



Proposed Net Metering Fee

1 message

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To: psc@utah.gov

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Dear Public Service Commission (Ron Allen, et. al).

I am writing in opposition to the proposed \$4.25 Net metering fee). While I recognize the equity argument, it is simply not in our state's long-term best interest to take any action that forestalls the development of the alternative energy industry. Fossil fuels may have brought us a long way and have been very lucrative, but they have also caused and continue to cause great health risk and harm to us. Dumping in rivers is not permitted. Why have we let dumping in our air continue for so long? If anything, we should be penalizing customers more stringently to cover the externalities caused by our use of coal. Maybe economically, we didn't have a good solution for clean energy, but as we are now getting closer, let's not shoot ourselves in the foot.

I worked for 7 years on emergency power systems before moving into solar as prices came down. Our company has grown consistently over 200% per year, and I feel I am in a job that is honestly working for the benefit of us all.

Perhaps one RMP customer I know best expressed the feeling many of rocky mountain power's customers. She was asked casually by RMP to join blue sky when she mentioned her support of green energy during a phone conversation about setting up a new meter for a home she just acquired. Her response, "Absolutely NOT! Not until you quit trying to screw over those people who are trying to go solar on their own. You're asking me to pay a premium for clean energy, and at the same time penalizing others who try to do it themselves. ... My [gosh]. You can't have it all. You just take, and take, and take. Not until you get with it!"

Honestly, I love blue-sky, and support efforts to promote clean energy, but RMP's initiative to tack on a fee to net metering customers, no matter how small, signals to customers that they (RMP) are not supportive. This perception will likely have the effect which RMP appears to intend: Slowing down customer solar adoption, thereby protecting their interests. Note, the proposed fee doesn't deter RMP from installing solar or wind on their own, as prices fall, just their customers, who will inconveniently find that is always just out of their reach as net metering fees are arbitrarily increased.

The reasoning behind the amount to charge is also flawed. With a flat fee, customers with smaller systems would pay a disproportionately higher amount than the wealthier ones, which RMP alleges are passing on costs to lower-income homes. Also, at <1% net metering customer penetration, a \$4.25 increase in the bill is over-stated to offset possible increased costs to the utility.

Of course, if the fee is passed, it will slow down the solar industry, creating a loss in opportunity for job creations that are actually meaningful. A coal miner produces power for a day, and then must do the same forever. Job, yes, but wasteful, inefficient, and unhealthy. A solar installer creates wealth that lasts and benefits society far beyond his own job because of the recurring long-term savings, both in generating power, and reduced medical costs to society.

If the fixed costs of the grid are not being met, then raise the base fee a few cents across the board, don't single out solar customers who are reducing daytime demand on the grid, just because they still use it at night. Encourage them to do what they can, and support it.

Say no to the net metering fee.

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