

From: Cynthia Walter <walter.atherton@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 7, 2020 9:13 AM
To: PUC: <PUC@puc.nh.gov>
Subject: Docket No. DE 20-092 2021-2023 Triennial Energy Efficiency Plan

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22 West Concord St.

Dover, NH 03820

Ms. Debra Howland

Executive Director New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission

21 S. Fruit Street, Suite 10 Concord, New Hampshire 03301-7319

Re: Docket No. DE 20-092 2021-2023 Triennial Energy Efficiency Plan

Dear Ms. Howland,

I am a Dover resident and a retired science professor.

I strongly oppose the request by a few legislators to delay the 2021 rollout of updates to energy efficiency programs.

Many planned energy efficiency updates depend on keeping the schedule for the state energy efficiency plan for 2021-2023. Lawmakers and utilities developed the plan because it will save money, grow jobs, and benefit our economy as well as the environment.

This plan was debated and passed by the legislature, signed by the Governor and put into regulations with support of utilities and the PUC. Now, a handful of legislators are asking the PUC to suspend action indefinitely. This sets a dangerous precedent if the PUC, a part of the Executive Branch, blocks a law passed by the legislature. This was not rushed legislation; the components of the law were in development for years with a broad range of input and support from citizens, the energy sector and the Consumer Advocate Office. The law's effects will span years, so any unforeseen problems can be corrected later.

Nine legislators want to stop the plan based, in part, on inaccurate assumptions and incomplete analyses. For example, in their letter asking the PUC to stop the plan, they exaggerated the cost at \$100M per year, but ignored that costs will be spread over 3 years and other aspects of rate changes are still in negotiation. They claimed without evidence that utilities and customers will be burdened significantly by the energy efficiency plan, but ignore larger cost issues, such as transmission changes and decommissioning the nuclear power plant. In contrast, small businesses are more likely to benefit from the plan directly with energy upgrades and indirectly with the economic and employment stimulus that begins immediately with the plan.

Here are reasons why we need the updated Energy Efficiency plan to start in 2021:

New money goes right away into local jobs.

(EE) jobs include a broad range of skill levels, thus many people underemployed from COVID-19 can find new jobs with EE projects.

Energy efficiency

Energy bills decrease right away.

After installing energy efficiency upgrades, home-owners and also small businesses such as restaurants see lower bills; we need this now under COVID-19. Beyond COVID, energy savings stimulate spending in all sectors of the economy.

NH residents depend on the increased funds.

For example, the weatherization projects run by my local Community Action Partnership get only partial funding from other programs; thus the 2021 NH Energy Efficiency update is critical. ([Weatherization – Community Action Partnership of Strafford County \(straaffordcap.org\)](http://www.straaffordcap.org))

Weatherization really works

The benefits we see in NH match national trends documented by scientists at Oak Ridge National Laboratory, as seen in quotes below from peer reviewed publications.

“WAP and leveraged expenditures supported directly and indirectly 8,500 jobs and increased national economic output by \$1.2 billion.” (Tonn, et al. 2014 - Oak Ridge National Laboratories, ORNL/TM-2014/338)

“The program supported the weatherization of 98,000 units in PY 2008 and 332,000 units in PY 2010. It is estimated that the program saved 2.3 trillion Btus in PY 2008 and 7.6 trillion Btus

in PY 2010. These savings achieve \$420 million in energy cost savings with respect to PY 2008 and \$1.2 billion in savings in PY 2010. Environmental and health and household related benefits add \$267 million and \$1.2 billion and \$694 million and \$3.8 billion of co-benefits to the energy cost savings benefits.” (Tonn, B. et al. 2018. Evaluation of the U.S. department of energy’s weatherization assistance program: Impact results. **Energy Policy** 118 (2018) 279–290.)

Many thanks for considering my request. If you wish to discuss this, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards,

Cynthia Walter, Ph.D.

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