94 Pleasant St.
Marlborough, NH 03455
June 15, 2016

To the Public Utilities Commission:

I am writing about Docket DE 16-576, a docket to set a net metering tariff as instructed by the Legislature when they passed HB 1116.

When the ST&E committee held hearings on HB 1116, much of the discussion was about setting a fair price for net metered electricity so that both the owner of a solar array and the non-solar customers of that utility would pay their fair share. There was a concern that continuing to pay the full retail price to residential customers was not fair because they were not paying enough for fixed costs such as transmission and distribution.

There was also debate about the value of solar energy to the rest of the grid: avoided costs of building new power plants or upgrading transmission infrastructure (as in Vermont), avoided costs for peak energy (the most expensive energy), the health benefits of producing some of our energy without the CO_2, SO_2, and particulates of fossil fuels (reducing the incidence of asthma and other health problems), and the environmental benefits of cleaner air and water as well as avoiding more fracking or mountain top removal to get at more conventional fuels.

There have been a number of studies by different states in the last few years that have looked at the competing benefits and costs of solar power to the grid. Some possible points to investigate in order to ameliorate problems for the utilities should include:

- Decoupling profit from volume of sales alone
- Increasing fixed customer charges or demand charges
- Allowing utilities to automatically apply all net-metered PV toward their RPS obligations
- Investigating Time-Of-Use differentiated rates

Some studies have found that solar power is undervalued and may actually decrease the cost of energy overall. I respectfully request that the PUC consider the benefits of solar energy as well the costs when determining a tariff that is fair for everyone.

Sincerely,

Marjorie Shepardson

Marjorie Shepardson, Representative
ST&E Committee