PublicService Commission <psc@utah.gov>

RMP Supporting Electric Transporation Infrastructure,

1 message

Ryan Perry <ryan@auricsolar.com> Fri, Oct 30, 2015 at 12:39 AM
To: david.eskelsen@rockymountainpower.net
Cc: psc@utah.gov

Dear Mr. Eskelsen,

I am thrilled to see the recent news (http://www.sltrib.com/home/3107701-155/rocky-mountain-power-wants-more-electric) about Rocky Mountain Power coming out in support of electric transportation infrastructure.

At the recent public hearing regarding the net metering costs and benefits study (PSC Docket 14-035-114), I made it a point to hit on the potential we have to power not just our facilities, but ALL of our energy needs, including transportation, with cleaner sources of energy, and mentioned that RMP's lawyers are likely quick to point out that the pollution concern brought up so frequently in the testimonies is largely due to transportation. I don't know if my statements made any significant impact in bring about this initiative - they were likely just one among many, and the initiative I imagine has been in the works for quite some time, but I am very pleased to see the direction RMP is taking with this. I am also glad to hear of the launch of the subscriber solar program which I know has been being prepared for some time. We're all in this together.

Thank you.

Check out our work

Ryan C. Perry
Energy Consultant, M.B.A.
www.auricsolar.com
801-870-5744

Auric SOLAR

PublicService Commission <psc@utah.gov>

Rocky Mountain Power tax on residential solar power

1 message

Christopher Jones <cjones3798@gmail.com> Sat, Oct 31, 2015 at 11:49 AM
To: psc@utah.gov

Please see attached for the WORD document file containing the same text as below.

To: Public Services Commission, State of Utah (psc@utah.gov).
Re: Rocky Mountain Power's (RMP) recent efforts to increase electric power bills on residential customers with on-site electricity production.
Note: The following opinions and concerns are diminished not at all by RMP's recent push for their "STEP" plan.
Date: 10/31/15

From: Christopher R Jones

3798 E. Sunnydale Lane, SLC, UT 84108
cjones3798@gmail.com

(H) 801-583-2825

Rocky Mountain Power (RMP) should NOT charge an extra fee to homeowners who lower their net electricity consumption bill by generating some of their total annual electricity consumption on site (for example, roof-top solar photovoltaic panels). This is primarily true because there are other ways residential consumers of electricity could reasonably, legally, and through no "fault" or specific intent of their own, consume a lesser total annual amount of electrical energy but without incurring the proposed extra fee specifically targeted at just home owners who have installed solar electric panels on their property. Some examples of these other ways of using less electricity are:

1) The kids succeed in leaving the house and one parent dies leaving only one person to consume electric energy instead of four or five people turning on various appliances and devices. By their logic, Rocky Mountain power would punish the surviving parent with a surcharge.

2) A warmer than usual winter (e.g. for me the winter of 2014-

2015) results in a large drop in electric furnace hot-air circulating fan (750 watts in my furnace) run time. In my case, furnace run time is a significant percentage of my total annual electricity consumption. By their logic, Rocky Mountain power would punish me for the whims of the weather.

3) A responsible citizen invests considerable money in additional thermal insulation for his attic floor and house walls resulting in considerably lower electric energy consumption in the summer (less air conditioner run time) and in the winter (less furnace circulating fan run time). Perhaps this citizen was responding to Questar Gas Company's advertisement featuring "Therm – the energy wise guy" who can "show you how to save money" (see www.questargas.com). By Rocky Mountain Power's logic, either Questar Gas Company or the responsible citizen should then pay Rocky Mountain Power for their lost winter-time electric bill revenue.

4) A financially-strapped home-owner who understands the toxicity of wood smoke and actually cares about his neighbor's health (not to mention his own children's health +/- the health of his aging mother who had to move in for financial reasons) invests in a new and expensive, high efficiency, wood stove with less toxic emissions that saves him natural gas bill expenses and also allows him to greatly decrease his natural gas furnace electric fan run time. He wins financially until Rocky Mountain Power decides he is not using enough electricity and therefore adds a surcharge to his electric bill.

Thus, if they thought about it, Rocky Mountain Power's argument would be seen as patently absurd from the general public's perspective. RMP seems to be betting that home-owners with solar panels are a very small minority and thus can be antagonized with much less political fallout than angry criticism from the great majority of residential customers. Furthermore, most net metering home-owners are well-to-do and thus socially unqualified for any political ground swell of sympathy.

How can honesty and fairness prevail here? Start by admitting the obvious:

1) We are on the threshold of a new era of distributed energy production that is perceived as threatening by the electric power company monopoly.

2) Rocky Mountain Power (RMP) finds it politically convenient to pass on claimed unmet grid maintenance costs to a small minority of grid-tied solar-powered homeowners in hopes of maintaining their monopoly on electric power production.

3) RMP should stand up and take responsibility for their history of hiding some of the cost of maintaining the grid in the bill for electricity consumed.

4) It should be clear that all residential electricity consumers, with or without solar panels and net metering, benefit from a reliable grid that requires money to maintain.

5) Therefore, to be fair and to incentivize the public to decrease pollution from coal-fired generating plants, RMP should either: a) Spread out any necessary increase in "base rate" equally across all residential customers whether they choose to save electricity by cutting down on consumption or by sending power back into the grid. A quick order of magnitude estimate of increased base rate for all residential customers (assuming that an increase of about 5 dollars for each of the approximately 3% of Salt Lake County homes that have photovoltaic panels is actually necessary and fair to RMP) is equivalent to about 15 extra cents per month on every home owner's bill in the county. Surely this is not onerous for the great majority of homeowners. Or, b) As HEAL Utah opined, put a graded surcharge on those who consume more electricity.

6) A technically-informed Public Utilities Commission with high morale that truly represents the citizenry, and hears from the body politic, is the only defense against a politically powerful monopoly driven primarily by the profit motive.

> In other words, please do your job and stand up for ordinary citizens!

Sincerely,

Christopher R Jones

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SCL, UT 84108

cjones3798@gmail.com

PUC re RMP surcharge residential PV electricity bill.docx
170K

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