



Real Possibilities

Mr. Ron Allen, Chairman
Utah Public Service Commission
160 East 300 South
Salt Lake City, UT 84114

July 28, 2014

Dear Chairman Allen:

Attached are comments from several participants in an AARP tele-town hall held July 15, 2014 related to the current Rocky Mountain Power rate case (Docket Number 13-035-184). These comments were left by phone to be transcribed and sent to the Public Service Commission.

Thank you for reviewing these comments and for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Alan Ormsby', is written above the typed name.

Alan Ormsby
State Director
AARP Utah

Transcribed recordings of comments from participants in an AARP Utah Tele-Town Hall event held July 15, 2014 for the Public Service Commission. Comments are in regard to the proposed Rocky Mountain Power rate increases (Docket Number 13-035-184).

Dale Swenson
3593 N 575 E
North Ogden, UT

My question is, as a public utility, I notice in my Rocky Mountain Power bill that they donate a significant amount of money to a school district every year or every month. How can they justify spending public utility money to donate like that? My second question is I notice they advertise in the newspaper and on television. Why do they spend ratepayer money to advertise when they are a regulated public utility?

Penny
2593 W 1800 N
Farr West, UT

My concern is for senior citizens who are on a very fixed income. Also, I am below the poverty level. I am unemployed. I am applying for disability and I have zero income coming in. I have been on the equal payment plan and I have been on the HEAT program and I am very thankful for it but right now I have no money coming in whatsoever. I am not able to pay my bills. What about the people who are disabled and the people who are below the poverty level? I think that they should be able to get a break including more than the equal payment plan. But even more so because, like I say, what about those people who can't afford to pay them and I keep my central air at 78 or 79 degrees and in the winter my temperature is usually set at 68 degrees. I do everything I can to conserve energy and have the equal payment plan and everything but I have no income and no way to pay my utilities. Are they going to shut off your utilities if you aren't able to pay because you have no income or because you are a senior on limited income and because you only get so much money or no money like me and you have to choose between heating your home or air conditioning your home or medications?

Karen Sharkey
453 Dammeron Valley Drive West
Dammeron Valley, UT

I would like to say that some utilities, for instance Verizon, provide a special rate or discount service to veterans and military and I think it would be nice if other utilities considered doing so as well.

Donelda Cochran
Vernal, UT

I am very proud that we do have Social Security although it doesn't seem to be enough to pay my bills or anything without me cutting back. I live here in Vernal, Utah and it gets very hot in Utah and I have to run my fan or my swamp cooler very sparingly and sometimes sit here just almost suffocating and sweating. And I know that it costs money to have this electricity coming, but is there any way that they can also give a discount to senior citizens who are low-income. I appreciate their need to keep abreast of all the new things that come and employees that need their pay too.

Linda Whitlock
440 W 800 S, Apt 5
Richfield, UT 84071

Why is so much of this rate increase allocated for residential customers? We are the least able to pay – especially the seniors. There are many, many seniors who are just barely staying alive with their income. Their income does not go up, but the bills do. I think it's a little unfair when residential customers such as myself are asked to pay more when the executives are getting these huge bonuses and huge salaries. It just doesn't seem fair to me. It doesn't seem like it is allocated fairly.

David Folland

I think it is not in the community's best interest to have an additional charge on solar panel users. It was suggested that Utah adopt a renewable portfolio standard and I totally agree with that. That would be wonderful. However, Utah seems to have a point of view of individual choice and individuality. I think it would be very, very hard to get a renewable portfolio standard passed in the legislature. Given the fact that it is very unlikely to pass, what could we do otherwise? Well, we can encourage individuals to take the initiative. Right now there are only about 2,000 homes who are solar panels users so it is not a big financial impact overall and if we can incentivize that, there are a lot of reasons for people to do it. The advantage to the community is, one, less particulate pollutants which are affecting our health but I think in the long-term more importantly, stabilization of prices because it is very likely that there is going to be a carbon tax or other influences to reduce our use of carbon sources for energy. And also the fact that most solar power is produced at the same time that we have these electricity boosts in the summer time for air conditioning so this would take stress off the grid if people had solar panels and they could be producing their own energy at times of peak demand. Again, I appreciate the point of view. It was also said that it was somehow more efficient to charge solar users. I didn't quite understand the efficiency reason for this. I would say in fairness that all use of the grid ought to be sharing some baseline costs and there is a variable charge based on how much we use.