated we can likely mitigate most of this risk through the market and through our continued aggressive pursuit of additional power resources, including a brand-new solicitation for 300 MW of new renewable energy projects.

CSU is confident that this bill gives us the planning certainty we need to continue the reliable and affordable operation of our electric system.

Comparison of Transmission Lines Used by Tri-State, Xcel and Colorado Springs Utilities to Power Colorado Communities



Comparison of Electric Transmission Ownership

