

8/25/16

Dear Director Howland:

With this letter, I ask the Commission to deny motions to stay proceedings in Dockets DG 15-155 and DG 15-289. The motions would grant Liberty Utilities and Valley Green more time to develop a joint agreement for bringing a new gas infrastructure to Lebanon and Hanover. The process so far has included testimony from PUC staff and the Office of Consumer Advocate as well as comments from citizen intervenors, two state representatives, and many members of the public. Allowing the two companies, originally competitors for the franchise, time to bring forth new evidence in the form of a deal struck in secret after the close of hearings would be fundamentally unjust. It would effectively combine the two dockets into a single proceeding -- something the Commission has previously said it would not allow. An agreement between the two companies would not address staff and OCA recommendations that both petitions be denied.

Communities don't passively wait for new fossil fuels deal to be made; they operate in the interest of both customers and climate and come up with alternatives. Recently, the communities of Hanover and Lebanon launched one such alternative -- a campaign to have 100% renewable electricity by 2030 and full renewable portfolios by 2050.

Please turn down the motions to stay from both companies. Please also act quickly to reject both Liberty Utilities and Valley Green's proposals for a gas franchise. More time won't make better two weak, unpopular proposals.

Thank you.

Judi Colla

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