

In the Matter Of:

In Re: RMP - Net Metering Program

HEARING - DOCKET NO. 14-035-114

August 09, 2017

Job Number: 355613

1 BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF UTAH

2

3 In the Matter of the Investigation Docket No. 14-035-114
4 of the Costs and Benefits of
5 PacifiCorp's Net Metering Program

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HEARING PROCEEDINGS

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PUBLIC WITNESS HEARING

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TAKEN AT: Utah Public Service Commission
Fourth Floor
160 East 300 South
Salt Lake City, Utah

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12 DATE: Wednesday, August 9, 2017

13 TIME: 2:00 p.m.

14 REPORTER: Mary R. Honigman, R.P.R.

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25 Job No. 355613

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1 PROCEEDINGS

2 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Good afternoon.

3 We are here in Public Service Commission Docket
4 No. 14-035-114. This is In the Matter of the
5 Investigation of the Costs and Benefits of
6 PacificCorp's Net Metering Program Compliance Filing
7 and Request to Complete all Analysis Required under
8 the Net Metering Statute for the Evaluation of the
9 Net Metering Program.

10 This is the time and place for the
11 public witness hearing. It is the opportunity for
12 members of the public to provide comments to us with
13 respect to this docket. We appreciate so much
14 interest in this proceeding. We appreciate all of
15 you that have taken time out of your day to speak to
16 us and address us. It looks like we have a lot of
17 people that have something to say to us today. Just
18 to let you know, this proceeding is also being
19 streamed live through YouTube -- just by audio only,
20 not video -- but the audio of this proceeding is
21 being streamed on our YouTube channel. There's a
22 link to that from our PSC website.

23 In terms of how this proceeding will
24 move forward, it looks like we have a lot of people
25 who want to speak to us, so it looks like it makes

1 sense to do some time limitations just to make sure
2 that those who want to speak to us don't have to
3 wait an unreasonable amount of time to do so. I
4 think what we'll do is, we'll limit initial comments
5 to three minutes apiece. If anyone needs more time
6 than that, you're welcome to go to the end of the
7 list and come back again and speak to us further
8 after everyone that's here to speak to us has had an
9 opportunity. And so we'll proceed in that order.

10 Any other preliminary matters any
11 party in the room feels they need to address? I
12 have a question in the back of the room.

13 UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: If we
14 don't get a chance to speak, can we leave a written
15 statement?

16 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Written
17 statements can be provided to the Commission at
18 psc@utah.gov. We have been accepting written
19 comments for a while on this docket, and they can
20 always be received there. I believe we have one
21 individual who -- yes, another question.

22 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: If
23 we're speaking today and we have a copy of our
24 remarks for the Commission, may we leave those with
25 you today?

1 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Yes, you may do
2 so, and then we'll get those entered in the docket
3 when we receive those. Okay. I believe we have one
4 individual who has called in on the telephone, a
5 Mr. Malin Moench. Are you on the phone?

6 MR. MOENCH: I'm here.

7 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Can we move the
8 microphone up there? So, Mr. Moench, I don't know
9 if you could hear what I was describing before. We
10 have a lot people here to speak today, so we're
11 going to limit initial comments to about three
12 minutes apiece, and then if you want to come back
13 after everyone who is here has had an opportunity to
14 speak, we can give you more time after that. So why
15 don't you go ahead, Mr. Moench.

16 MR. MOENCH: Okay. Thank you. My
17 name is Malin Moench. I have spent 35 years
18 analyzing utilities' rates and costs at the federal
19 level. In this docket, Rocky Mountain Power
20 justifies its proposed special charges for its
21 rooftop solar customers mainly by asserting that
22 they shift peak-capacity costs to other customers.
23 This argument is unrealistic as I will explain.

24 Rocky Mountain Power, or RMP, argues
25 that most net metered power enters the system during

1 times of slack capacity when it isn't needed. It
2 further argues that its rooftop customers draw more
3 power than other customers during the system's cool
4 (inaudible) peak, which requires it to add peak
5 generation, transmission, and distribution capacity.
6 Its analysis glosses over many facts. One is that
7 rooftop solar currently has a tiny share of total
8 system capacity, and the share will have to grow at
9 its current pace for at least ten more years before
10 it is large enough to impose additional
11 peak-capacity costs on RMP's system. RMP admits in
12 other context that its least-cost strategy for
13 meeting minor demand peaks is to buy the amount of
14 power it needs on the wholesale and balance market,
15 rather than to add reserve-generating transmission
16 or distribution capacity to its system.

17 Currently, Utah has a hundred
18 megawatts of rooftop solar, which is
19 1/2 of 1 percent of RMP's peak total-system
20 capacity. RMP expects rooftop solar in Utah to grow
21 by 40 megawatts for the next ten years each year.
22 If so, by that time Utah will have 500 megawatts of
23 rooftop solar, or 4 percent of RMP's future system
24 capacity of 12,000 megawatts. 4 percent
25 penetration, however, isn't enough to add any

1 peak-capacity costs to its system, even if none of
2 it is available to serve peak demand. Why is this?
3 It's because ten years from now, RMP expects to be
4 part of a transformed, wholesale power grid where 80
5 or so local imbalanced markets are consolidated into
6 a single, vast, smart grid. This super grid will
7 distribute the output of dozens of coal and gas
8 plants -- Wyoming Wind, Northwest Hydro, and
9 California Solar -- in a manner that balances
10 wholesale loads across the entire western United
11 States.

12 According to an analysis by the
13 National Renewable Energy Lab, this more diverse and
14 flexible, regional, wholesale market will be able to
15 absorb the variability of renewable power at
16 penetration levels of 35 percent, without adding any
17 additional reserve capacity. A grid like this
18 should easily accommodate the amount of dispatched
19 variability to be expected from the comparatively
20 tiny sliver of rooftop solar capacity that will then
21 exist ten years from now in Utah, without requiring
22 RMP to incur any of the additional peak-capacity
23 costs.

24 In this docket, Witness Clements has
25 noted that at current rooftop penetration levels,

1 the capacity costs that RMP thinks are shifted to
2 non-rooftop customers average less than 15 cents a
3 month per non-rooftop customer.

4 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Mr. Moench --

5 MR. MOENCH: Solar penetration growth
6 fourfold after ten years --

7 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Mr. Moench --

8 MR. MOENCH: -- costs will then
9 average a whopping 60 cents per customer. This is
10 an amount that will be lost in the noise of RMP's
11 inherently imprecise cost estimate. Witness
12 Clements also points out that these charges could
13 easily add 100 times those amounts to the monthly
14 bill of each rooftop solar customer.

15 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Mr. Moench,
16 we're going to have to go on with other witnesses at
17 this point.

18 MR. MOENCH: These special charges
19 are a cannonball aimed at a problem that is no
20 bigger than a flea and will remain no bigger than a
21 flea for at least ten years. One wonders whether
22 they are not really intended to wipe the flea but
23 are intended to wipe out the solar customers
24 standing behind the flea.

25 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER:

1 Mr. Moench, can you hear me?

2 MR. MOENCH: Barely.

3 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: It sounds like
4 we've got some audio issues with the phone. Because
5 of time, I think we're going to have to move on to
6 others who are here waiting to speak. If you would
7 like, we can come back to you after everyone who is
8 present has had an opportunity to give us some
9 initial comments. Is that what you would like to
10 do, Mr. Moench?

11 MR. MOENCH: I would like to do that.
12 I only had one more sentence in my statement.

13 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Okay. Go ahead
14 and give us that sentence, then.

15 MR. MOENCH: The final sentence was
16 that the Public Service Commission should recognize
17 that this rate proposal is a solution in search of a
18 problem, and invite RMP to file it again in ten
19 years should the problem actually arise by then.
20 Thank you.

21 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Our
22 next witness is David Bennet. You're welcome to use
23 the podium or the chair, whichever you prefer.

24 MR. BENNET: Where would you like me?

25 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Either is fine.

1 MR. BENNET: So last month in July,
2 once again, Salt Lake set a record, an
3 all-time-record-high for the month of July.
4 Yesterday's New York Times' lead story confirmed
5 99.5 percent of the climate scientists in the United
6 States have confirmed that climate change is very
7 real, that it is man-made and that it is progressing
8 faster than had been originally anticipated.

9 My name is David Bennet. I'm from
10 Park City. I have lived in Utah for 45 years. In
11 2010, I installed rooftop solar. I didn't do it for
12 economic reasons, because certainly back then it
13 didn't make economic sense. I did it because it was
14 the right thing to do. Now we have Mr. Warren
15 Buffet, the owner of Rocky Mountain Power, and the
16 American Legislative Exchange Counsel, substantially
17 funded by utilities and other fossil-burning
18 companies, coming in and trying to set policy for
19 Utah. Coming in and trying to decimate rooftop
20 solar. We just simply can't allow it.

21 Now, I do use the grid, but the
22 utility refuses to give me any credit for what I
23 provide into the grid, and that is power that can go
24 to my neighbors; power that is not having to go be
25 transmitted over long distances. We're also being

1 able to forestall the need for additional power
2 plants because we do have rooftop solar. By way of
3 an analogy, look at rural Utah. So much of Utah
4 outside the Wasatch Front is rural. Clearly, it
5 costs more money to install, maintain, and transmit
6 power into rural Utah. Yet, do we charge rural
7 Utahns higher fees for the kilowatt hours that they
8 use? Of course not. Nor should we do the same for
9 the solar users. The 16,000 of us out of 865,000
10 total subscribers in Utah, we shouldn't be taxed and
11 have to pay more because of our commitment to the
12 environment, our commitment to burning far fewer
13 fossil fuels, and by putting in place renewable
14 energy for the future.

15 Mr. Ryan Evans, head of Utah Solar
16 Energy Association and his businesses that are part
17 of that association, whether they're our own Vivint
18 Solar, the large corporation based here in Utah, or
19 smaller operations like Gardener Engineering out of
20 Ogden or Intermountain Wind and Power, these are
21 local business that currently employ 4,400 Utahns.
22 These are jobs that are important to the economy and
23 it is important that we preserve the Utah solar
24 industry, so as we go forward, we have that industry
25 in place.

1 Let me close with sharing with you
2 the title of a song. February, a year ago, I had
3 the privilege of seeing an amazing show on Broadway.
4 I saw the original cast in Hamilton, and the title
5 of this song I am not directing to you the
6 commissioners, I'm directing it to all of us in this
7 room; I'm directing it to our congressional
8 delegation, the legislature, and our governor. And
9 the title of that song is, "History Has its Eyes on
10 You." We need to do the right thing, we need to do
11 it now, we need to prepare for the future. Solar is
12 our future, and I encourage you to reject Rocky
13 Mountain Power's proposal. Thank you very much.

14 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Our next speaker
15 is Ken Bronston, and the next two after him are Bill
16 Davis and Brent Donohue. Mr. Bronston.

17 MR. BRONSTON: My name is Ken
18 Bronston. I have been a resident of Salt Lake City
19 for more than 40 years, and I love this
20 extraordinary space of Utah that I call my home.

21 I'm here to urgently request that you
22 reject Rocky Mountain Power's net metering
23 compliance filing because I believe that it will
24 severely cripple the economic viability of the solar
25 industry in this state. But, more importantly like

1 our last speaker, I believe the rate increases
2 requested will curtail the transition from fossil
3 fuels to renewable energies our society must
4 undertake if it is to help curtail the worst effects
5 of climate change, which 97 percent of climate
6 scientists agree is primarily caused by human
7 activity, that is, the burning of fossil fuels.

8 I have just this past week contracted
9 for the installation of solar panels on my home.
10 The cost of that installation and possible savings
11 over time obviously figured in my decision. I'm not
12 a rich man. But the guiding motivation behind that
13 decision is my deep desire to make a palpable
14 contribution towards reducing my destructive, human
15 input on the natural world we all inhabit.

16 I have spent a number of hours
17 reading just some of the filings in this lengthy
18 docket in which this panel has appropriately devoted
19 so much time and effort. Thank you. And so I am
20 aware that the Commission has determined that under
21 Utah Code 54-15-105-1, the guiding statute in this
22 case, it went beyond your legal purview to conduct
23 "an all-encompassing analysis that extends to the
24 kinds of broad societal concerns intervenors assert
25 are relevant in this docket." And I know I'm

1 drawing attention to just that kind of concern, but
 2 I strongly suspect that those with an intimate
 3 knowledge of the vast range of considerations that
 4 are before this panel can find just and reasonable
 5 legal arguments for including the ethical
 6 environmental concern that I raise to be within your
 7 legal statutory purview.

8 I hope you will find such arguments
 9 persuasive. Thank you.

10 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. And
 11 next is Bill Davis. The next two are Brent Donohue
 12 and Gary Cox. And, Mr. Davis, if I could ask you, I
 13 think it would help our streaming if you pull that
 14 microphone a little bit closer to the edge of the
 15 podium.

16 MR. DAVIS: As you just said, my name
 17 is Bill Davis. I live right here in Mill Creek,
 18 Utah. I have lived in Salt Lake City my whole life,
 19 and I own and operate a small solar installation
 20 company. I'm here to ask you to do the right thing.

21 My understanding is the Public
 22 Service Commission decided to weigh not the total
 23 socioeconomic value of rooftop solar, but rather to
 24 decide if net metering is a cost or benefit to other
 25 grid users. I also understand that you commissioned

1 RMP to create this study.

2 First, the minute you asked RMP to do
3 the study, the outcome of that was determined. You
4 gave the keys to the hen house to the fox. There
5 was no way on earth they would come back to you
6 saying, "We're good. It's okay. Never mind." I
7 have a summary right here below this which I'll
8 submit, of 16 studies that were conducted in the
9 last few years, and 12 of them came back to say that
10 grid-tied solar producers benefit all grid-tied
11 customers more than they cost them. And three of
12 the four others were commissioned by utilities that
13 dissented.

14 While rooftop solar and other
15 efficiency measures pose a challenge to the
16 electrical utilities' existing business model, the
17 benefits of distributed energy outweigh the costs,
18 and those benefits are shared by all ratepayers.
19 The benefits of private and distributed solar
20 investments include reduced need for centralized
21 power plants, reduced strain on the utility grid,
22 and reduced voltage drop. It produces the most
23 at-peak demand as well.

24 The Cornerstone Policy enabling
25 rooftop solar to be equitable is net metering. It

1 creates a host of societal benefits for all
2 ratepayers that are not accounted for by the utility
3 analysis, including public health benefits,
4 employment, downstream economic benefits and
5 price-market impacts. The independent report
6 conducted by Crossborder in 2012, said that
7 California's net metering program gave a benefit of
8 \$92 million annually to California ratepayers. The
9 2012 report, Cost of Net Metering in the State of
10 California, commissioned by the California Public
11 Utility Commission, found that solar customers pay
12 more on their own bills than what it costs the
13 utility to support them.

14 Ever since a 2013 Edison study,
15 utilities have argued that solar panels strain the
16 electric grid, and what they found out from that
17 study was that they told the utilities you're
18 basically going to lose customers over time, because
19 solar is going to reduce the amount of watts that
20 you sell. So what the utilities companies have done
21 is find other ways to try and stymie or sabotage
22 solar, and that's exactly what this whole net
23 metering charade is about.

24 Every household that has a rooftop
25 solar and drives an electric vehicle directly

1 benefits every person in this room and in this city.
 2 It stops them from producing carbon monoxide and
 3 other harmful particulates. We should be doing
 4 everything possible to promote rooftop solar, not
 5 kill it. And make no mistake, if you scrap net
 6 metering, you will kill solar in Utah and be putting
 7 thousands of us out of jobs, completely killing a
 8 fast-growing industry and directly harming the
 9 environment. Thank you.

10 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: I need to ask
 11 our court reporter -- you were having some trouble
 12 with the first witness. Are we doing okay for
 13 getting a transcript?

14 COURT REPORTER: Yes. It was just
 15 the phone. I was having a hard time understanding
 16 what he was saying. No other problems. Thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Our next speaker
 18 is Brent Donohue. The next two are Gary Cox and Tom
 19 Carter.

20 MR. DONOHUE: Good afternoon. My
 21 name is Brent Donohue. I am the -- my business
 22 address is 4551 South Atherton Drive, Salt Lake
 23 City, Utah. I am the business manager of
 24 International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
 25 Local 57. Local 57 is the certified representative

1 of maintenance, operations, and support employees of
2 Rocky Mountain Power. I administer and enforce
3 collective bargaining agreements with RMP in Utah,
4 Idaho, and Wyoming. The purpose of my testimony is
5 to support RMP's filed rate change for new solar
6 customers with the Utah Public Service Commission.

7 The challenge for all concerned
8 parties is to have a rate system that accurately
9 values electricity that flows in different
10 directions, at different volumes, at different times
11 of day. The monthly fixed charge is adequate and
12 not unusual in traditional, residential rate-making
13 design to include minimum charges. These minimum
14 charges assure the adequate level of cost recovery
15 from net metering generators. The demand charge is
16 also standard in rate-making design. This demand
17 charge covers the cost of interconnection.

18 As rooftop solar grows, grid costs
19 will increase. Rocky Mountain Power's
20 cost-of-service study accurately estimates the cost
21 of service for rooftop solar customers. Rooftop
22 solar is a cost to the grid. These fees will be
23 used to cover the real costs of structures, wires,
24 meters customer service, and substation equipment.

25 The installation of net metering does

1 not make customers independent from the grid. When
2 it's dark outside or overcast, RMP is required by
3 law to have enough power on reserve to meet the
4 customers' needs. Net metering customers are still
5 heavily reliant on the distribution infrastructure.
6 An adequate grid is needed to serve all customers in
7 the system, and all customers may pay -- must pay
8 their fair share to maintain and grow the
9 distribution system.

10 Net metering is actually pretty bad
11 policy. Net metering customers are compensated for
12 their unused power at the retail rate, which is
13 two-to-three-times higher than the wholesale price
14 paid to other generators. The current net metering
15 policy disproportionately subsidizes rooftop solar.
16 I request that you reduce the amount the utility
17 pays in credits to net metering customers. No
18 business can cover the cost of operation and profit
19 necessary while buying the product at the same price
20 they sell it for. The utility must provide billing,
21 support services, grid operation and maintenance,
22 and other operational functions. Customers have to
23 pay for those.

24 Regulators are responsible for
25 ensuring that electric utility can afford to supply

1 power to the largest number of customers at the most
2 equitable rates. That includes customers without
3 the means or inclination to install solar
4 collectors. The Public Service Commission, I ask
5 you not to feel bullied by the amount of people that
6 you hear from -- rooftop solar customers and current
7 net metering customers. The long-term solution is
8 one that balances the needs of all customers and not
9 just a few. Thank you.

10 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you,
11 Mr. Donohue. The next speaker is Gary Cox, followed
12 by Tom Carter and Calvin Ockey. I want to make a
13 comment. We do understand and appreciate that there
14 are a lot of strong feelings about various issues in
15 here. I don't think we, the three of us, have any
16 objection to applause or response, but I do have
17 some sensitivity to -- we have a long list of people
18 who want to speak to us today, so anything that
19 delays each time we have someone speak, it just
20 pushes the people towards the end of the list having
21 to stay here. I know all of you have lots of other
22 things in your lives, and we appreciate you taking
23 time out of your day. And so we're hopeful to be
24 able to give everyone a reasonable opportunity to
25 speak, and I would just ask you to be mindful of

1 that as we have responses between speakers. With
2 that, go ahead, Mr. Cox.

3 MR. COX: Thank you. My name is Gary
4 Cox. I was born and raised in Utah. I began
5 working in the electrical industry in 1978. Since
6 then, I have worked in both the power generation and
7 power distribution business.

8 The installation of solar net energy
9 metering does not make customers independent from
10 the grid. Rooftop solar customers are still equally
11 reliant. Electricity is flowing one way or the
12 other, but they do not stand alone without the grid.
13 The reality is that rooftop solar customers are
14 asking non-solar customers to pay the total cost of
15 constructing and maintaining the grid and
16 alternative generation resources. Everybody needs
17 to pay their fair share of the actual costs.

18 When the power goes out, who do you
19 call? The solar company or the utility company?
20 The utility companies are required to respond and
21 maintain a reliable and affordable electrical system
22 for everyone. I support the utility company's
23 position in this matter. Thank you.

24 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you,
25 Mr. Cox. Tom Carter. And the next two are Calvin

1 Ockey and Todd Sangster.

2 MR. CARTER: Hello. I'm Tom Carter.

3 I was born and raised here in Utah. I work for
4 Rocky Mountain Power. I am currently a
5 troubleshooter for them in the Utah County area and,
6 anyway, my comment is just short and sweet. I think
7 all customers should be able to cover their own true
8 costs, and my folks who are Rocky Mountain Power
9 customers shouldn't have to pay -- they're retired
10 and on a fixed income -- they shouldn't have to pay
11 for other people's power bill. Thank you.

12 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you,
13 Mr. Carter. Calvin Ockey, followed by Todd Sangster
14 and James Voyles. And I apologize if I mispronounce
15 names. I'll do my best.

16 MR. OCKEY: Calvin Ockey from
17 southern Utah. Appreciate the time. I'm a little
18 bit nervous right now, but I'm here in support of
19 Rocky Mountain Power's net metering. I own
20 apartments that I have disabled people and people
21 that need -- special needs and everything. I do not
22 have the money to pay for solar panels. From what I
23 understand, there's all kinds of tax incentives in
24 that, but there's no such thing as free money.
25 Somebody's got to pay for it, and I feel like Rocky

1 Mountain Power has done me a good job giving me
2 reliable power and I don't see that going away. My
3 biggest fear is I don't want to have -- I mean, I
4 think the people that want the solar panels, that's
5 great, that's fine, everybody has their wants and
6 needs, but I honestly think that if the solar power
7 industry -- the people that like solar power, they
8 ought to stand on their own two feet and not rely on
9 the grid if they don't want to help pay for the
10 grid. Then have them go ahead and -- the only thing
11 that I know of that stores power is batteries. And
12 I don't know how many people in this room has only
13 had to buy one battery for their car. I mean,
14 everybody's had to buy plenty of batteries in their
15 lifetime. What are we going to do with the
16 batteries after they go bad? But I'm here to
17 support Rocky Mountain Power. Like I said, I think
18 everybody ought to pay their fair share. Thanks.

19 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you,
20 Mr. Ockey. Todd Sangster, followed by James Voyles.

21 MR. SANGSTER: Thank you. My name is
22 Todd Sangster. I'm currently a net metering
23 customer of Rocky Mountain Power. I live in the
24 Avenues here in Salt Lake City.

25 My system's been active about a year.

1 I believe in energy efficiency and actually produce
2 more power than I can consume. I have about a
3 one-point-five-megawatt hour overage right now. I
4 expect that to increase to about two megawatt hours
5 when credits expire in March. Now, I'm currently
6 happy with the current arrangement. I pay \$9 a
7 month and Rocky Mountain Power gets a donation of
8 two megawatt hours a year. However, Rocky Mountain
9 Power wants to rock the boat. So I have run all of
10 the testimony that's been submitted and I have three
11 points beyond that that I'd like to make.

12 First, there seems to be some odd
13 calculations that Rocky Mountain Power does. So I
14 could increase my output by 30 to 50 percent simply
15 by clipping my trees. And under Rocky Mountain
16 Power's calculations, that would increase my shifted
17 cost. Now, I give Rocky Mountain Power a bigger
18 gift and their costs go up. This seems very
19 strange. I wish I could do that accounting, but the
20 IRS might have some issues with that.

21 The second point is that the design
22 of the study which Rocky Mountain Power uses to
23 claim that net metering customers shift costs is
24 fundamentally flawed. This is a comparative study
25 where they look at net metering customers versus

1 non-net customers. And, ideally, when you're doing
2 that study, you'd have one variable which differs;
3 do they have solar panels or not. However, Rocky
4 Mountain Power's study doesn't do that. Instead, as
5 the speaker before me referenced, net metering
6 customers are going to have a whole range of other
7 variables that differ. They tend to be wealthier,
8 they tend to be in certain areas which will have
9 different insulation properties -- one would think
10 they get more sun, more gadgets, et cetera. There's
11 a whole range of reasons why their power usage might
12 be different.

13 So my -- I'm a consultant to the
14 pharmaceutical industry, and my expertise is in
15 clinical trial design. To draw an analogy, what
16 Rocky Mountain Power's study does is, if I took a
17 group of 20-year olds, gave them my experimental
18 drug, and I took of group of 70-year olds and gave
19 them a placebo, and then I conclude that my drug is
20 a wonder drug. It increased lifespan by 50 years.
21 You'd buy that, right? Okay. Medicine, we got the
22 FDA to say no, that's junk science, that's spurious,
23 protect the public. So my ask is for this
24 Commission to protect the public from Rocky Mountain
25 Power's junk study.

1 Final point is that Rocky Mountain
2 Power fails to account for adverse customer behavior
3 which may result from their proposal. The speakers
4 before me mentioned that net metering customers
5 connect to the grid and have costs to the grid. I
6 agree with that; that's true. However, if this
7 Commission approves Rocky Mountain Power's proposal,
8 I will opt out from the grid.

9 I have done a detailed look at my
10 usage over the last year, and it would take less
11 than 30-kilowatt hours of batteries for me to supply
12 all of my usage. I mentioned that I produce more
13 than I can consume. I can currently get 42-kilowatt
14 hours of batteries from Tesla for \$18,000. Notably,
15 that's down from over \$25,000 last November, when
16 Rocky Mountain Power published this proposal, so
17 costs are coming down quickly. But, look, me
18 leaving the grid wouldn't be good for the public
19 interest. I'm giving Rocky Mountain Power power,
20 and then that just decreases -- fewer customers for
21 the cost of the grid.

22 However, in closing, I think it's
23 important to be both positive and negative. I would
24 like to mention I would support a time-of-use rate
25 proposal if it's well crafted and keeps all

1 residential customers in a single class as part of a
2 general rate case from Rocky Mountain Power. And I
3 urge the Commission to take that route forward.
4 Thank you.

5 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you,
6 Mr. Sangster. Next up is James Voyles followed by
7 Walter Pera and Michael Budig.

8 MR. VOYLES: I'm James Voyles,
9 representing Consumer Energy Alliance. For those
10 trying to spell, it's "V", like Virginia, o-y-l-e-s.
11 I have sports trophies from when I was a kid with it
12 spelled wrong, so don't feel bad if you struggle
13 with it.

14 Consumer Energy Alliance is probably
15 a new face to you. We're a consumer advocacy
16 organization that supports policies that yield
17 access to affordable, reliable energy for American
18 families and businesses. CEA represents over 250
19 organizations that participate in nearly every
20 sector of the U.S. economy, including trucking
21 groups, manufacturers, agribusiness, petrochemical
22 producers, airlines, and many more. More
23 importantly, CEA represents over 450,000 individuals
24 and families across the country. Right here in the
25 state of Utah, our member companies include CAP

1 Logistics, Nalco, Thyssen Krupp, Caterpillar, and
2 Nucor Steel. We also represent about 1,700
3 grassroots members across the state.

4 As an organization, CEA and its
5 members are in favor of solar power. I'll say we're
6 pro solar. As solar prices have come down, solar is
7 becoming increasingly competitive and economical,
8 and that's an important development. We believe
9 that solar technology has the power to diversify and
10 modernize electricity generation across the country,
11 and provide families and businesses with renewable,
12 clean, and affordable energy, which requires the
13 right policy.

14 According to a forthcoming study by
15 CEA -- we'll put it out this fall -- Utah residents
16 are currently entitled to incentives that reimburse
17 the homeowner for 89 percent or more of the
18 installed cost of a solar system. In real dollars,
19 that means somebody that puts in a typical
20 three-point-nine-kilowatt system for about thirteen
21 and a half thousand dollars -- which would be the
22 market average -- can expect a return of \$12,000.
23 This incentive is an outstanding financial
24 opportunity for the installer, but can present
25 issues for those who have not or cannot afford

1 panels of their own.

2 It makes sense from a policy
3 perspective that solar policies should be able to
4 advance solar, consumer interests, and
5 infrastructure. Candidly, we prefer this issue to
6 settle. We think that's the right path for all
7 parties involved. In the event that that doesn't
8 occur, CEA is present to speak in favor of
9 PacifiCorp's proposal, because the plan takes steps
10 towards allowing solar to proliferate, ensure a
11 robust electric grid, and provide families with fair
12 and affordable electricity rates.

13 The proposal has many tenets, but
14 it's founded on the basic market principles of
15 competition and choice, and balances the needs of
16 renewable and traditional energy users. Most
17 importantly, it allows solar to grow at rates that
18 work for everyone. Specifically, CEA supports the
19 proposal because it balances consumer choice with
20 the real costs of providing electricity to families
21 and businesses; it creates a fair method of allowing
22 solar to grow and to keep the grid healthy; it
23 proactively acknowledges the need for long-term
24 policies that secure the state's energy future; it
25 continues to compensate solar families at

1 competitive, predictable rates; and because it
2 honors existing contracts by grandfathering solar
3 families into their current plan.

4 Importantly, CEA supports Utah grid
5 operators' dedication to installing large-scale
6 solar facilities that bring the numerous benefits of
7 solar energy to as many state residents as possible.
8 In closing, CEA is in favor of solar power and views
9 PacifiCorp's proposal as a path forward to ensuring
10 that the technology thrives at the best rate and
11 lowest cost for all consumers.

12 CEA views this plan as being in line
13 with the principles of being pro solar, pro grid,
14 and pro consumer. Thank you.

15 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. The
16 next speakers are Walter Pera, Michael Budig, and
17 Allison Jones.

18 MR. PERA: My name is Walter Pera,
19 and I have some prefiled testimony that I'd like to
20 just summarize since you guys have already read it.

21 I believe that Rocky Mountain Power
22 has made a couple of errors -- several errors in
23 what they have done. First of all, when they did
24 their load curve and they represented their load
25 curve, they used a system-wide load curve, and I

1 believe that they should have used the division load
2 curve -- Utah Division load curve -- because you
3 represent Utah and not an entire system. And if you
4 look at my graph on page No. 3, you can see that the
5 typical output of a solar system coincides very well
6 with the Utah load curve, which brings me to the
7 next point. I'm doing this very briefly to save
8 time.

9 Generation is supplied to meet the
10 load, and there's three different types of
11 generation. There's a base generation, an
12 intermediate generation, and then the peaking
13 generation, which can be high-cost generation or
14 purchases. And that also coincides very closely
15 with the load curve of solar output.

16 The next thing is when Utah Power and
17 Light -- and this is on page 5 -- calculated the net
18 power benefit cost, they used a system average
19 fuel-cost curve calculation. That means that they
20 included all of the base generation, which will
21 never, ever be displaced by solar energy. They
22 should have used just the higher cost energies that
23 the solar will displace. So their calculation of
24 1,168 is incorrect, I believe, by a factor of about
25 three. And when you calculate that all out, that

1 shows that solar customers are actually a benefit to
2 the company, not a cost. And with that, I will
3 conclude my testimony.

4 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you,
5 Mr. Pera. Next is Michael Budig, followed by
6 Allison Jones and Amy O'Connor.

7 MR. BUDIG: My name is Michael Budig,
8 and I live in Salt Lake City.

9 Utah has recognized the value of
10 renewable energy by offering a \$2,000 tax credit,
11 which will be phased out by 2021. Tax credits from
12 the federal government and state governments have
13 pumped up the solar industry and helped it scale up
14 to a level where the costs of solar has dropped
15 enough where it will be competitive with fossil
16 fuels, including coal and natural gas, and
17 eventually will be the least expensive alternative.
18 It is now a widely-accepted fact that solar will no
19 longer need a subsidy in the future to compete.
20 However, the same cannot be said of fossil fuels,
21 especially coal. Fossil fuels have always used the
22 air as a dumping ground for toxic emissions. This
23 is a cost borne by society in the form of impaired
24 health and increased healthcare costs. Yet, the PSC
25 is being asked to consider coal and solar without

1 factoring in this significant subsidy for coal,
2 despite the fact that air quality is the number one
3 deterrent for many companies considering relocating
4 to Utah.

5 The proposed taxes on solar
6 installation by Rocky Mountain Power would cause the
7 Utah solar industry to cease to exist. In Nevada,
8 similar punishment was impelled by the state
9 legislature and it resulted in the immediate loss
10 of more than 2,600 jobs. Nevada was devastated by
11 these job losses and basically revoked the penalties
12 on solar about a year later. In the meantime, an
13 initiative was passed in Nevada as part of the
14 backlash to these penalties. The initiative is the
15 first step in revoking the monopoly of Nevada Energy
16 and allowing electric power customers to choose
17 their power provider and energy source in the
18 future.

19 Utah currently is the sixth largest
20 solar state in the country, and has over 4,400 jobs,
21 more than twice the number employed in the coal
22 industry. The industry grew by 65 percent last year
23 and has enjoyed increased growth this year as well.
24 Solar and other renewable power companies will
25 continue to grow in the future, and eventually its

1 growth will inevitably make power abundant and so
2 cheap, that power companies will have to become
3 managers rather than producers of power. If Rocky
4 Mountain Power doesn't adjust to this reality, it
5 will be steamrolled and its customers and investors
6 will also suffer. Rocky Mountain Power needs to
7 recognize and adjust to this reality and work to
8 serve the demands of its customers, not just its
9 investors.

10 Rocky Mountain Power is a subsidiary
11 of Berkshire Hathaway, as are both Nevada Energy and
12 Pacific Power. Pacific Power serves much of
13 Oregon -- which has a stated goal of at least
14 50 percent of all energy by 2040 to come from
15 renewables -- and some of Northern California is
16 also served by Pacific Power. Pacific Power has
17 been much more open to solar installation by its
18 customers. They work with the customers' demand for
19 solar rather than fighting the will of its
20 customers. Rocky Mountain Power should do the same.
21 The sooner Rocky Mountain Power recognizes that it
22 has over-invested in coal and begins to write off
23 its stranded coal assets, the better everyone will
24 be in the long run.

25 An even better example is Green

1 Mountain --

2 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: It's about time
3 to move on. Do you need more time at the end?

4 MR. BUDIG: I'll finish this
5 paragraph. Thank you. Green Mountain Power is
6 supporting customer initiatives to gain energy
7 independence by offering access to solar panels and
8 Tesla Powerwalls. By retaining the ability to
9 remotely access the Powerwall batteries, Green
10 Mountain is able to draw upon these stored reserves
11 as needed, reducing the need to purchase expensive
12 peak demand energy. By doing so, Green Energy keeps
13 its customers happy while reducing its own costs.
14 It is a great role model and a window into the
15 future that the PSC and Rocky Mountain Power would
16 benefit from looking into. Thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you,
18 Mr. Budig. Allison Jones, followed by Amy O'Connor
19 and then Jennifer Daley-Provost.

20 MS. JONES: Hello. My name is
21 Allison Jones from Murray, Utah, and I have lived
22 here for about 20 years now, and so I have seen how
23 the state of Utah is really into robust economic
24 growth and a healthy economy. So it is mind-blowing
25 to me that Utah, via the Public Service Commission

1 approving RMP's net metering restructuring, would
2 allow us to severely hobble, if not effectively kill
3 this burgeoning solar industry in our state. I was
4 blown away at the press conference just now to hear
5 about the thousands of jobs our new growing solar
6 industry is creating in our state to the tune of
7 \$350 million of economic impact. That is huge.

8 I'm one of the customers that rushed
9 to get myself grandfathered in last December to the
10 old net metering rates, and I was really struck by
11 the gentlemen a few speakers ago with -- I forgot
12 the organization -- CEA, who mentioned that
13 89 percent of my costs of getting my solar panels
14 are coming back to me. That's not true. We're
15 putting out about 13,000 and getting about 6,500
16 back, so that's what's happening today on the
17 contract on my desk with Creative Energies.

18 I think there is some other window
19 dressing in his statement to you as well. The
20 proposal that we can have the new net metering
21 structure and still have a growing healthy solar
22 industry I just don't think is true. There's been a
23 lot of reference to what happened in Nevada. My
24 understanding is that RMP's net metering restructure
25 of those rates is very similar to what they did in

1 Nevada and we can see how that killed the industry
2 there. My understanding is that a successful
3 lawsuit will help bring that industry back, but I
4 don't think we want to make the same mistake here.
5 Whether the governor likes it or not, whether you
6 like it or not, whether RMP likes it or not, solar,
7 as a mix with other alternative energy sources and
8 efficiency and conservation, is the way of the
9 future in this country. It has to be.

10 I've seen our state be on the wrong
11 side of history on some other issues -- gay
12 marriage, just to name one. Please don't allow us
13 to be on the wrong side of history on the solar
14 front. Thank you.

15 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you,
16 Ms. Jones. Next is Amy O'Connor, followed by
17 Jennifer Daley-Provost and Craig Provost.

18 MS. O'CONNOR: Hello. My name is Amy
19 O'Connor, and I live in Glendale.

20 My husband and I installed solar
21 panels on our roof in 2013. We actually offset
22 about a hundred percent of our electricity
23 consumption with clean, solar energy. Even with
24 subsidies, this was a major financial investment.
25 Rocky Mountain Power's proposed, I believe,

1 outrageous fees on solar customers would make such
2 an investment completely impractical for thousands
3 upon thousands of customers wishing to install solar
4 in the future.

5 The company's bogus and biased
6 reporting trying to justify the fees is based, I
7 believe, on some 30 customers years ago. From what
8 others have said, it sounds unscientific and it
9 should be completely dismissed. Please deny Rocky
10 Mountain Power's request for its unfair, regressive,
11 multi-tiered fee structure outside of a general rate
12 case.

13 Why is Rocky Mountain Power proposing
14 these fees? It seems that it is because they feel
15 entitled to follow their old business model based on
16 the dying coal industry and show no willingness to
17 embrace the inevitable clean energy economy of the
18 future. Who will be hurt by their intransigence and
19 greed? First and foremost, the planet. Detrimental
20 climate change is happening, as some 99.5 percent of
21 scientists agree. It is a terrible reality already
22 wreaking havoc around the globe. With the abundant
23 sunshine Utah enjoys, Utahns should be part of the
24 solution. Rocky Mountain Power should help
25 facilitate what most of its ratepayers want anyway:

1 more solar power. It is literally immoral to do
2 otherwise.

3 Second, Utah's thriving solar
4 industry and the thousands of people who depend on
5 it for their livelihood would also be hurt. Do we
6 really want to repeat Nevada's and Arizona's
7 mistakes?

8 Third, all ratepayers to Rocky
9 Mountain Power would suffer. Ratepayers, as others
10 have much more eloquently explained, actually
11 benefit from their rooftop solar generating
12 neighbors who supply cheap electrons and cut down on
13 transmission power losses and the need to build more
14 expensive power-generating facilities.

15 Four, people's health is at stake.
16 We need to clean up our air, not just because the
17 rising CO2 level is killing life on earth, but
18 because of people's immediate health. If we take
19 pride in Utah, we should be cleaning up our air, not
20 polluting it further.

21 There are other great arguments
22 before you opposing the company's proposal. Rocky
23 Mountain Power needs a new business model that is in
24 line with the clean energy revolution that will
25 inevitably happen. But it needs to happen sooner

1 rather than later if we are to prevent the worst
2 effects of climate change. We have a huge
3 responsibility to this and future generations.
4 Please get this decision right. Listen to reason,
5 not greed; to what is best for the people of Utah,
6 not to a monopoly that wants to keep its unsound
7 business model at the expense of our Utah economy;
8 and, most importantly, to what will help prevent
9 additional catastrophic climate change.

10 In conclusion, please do not grant
11 Rocky Mountain Power its unfair fees for solar
12 customers that hurt all of us and the planet.
13 Please honor your responsibility to stand up for the
14 public. Thank you so much.

15 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you,
16 Ms. O'Connor. Next is Jennifer Daley-Provost and
17 then Craig Provost.

18 MS. PROVOST: Good afternoon. Thank
19 you. Can you hear me? My name is Jennifer
20 Daley-Provost. On a professional level, I'm a
21 legislative advocate at the legislature here in Utah
22 and have been advocating for years for good, sound
23 climate policy, specifically with regard to clean
24 air.

25 My family and I are also solar

1 owners. We did not put solar on our home because we
2 thought it would be a cost boon to us, but because
3 we wanted to do our part to clean up the air in our
4 state. I have serious concerns about Rocky Mountain
5 Power's proposal because they are essentially a
6 state-sanctioned monopoly, and, perhaps in part by
7 being a monopoly, they didn't feel a lot of pressure
8 to do good evaluations of the markets that they
9 existed in. Instead of looking around and seeing
10 that solar was the future and that they needed to
11 diversify their ability to provide power, they
12 doubled down on coal, and we know now that that was
13 probably a bad decision. But by allowing the
14 elimination of net metering, we're allowing them to
15 continue. We're rewarding them for those bad
16 business decisions.

17 This is my daughter, Maggie. She's
18 eight-and-a-half-months old. It is very, very,
19 likely that she will live into the next century, and
20 I can't begin to imagine that if we don't, as
21 consumers and government and businesses, start to
22 make better decisions about our energy creation and
23 usage, what the air quality in the year 2100 will
24 look like for her. So I think there is a better way
25 to help Rocky Mountain Power recover their costs. I

1 think that eliminating net metering is not the way
2 to do it.

3 We're happy to pay our costs for the
4 grid, but I also have concern with this willingness
5 to say we'll just grandfather in all the current
6 customers. Well, 20 years down the road when my
7 husband and I retire and Maggie is off to college
8 and we sell our house, is our house grandfathered in
9 or is it just us? If it's just us and solar
10 generation is prohibitively expensive, that makes
11 selling our home a liability. Imagine clean energy
12 actually being a liability in Utah. I just want to
13 leave you with that thought. Thank you.

14 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you,
15 Ms. Daley-Provost. Craig Provost, then Dale
16 Provost, then Colin Jack.

17 MR. PROVOST: Thank you for listening
18 to us. I am Craig Provost. That's my
19 daughter-in-law and granddaughter, and I'm quite
20 proud of them both, actually.

21 I have had solar panels for over two
22 years now and was enticed by the rebates offered by
23 our state and federal government, so it made it
24 affordable for long-term planning for us. However,
25 part of the reason I did that was long-term

1 planning -- despite my advanced age -- and my wife
2 has asthma and lung problems, which is one of the
3 reasons we located to the upper Avenues, to try and
4 get out of some of the smog or pollution or
5 inversion, all the combined factors going on, as
6 well as all the other wonderful factors for living
7 there.

8 We also wanted to be part of the
9 solution, and not part of the problem for our clean
10 energy, and keep sustainable energy moving forward,
11 and to promote what our city has also promoted is
12 sustainable energy a hundred percent by 2032. So when
13 Rocky Mountain Power made these proposals for the
14 rate increases, we were supposed to be grandfathered
15 in as was said that they may bump us into the other
16 tier in 20 or so years, but I am also suspicious of
17 their sloppy study data as others have already
18 addressed more eloquently. So I do recognize that
19 those of us who generate our own power are costing
20 Rocky Mountain Power money, and they need to make a
21 profit. That's a business. I do understand that.
22 However, I think the benefits of solar generation on
23 rooftops is a greater benefit to the community that
24 we need to worry about and, hopefully, you need to
25 worry about more than Rocky Mountain Power's

1 profitability.

2 Many of my neighbors, one of whom
3 just spoke, recently made similar or greater
4 investments in solar power. I don't generate over a
5 hundred percent of my needs, that's for sure, so I
6 do need the grid. And I understand a need to pay
7 back some of the costs, which we have already done.
8 So the neighbors have gathered together on the Next
9 Door app and at the Greater Avenues Community
10 Council meeting and have gotten together and have
11 discussed the Rocky Mountain proposal, and over 50
12 of us have gotten together to talk about these
13 proposals and what we can do, hopefully, to get your
14 attention to please help us in not promoting those
15 increased rates. Not only have we done it, but
16 community councils across the Big Cottonwood Canyons
17 and Capital Hill, Fairpark, and Glendale have also
18 promoted such resolutions in support of sustainable
19 energy. And Moab and Summit County have submitted
20 comments that are also more advanced in their
21 wording about being against the Rocky Mountain Power
22 proposals increases, so we hope you would take those
23 into account along with the over 25,000 other
24 individuals who have signed petitions or submitted
25 comments to your committee about these rate

1 increases and in support of sustainable energy, not
2 increased rates for Rocky Mountain Power.

3 Utahns have strived to get cleaner
4 energy for our future, it's very clear. And we hope
5 that all of us will be able to provide a better
6 environment for all of our grandchildren. So we
7 hope you will consider not supporting Rocky Mountain
8 Power's proposed rate increases. Thank you.

9 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you,
10 Mr. Provost. I've got Dale Provost, Colin Jack, and
11 Stan Holmes.

12 MR. PROVOST: My name is Dale
13 Provost. I live in Salt Lake City and I'm retired
14 and on a fixed income. I'm a solar customer, I have
15 asthma, and I'm against Rocky Mountain Power's
16 request for a rate hike on solar customers.

17 I realize that I theoretically would
18 be grandfathered in, but that's not the point. The
19 point is that renewable energy is better for the
20 environment and will leave my grandchildren,
21 including that little girl back there, with a better
22 world than what our continued reliance on fossil
23 fuels. And this rate hike will discourage people
24 from getting solar panels.

25 Pollution takes a personal toll on me

1 because of my asthma -- and I'm a little hoarse
2 right now because of it, so excuse me -- but we all
3 bear the cost of pollution through a higher
4 insurance cost and higher taxes when large groups of
5 the population are made ill by this pollution.
6 RMP's supposed research behind the rate hike request
7 is faulty. I'm not a scientist like the other
8 people who talked, but their sample size and
9 interval measure within themselves call their
10 conclusions into question, but they did not take
11 many variables into account, for example, the cost
12 of building and maintaining power plants.

13 Each one of my solar panels is, in
14 itself, a power plant that Rocky Mountain Power did
15 not have to spend one cent to build. I bore the
16 cost. But more importantly, solar panels do not
17 harm the air we breathe and the water we drink.
18 Solar does not contribute to climate change. In the
19 very recently released National Climate Assessments
20 Special Report, 19 government agencies and thousands
21 of scientists agree that (1) climate change that is
22 now going on will accelerate if we keep on what
23 we're doing and is dangerous to human life and the
24 life of other species on this earth, (2) human
25 activity is the primary culprit, and (3) the human

1 activity that is causing this is the emission of
2 greenhouse gases.

3 Solar energy is part of the solution.
4 Coal-fired power plants are part of the problem. Do
5 not let Rocky Mountain Power discourage new solar
6 customers in this way. Thank you.

7 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you,
8 Mr. Provost. Colin Jack, then Stan Holmes, then
9 Lisa Rutherford.

10 MR. JACK: Good afternoon. My name
11 is Colin Jack. I'm a licensed professional
12 electrical engineer with a degree in Power
13 Engineering from BYU, and I have 30 years'
14 experience and I'm currently the chief operating
15 officer for Dixie Power in St. George.

16 On the subject of net metering and
17 appropriate tariffs, we, the electrical utilities,
18 have been sending the wrong price signals. We have
19 been billing on energy and kilowatt hour usage. I
20 understand why we do it; it's in a non-competitive
21 market, it was the easiest way to allocate costs.
22 Whoever used the most energy paid the most, and
23 whoever used the least energy paid the least. That
24 seems fair. But now we in the commercial electric
25 utility business, like our colleagues over in the

1 phone and cable TV business, find ourselves in a
2 competitive market with seemingly viable
3 alternatives. Suddenly, our members find themselves
4 inundated with high-pressure salesman on the phone,
5 on the radio, at the football stadium, or going door
6 to door telling them that they will get a check from
7 the power company each month, or that they can stop
8 the 14 percent rate increase on their electric bill,
9 or that the big, bad utility is going to have a
10 3.5 percent rate increase every year from here to
11 eternity, or even that the co-ops' rates are going
12 to triple. I have personally heard salesmen tell
13 every one of these lies, and I have a couple of them
14 recorded on my cell phone.

15 So what are we as energy
16 professionals supposed to do to help our members who
17 are not energy professionals? How do we help them
18 sort through the lies and deception? Clearly, it's
19 time we start giving out more correct price signals
20 so that they can start making correct purchasing
21 decisions based on sound financial data. I think is
22 the time to unbundle the many services that our
23 members currently pay for, historically lumped in
24 with their energy. And I'm not just talking about
25 net metering customers, I think all customers need

1 to see a more itemized bill. And this doesn't
2 equate to a rate increase, just the detail about
3 what they're buying each month, and that they would
4 still be paying even if they reduce their energy
5 consumption. That's what the phone companies, the
6 cell phone companies and the internet, and cable TV
7 companies have done. So then with the rationalized
8 rates, a customer of a cell phone company can decide
9 whether or not to make that phone call or whether or
10 not to watch that TV show and whether or not that
11 will save them money.

12 Our commercial customers already pay
13 a demand charge. Maybe it's time we unbundle demand
14 from energy costs for residential customers, too.
15 It wouldn't be a rate increase, it would just be a
16 rationalization of the charges and would require
17 some customer education. We also have the monthly
18 facilities charge, which should cover such fixed
19 costs like metering, accounting, billing,
20 administration, distribution system costs like
21 operations and maintenance, taxes, depreciation. We
22 could also separate out our transmission costs so
23 that that way our members would know right away if
24 upstream transmission charges suddenly doubled.

25 Once we separate out all these

1 charges, we would have boiled down our energy rate
2 down to something close to avoided cost, which is
3 the actual cost that the utility pays for any other
4 kilowatt hour that they currently purchase on the
5 free market, which we currently operate. Plus,
6 there are several new factors that have arisen with
7 the introduction of intermittent energy into the
8 market as they have from California.

9 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Mr. Jack, do you
10 need more time? It's about time for us to move on.

11 MR. JACK: Then I'll just close. So
12 if we're talking about crediting excess energy at
13 avoided cost and everything else is unbundled, then
14 we're sending the price signals to our customers so
15 they can make informed decisions based on the
16 correct information. Thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you,
18 Mr. Jack. I think we'll do three more and then take
19 a short break and let our court reporter rest her
20 fingers for a few minutes. Stan Holmes, Lisa
21 Rutherford, and Paul Van Dam, and then we'll take a
22 short break after those three.

23 MR. HOLMES: Thank you. My name is
24 Stan Holmes, and I'm the outreach coordinator for
25 UCARE. I would like to thank you for this

1 opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of Utah
2 Citizens Advocating Renewable Energy, or UCARE, with
3 regard to Docket 14-035-114 Compliance Filing of
4 PacifiCorp, doing business as Rocky Mountain Power.

5 UCARE is an all-volunteer citizens
6 group formed in 2014. We appreciated the
7 Commission's recognition of us as an intervening
8 party at that time and subsequent opportunities for
9 input into this important regulatory proceeding.

10 UCARE's position is that Rocky
11 Mountain Power -- herein also referred to as "the
12 Company" and "the utility" -- should be denied any
13 net metering rate changes -- permanent or
14 provisional -- until the need for such changes has
15 been established in the context of a general rate
16 case and so determined by the Public Service
17 Commission at the conclusion of that GRC.

18 UCARE does not believe that the
19 Company's November 9, 2016 Compliance Filing
20 fulfills its obligations under the Commission's
21 November 2015 Order, for reasons presented by
22 numerous intervening parties to that docket. Nor
23 does the Company's Compliance Filing substantiate
24 its tariff change proposal also presented last
25 November under Docket 16-035-T14.

1 UCARE agrees with other docket
2 intervenors that Rocky Mountain Power's proposed
3 rooftop solar rate hike request constitutes
4 single-issue ratemaking that discriminates against
5 one subset of the Company's customer base. We are
6 also concerned that imposition of the Company's new
7 demand charge would set a precedent that the Company
8 could later apply to other residential ratepayers.

9 UCARE is aware that the traditional
10 fossil-fuel laden energy paradigm is shifting in
11 Utah as it is across the nation. The rise of clean,
12 distributed, renewable energy resources that has so
13 dismayed Rocky Mountain Power, PacifiCorp, and
14 ultimately Berkshire Hathaway, is but part of a
15 transition toward smarter, more efficient energy
16 production and consumption patterns.

17 Conditions that motivate the Company
18 to restrict the growth of rooftop solar have
19 implications for all ratepayers and the general
20 public. A general rate case is the proper context
21 in which to provide new energy realities and the
22 utility's concerns, a forum for broader scope
23 examinations, and impacts analysis. While UCARE
24 feels that Rocky Mountain Power's cost-of-service
25 study undervalued net metered rooftop solar resource

1 benefits and overstated its costs, we were also
2 disappointed that utility's cost shifting from its
3 shareholders to ratepayers, and the general public
4 was ignored in this study.

5 UCARE members accept the unambiguous
6 connection between human activity -- especially
7 fossil fuel combustion -- and environmental
8 degradation linked to rising healthcare costs and
9 other negative economic impacts. We agree with the
10 recent op-ed comment of Salt Lake City Mayor Jackie
11 Biskupski, that there needs to be "an accounting for
12 the true cost to our environment of burning fossil
13 fuels."

14 The ability of Rocky Mountain Power
15 to retain utility rates that do not reflect these
16 costs means that the so-called "externalities" are
17 paid for by the general public instead. This is a
18 subsidy from the public to the utility, its
19 shareholders, and the fossil fuel industry. Rocky
20 Mountain Power protests that cost shifting is
21 occurring between rooftop solar and non-solar
22 residential customers. In this, the Company is
23 somewhat correct, although it has the cost shift
24 backwards. Those customers who have invested in
25 rooftop solar energy produced and consumed locally

1 reduce the amount of polluting fossil fuels the
2 utility would otherwise burn and ship as energy over
3 long, costly transmission lines.

4 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Mr. Holmes, do
5 you need more time? We can put you in at the end if
6 you need us to do that.

7 MR. HOLMES: What I will do is, I
8 will submit this for the record. I'd also like to
9 submit the Capitol Hill Neighborhood Council's
10 resolution in favor of what the city is trying to do
11 against Rocky Mountain Power's proposal to raise the
12 rates on rooftop solar customers.

13 But the bottom line is that we asked
14 for a denial of the Company's request for the rate
15 increase, and we also would like to see
16 externalities considered in perhaps a separate
17 document or a separate proceeding that would take a
18 look at the impacts, costs, and benefits across all
19 energy resource acquisition dockets. Thank you.

20 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you,
21 Mr. Holmes. Lisa Rutherford and then Paul Van Dam.

22 MS. RUTHERFORD: Good afternoon. My
23 name is Lisa Rutherford. I appreciate the
24 opportunity to comment today. I live in Sunny
25 Island near St. George in Washington County, and

1 have traveled four to five hours to attend this
2 public meeting. I'm a retired 20-year oil and gas
3 employee, and I have great concerns about the
4 climate change issues facing us, which tie directly
5 to the future of fossil fuels and solar. During my
6 career, I was proud of that work, but I have come to
7 realize how much energy is wasted. Americans expect
8 cheap, available energy, but I see the waste and the
9 harm toward environment everywhere. It's been
10 subsidized too long, and a new future is needed.

11 Fortunately, solar is taking off in
12 Utah, even in Saratoga Springs where conservative
13 leader, Mia Love, served as mayor. Solar on
14 rooftops are everywhere. In Southern Utah, solar is
15 really gaining momentum. My conservative town of
16 Ivins has embraced solar, including our city
17 offices. I would hate to see that stopped. For
18 more than ten years, I participated in Rocky
19 Mountain Power's Blue Sky Program, thinking I was
20 doing my part to help promote a new future. In
21 2016, I canceled when I saw the Company working to
22 undermine renewable energy while raising my rates.

23 My partner and I recently installed
24 solar. Fortunately, I am a citizen who can afford
25 to get off-grid if needed. I don't want to, but I

1 can afford to. Others may not be that lucky.
2 Friends installed solar on a lease basis after
3 running the economics; they now may be facing
4 harmful rate increases while going off-grid is not
5 an option. Shareholder profits should not take
6 precedence over customers, but companies such as RMP
7 have no obligation to citizens to provide a service
8 at a fair price. Fortunately, we have entities such
9 as you, our Public Service Commission, to help
10 balance things.

11 Much of RMP's effort is driven by
12 fossil fuel development pressure, but perhaps Utah's
13 fossil fuel focus is changing. At this year's Rural
14 Summit, rural leaders were encouraged to take to a
15 new, fresh look at what their communities' futures
16 should be, not just fall back on the old tried and
17 true fossil fuel economies. A Summit County
18 Commissioner testified that his county and others
19 have established community-level renewable energy
20 and pollution reduction goals that may be impacted
21 by the outcome of this Commission's decision.

22 Energy we produce is helping our
23 neighbors, helping Rocky Mountain Power to defer
24 capital costs for new facilities, and defray
25 long-distance transmission energy losses. The

1 fossil fuel energy that we are no longer using is
2 not costing my neighbors. Information provided by
3 Rocky Mountain Power does not clearly show that net
4 metering customers are directly increasing costs for
5 non-participating customers.

6 Finally, the legislature's NEM
7 statute may have tied your hands. That said, I feel
8 RMP's peak hour load study is flawed, but if the
9 Public Service Commission chooses to rely on it, it
10 is unfair for the study to focus exclusively on
11 residential. All solar customers, including
12 commercial, should be evaluated. My preference,
13 however, would be for you to simply deny Rocky
14 Mountain Power's rate increase request. Thank you
15 so much for your time.

16 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you,
17 Ms. Rutherford. We'll have Paul Van Dam and then
18 we'll take a short break. The next three after the
19 break will be Sarah Lambrechtsen, Rob Stewart, and
20 Guy Koretz.

21 UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: And what
22 number are they?

23 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: On my sheet,
24 they are 21, 22, and 23. Mr. Van Dam.

25 MR. VAN DAM: Thank you, gentlemen.

1 First of all, let me thank you for the jobs that you
2 do. I have been involved with the Public Service
3 Commission as a former Attorney General of the State
4 back in the early '90s, and also very much as the
5 District Attorney for Salt Lake County back in the
6 '70s, and I always had great respect for what this
7 body did and the way that they did it. Thank you
8 for being open, transparent, and thorough, because I
9 think this is one place where you're really going to
10 need to tax yourself.

11 I have lived in the state of Utah all
12 my life, which is getting very close to 80 years
13 now. And believe it or not, the bad air that we
14 experience here was worse when I was a kid, because
15 everybody had a coal-fired stove and everybody
16 belched out that stuff in the atmosphere. It's
17 gotten better, except that as we grow, we have more
18 cars, and cars are about 50 percent of our
19 pollution.

20 Ten years ago, I moved to Southern
21 Utah to Ivins, found Lisa, and we have been fighting
22 the fight in Southern Utah on some very interesting
23 and important issues. It distresses me that our
24 power delivered in Utah has to be 80 percent
25 fossil-fuel driven. I understand that's the way the

1 situation is, and I also know that Rocky Mountain is
2 trying to go to cleaner sources of power, which I
3 appreciate. But I had to move out of here ten years
4 ago because it began to affect my lungs, and there
5 was no way to get rid of it since I was a real
6 outdoors person and did a lot of bicycle riding
7 here. Well, I now have a little thing where my
8 heart skips beats and accelerates, and the doctor
9 tells me that's because it has a lot to do with our
10 environment.

11 I encourage this Commission -- you
12 have got all kinds of data about what Rocky Mountain
13 thinks, about what other people think what's fair,
14 what's not fair; but let me give you my pitch, and
15 that is: involve the citizens of Utah in their
16 effort to clean up our atmosphere. Involve the
17 people in this county, in this state, because we're
18 not just friendly to other corporations of the
19 corporate life, we're not just the best-managed
20 state, but we have a history that is a powerful
21 history. My ancestors and probably some of yours
22 did come across the plains. They did find a tough
23 life, they did get involved in making that life, and
24 that's what we need to do. It's such an opportunity
25 for people to get involved in creating the energy

1 that they use and having it distributed to their
2 neighbors.

3 Now, there have got to be formulas
4 where that can be an acceptable thing, because it's
5 certainly a satisfactory thing. And the other thing
6 I want to tell you is that we have a grid in this
7 country, in this state, in our whole country, that
8 is extremely vulnerable. It's of great concern as a
9 national concern in defending our country because
10 rockets hitting, maybe from North Korea -- who
11 knows, the guy is crazy enough to do it -- rockets
12 hitting the right place could put us out of energy
13 for a long period of time and would be very
14 difficult to deal with. But if we build a grid, if
15 we build individual places where energy can be
16 emitted, it adds a great deal to what we can do.
17 And I think it's very important for you to remember
18 to involve the citizenry because we do get
19 eliminated in so many ways in resolving problems.

20 I appreciate your time. I know that
21 sometimes it gets tough up there. Thank you for
22 what you do, and do the right thing here, please.

23 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you,
24 Mr. Van Dam. Appreciate your time here. We will
25 take a break until about 3:30. I'll give you the

1 next five speakers after the break. Sarah
2 Lambrechtsen, Rob Stewart, Guy Koretz, Marilee
3 Guinan, and Caroline Gleich.

4 (Break)

5 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: We're back on
6 the record in the public witness hearing for Public
7 Service Commission Docket No. 14-035-114, and our
8 next three speakers to present comment to us in this
9 docket are Sarah Lambrechsten, Rob Stewart, and Guy
10 Koretz.

11 MS. LAMBRECHTSEN: Good afternoon,
12 Commissioners. My name is Sarah Lambrechtsen. I'm
13 here representing Ion Solar. Thank you for the
14 opportunity to speak before you today. As I said,
15 my name is Sarah Lambrechtsen, and I'm representing
16 Ion Solar.

17 I moved here from San Diego, and my
18 job was one of the 1,700 created in the industry
19 last year. Ion Solar is a Utah-based company. It
20 was founded by three local families, and we, as a
21 company, are proud to have contributed to the
22 \$300 million that the solar industry infused into
23 the economy last year.

24 We recognize that solar technology is
25 changing the way consumers use energy, and we are

1 excited to be a part of that change. Utahns pride
2 themselves on industry and self-reliance, which we
3 believe has been a major contributor to the demand
4 for solar technology in the state. We also believe
5 that Utah residents' love of innovation and
6 technology are the key drivers behind the state's
7 moniker of Silicon Slopes and recognition worldwide
8 as a leader in business and technological
9 innovation. However, the current proposed changes
10 to solar net metering could not be further from the
11 things that Utah's economy is known for. These
12 changes, based on only 12 months of data, do not
13 take into account an in-depth, long-term analysis of
14 the true tangible and intangible benefits of solar.

15 Rocky Mountain Power's sister
16 company, Nevada Energy, implemented similar changes
17 as I'm sure you are aware, in 2015, that destroyed
18 thousands of jobs. These changes in kind will kill
19 an industry here in Utah that is already slowing and
20 self-correcting.

21 We ask you, the Commissioners, to
22 postpone a decision on net metering and allow all
23 the stakeholders to take the time to study the true
24 value of solar to Utah's economy. Thank you.

25 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.

1 Before we go on, I failed to mention for those of
2 you who just want to listen to the hearing, we are
3 broadcasting the audio of this hearing over our You
4 Tube channel. There's a link to that at
5 psc.utah.gov. I understand during the first hour
6 there was some intermittent streaming. Apparently,
7 the internet connections here in this building were
8 going in and out. That appears to be resolved at
9 this point, so the streaming should be working
10 better at this point moving forward, but I just want
11 to let everyone know that that option is available
12 for listening to the hearing. So we'll go to
13 Mr. Rob Stewart, followed by Guy Koretz and Marilee
14 Guinan.

15 MR. STEWART: Thank you. I'm Rob
16 Stewart. I live out in Tooele Valley. I'm also an
17 employee of Rocky Mountain Power. I'm also a
18 rooftop solar owner. I own a cabin that has no grid
19 connection, and so I have batteries.

20 I'm very acutely aware of the need
21 for not only kilowatt hours but also kilowatt
22 demand. If I want to run a saw and it exceeds the
23 capacity of my inverter, I have to start a
24 generator. Those who are advocating for solar seem
25 to think that the power company is against solar,

1 where the power company has invested in megawatts of
2 solar capacity of which I participate in as a solar
3 subscriber. The Company has not created any new
4 coal generation that I'm aware of in the last few
5 years. In fact, their plan has changed. So they
6 are not pro pollution. They have the same interests
7 as everyone else here. We work here and we live
8 here, and we don't want the pollution either.

9 But a solar generator is not a
10 nighttime power plant. As such, they need the power
11 company. For a simple illustration, this lack of
12 consideration for demand, if and as it does, the
13 residential customer does not pay a demand charge
14 directly. It is averaged into their kilowatt hour
15 charge. If that kilowatt hour charge is \$100, it
16 constitutes -- let's just throw out a superficial
17 number of 40 percent as kW -- and they generate to
18 offset the full \$100 worth of kilowatt hours, what
19 they've really done in the credits they get is that
20 they've avoided \$60 of kilowatt hour charges and \$40
21 of kW charges, which they actually should be paying
22 because they are, when the sun goes down, using that
23 demand. What I'm opposed to is for me, as a
24 customer who does not have rooftop solar on my home,
25 connected to the grid paying more because in order

1 to recoup that cost that's allocated to the
2 residential class, the kilowatt hour charge will
3 have to go up, which means my electricity prices
4 will have to go up because a solar rooftop customer
5 is not paying their fair share of the kilowatt hour
6 demand.

7 And that's what I would appeal that
8 the cost be such that every customer pays the cost
9 that they cause on the system.

10 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you,
11 Mr. Stewart. Guy Koretz, Marilee Guinan, and then
12 Caroline Gleich. Is Guy Koretz here? And I hope
13 I'm saying the last name right. Okay, Marilee
14 Guinan.

15 MS. GUINAN: Hello there. It's
16 actually Marilee Guinan. Thank you. First of all,
17 thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak. I
18 appreciate you being here today, as well as everyone
19 that's come out for this meeting.

20 I did want to mention one thing, and
21 Jordan White, I know that you have been previous
22 counsel for PacifiCorp, and I wonder if there's any
23 conflict there with you sitting on the Public
24 Service Commission with that previous employment
25 with PacifiCorp. So I just wanted to bring that to

1 the public's attention.

2 I have been involved in the solar
3 industry for about five years and helped hundreds of
4 homeowners and business owners put rooftop solar on
5 their homes and business, and I just wanted to not
6 only bring it to your attention -- which I'm sure
7 you are aware of what happened in Nevada -- but also
8 serve this as warning of what can happen here. In
9 Nevada, in December of 2015, they did vote to get
10 rid of the solar industry, or basically change the
11 net metering agreements to where people that had put
12 solar on their homes could no longer really utilize
13 the benefit of that, and then in June of this last
14 year, they actually reversed that, so they are now
15 honoring those net metering agreements. In the
16 meantime, in November, they did vote to deregulate
17 the Nevada Energy there, and I would like to -- in
18 talking to the people here in the room -- let them
19 know that we do have power to sign a petition to get
20 the Rocky Mountain Power deregulated here in Utah as
21 well.

22 Now, I don't think anyone wants that
23 to happen. That's obviously not our first choice,
24 but I think what's really at stake here is the
25 opportunity to have a choice. I'm all for free will

1 and freedom of choice, and why should people who
2 have invested in solar, put it on their rooftops to
3 enjoy cleaner energy, to enjoy clean air, and to
4 have the benefits of that, why should they be
5 penalized for investing money into their own homes?
6 So that's all I have to say. Thank you.

7 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.
8 Caroline Gleich, Brody Leven, and D. Kira Kilmer.

9 MS. GLEICH: Hello. My name is
10 Caroline Gleich, and I'm a professional skier and
11 outdoor athlete based here in Salt Lake City, Utah.
12 I'm here today to ask you to oppose Rocky Mountain
13 Power's proposed rooftop solar fees. You see,
14 rooftop solar is an issue near and dear to my heart.
15 My parents have over 60 panels on their roof, my
16 niece is an engineer at Tesla, and I hope to install
17 my own rooftop solar system in the future.

18 My parents installed the system on
19 their house because of the economic and
20 environmental benefits it offers to all of us. And
21 it's painful to think of the effect these new fees
22 could have on families who are considering rooftop
23 solar in the future. And I'm also concerned that
24 the full costs of fossil fuel energy aren't being
25 considered equally. They pose a serious risk to

1 human health by contaminating air and water.

2 As a skier, I have seen some of the
3 effects of climate change here in Utah. There is
4 more rain now than snow, and in the rest of the
5 world I have seen shrinking glaciers, and I believe
6 we need to curb our carbon emissions immediately.
7 Solar will help us achieve renewable energy goals.

8 When I was a senior in college, I
9 wrote a paper analyzing Utah's energy policy as part
10 of an environmental internship I did, and at that
11 time, over 90 percent of the electricity powering
12 our grid came from fossil fuels, predominantly coal.
13 Rooftop solar is a powerful opportunity to diversify
14 our energy portfolio. Just like our retirement
15 funds, you don't want to put all your eggs in one
16 basket. It gives consumers a choice, and it's
17 better for the health and prosperity of our families
18 and communities and for our global climate. A clean
19 energy economy is good for the outdoor recreation
20 and tourism business, too, which my profession
21 depends upon.

22 Solar is the path forward. It is a
23 valuable resource, especially in a sunny climate
24 like here in Utah. Please consider the wants and
25 needs of Utahns, and put those before the interests

1 of industry, or even consider the challenge. I
2 would love to see Utah as a leader on the forefront
3 of embracing and pioneering renewable energy.
4 Rooftop solar is an ethical investment and users
5 should not be penalized. Thank you.

6 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.
7 Brody Leven, D. Kira Kilmer, and Claire Geddes.

8 MR. LEVEN: Hello, Commission.
9 Hello, everyone. Thanks for having us today,
10 appreciate that. My name is Brody Leven. I don't
11 work in the coal industry, I don't work in the solar
12 industry. I'm a professional athlete. I do mostly
13 skiing. I moved here in 2006 to attend college at
14 Westminster where I got an Honours Degree and an
15 Economics Degree, and I started skiing more and
16 more. And I eventually formed a business as a
17 professional skier, a local business right here in
18 downtown Salt Lake.

19 And I'm afraid Utah is at risk of
20 eliminating its tourism industry, which is large and
21 substantial, as you know. This will hit us all
22 right where it hurts -- in our wallets. Mining and
23 depleting our resources -- the way we get our power
24 now -- will give us exhausted and unattractive
25 lands, the lands that attract so many people to

1 Utah. This affects our recreation, our happiness,
2 our tourism, our health, and maybe most importantly,
3 our bottom line. Affordable and practical solar,
4 though, offers a solution.

5 So I'm a professional skier. What
6 does that mean? It means I travel the world to
7 climb and ski mountains, and I bring back stories
8 that inspire people to do hard and challenging
9 things. There is no environment that I know
10 anywhere in the world better than Utah's. The
11 reality of climate change is something I experience
12 firsthand on a daily basis, whether I'm in the
13 mountains of Utah, in the valley of Salt Lake, or in
14 the glaciers all over the world. But it's something
15 that you experience as well. Record heat waves and
16 record-breaking winters are easy to point to for all
17 of us. We pride ourselves on our outdoor recreation
18 here in Utah because it generates 12.3 billion
19 dollars and employs 110,000 of us and our neighbors.

20 Carbon pollution -- created by
21 burning the non-renewable resources (a.k.a. the way
22 we're getting our power now) -- threatens this. If
23 Utah wants a future of the greatest snow on earth,
24 we need to address climate change and the policies
25 we enact now. In our lifetimes, our ski economy is

1 going to see far less snowfall, and that affects all
2 of us. It affects my bottom line and yours. The
3 outdoor rec economy brings in 737 million Utah tax
4 dollars every year, 3.9 billion dollars in wages and
5 salary. I don't care if you're a skier or not, this
6 affects you.

7 The same government and the same
8 people that celebrate all of us out-of-towners
9 moving here to Utah and building a home, building a
10 life, and building families, are attempting to add
11 additional barriers to entry for rooftop solar, and
12 that's pushing us away from Utah to the tune of more
13 than just a few bucks per house. This generation is
14 just coming to age and wanting to purchase homes in
15 an already difficult economy. We are people putting
16 solar on our houses to protect your wallet and ours,
17 your health and ours.

18 We have not only a room here, but a
19 valley full of people trying to live rich and
20 healthy lives, but we are not the policymakers. Let
21 our voices be heard and effective. There's a reason
22 that not more of my generation is here today. We
23 felt just disenfranchised at so many stages. We
24 want to use and continue to innovate healthy
25 technology and cost-competitive solutions not just

1 for us, but for everyone. Solar already exists and
2 it already is one. It can eliminate a household
3 footprint by 80 percent. Let's not let a
4 progressive generation and the entire outdoor
5 recreation economy -- which benefits all of us -- go
6 the way of the Outdoor Retailer Trade Show, taking
7 our money, our respect, and ourselves elsewhere.
8 Let's encourage people to protect our health and our
9 economy, putting us on the right side of both the
10 present and the future. Thank you very much.

11 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you,
12 Mr. Leven. D. Kira Kilmer, Claire Geddes, and then
13 the next one I'm having trouble reading the first
14 name. Wheeler, I believe, is the last name. First
15 name begins with an "R". Ray Wheeler. Ms. Kilmer,
16 Ms. Geddes, and then Ray Wheeler.

17 MS. KILMER: I'm Kira Kilmer. I'm a
18 homeowner. That means I'm a property taxpayer and a
19 state income tax payer, and I am also a
20 schoolteacher.

21 On a red air day and I go to air.gov,
22 my kids -- at a Granite school on the west side --
23 stay inside. On an orange day, the ones that have
24 asthma stay inside. When I came down with a
25 bronchial illness one winter, the doctor said,

1 "Well, I can give you some amoxicillin, but the
2 minute you go outdoors after the first ten days,
3 you'll be sick again." So I think this is something
4 that everybody in Utah is aware of, and I think also
5 in terms of Utah and the growth pattern that the
6 government wants and that the legislature is
7 encouraging, the generation of power for that growth
8 needs to be of concern to everybody, including the
9 Public Service Commission.

10 I have one simple statement -- I know
11 there's some bad data out here -- it isn't that if
12 you put solar on your rooftop, 99 percent of it is
13 covered by incentives. That is not true, and other
14 people I'm sure will speak to it. I have never
15 heard anybody with a solar on their roof say they
16 don't want to pay their basic charge. My basic
17 charge, like everybody else in this room, is
18 probably \$6 plus \$3 to the state -- because we're
19 attached -- when we use energy, we pay to the state.
20 So I think that everybody here would like the Public
21 Service Commission to look at solar as not an
22 adversary but an ally in the growth that Utah
23 expects over the next 20, 30, 40 years, and that
24 solar has to be a part of the energy development.

25 The alternatives -- natural gas --

1 that's going to be fracking, that's going to be
2 transmission, that's going to be methane release.
3 If it's coal, it's going to be mercury. We already
4 have a valley where the air is dirty in the winter,
5 and it takes a long time to blow out. Solar is a
6 way that you can provide for the growth that the
7 government wants, that the governor wants, and that
8 a lot of Utah citizens want. And that's all I have
9 to say. Thank you.

10 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.
11 Claire Geddes, then Ray Wheeler, and I believe the
12 next name is Ally O'Connor. Is there an Ally
13 O'Connor?

14 UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Amy
15 O'Connor is my wife, and she's already spoken.

16 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Okay. So it
17 will be Claire Geddes, Ray Wheeler, and then Jill
18 Sheinberg.

19 MS. GEDDES: My name is Claire
20 Geddes, and I've run two organizations in Utah. I
21 have been a consumer advocate since about 1993, so
22 I'm pretty aware of how the system works, and I have
23 real concerns.

24 I personally am very supportive of
25 solar. This isn't really, to me, an issue of you

1 either support solar or believe in global warming.
2 It's who is going to pay for it. And there's a lot
3 of people out there who live on such fixed
4 incomes -- I have watched when a rate increase comes
5 that someone who makes \$600 comes in and talks about
6 what that does to them. When you put these things
7 into rates it treats everybody equal, but not
8 everybody is equal. They can't afford to have solar
9 on their roof, and I think it's extremely unfair for
10 us to ask them to pay for it. What you have is a
11 reverse of the Robin Hood, and it really is
12 problematic to have people who have very little
13 money subsidizing this.

14 I'm not here to support Rocky
15 Mountain Power's position, I'm here to say we need
16 to treat these people fairly. There's such a
17 disparity in this country, and the more you drive it
18 the more problems you're going to have. And I want
19 to make one statement about cleaning the air on the
20 Wasatch Front. Solar does very little, and that's a
21 fact. It's mostly done by automobiles, industry,
22 and wood burning. And I've already checked this
23 out, I've done this a long time ago. So when I hear
24 that we have to do this for the air on the Wasatch
25 Front, I'm all for getting rid of fossil fuels. I

1 believe that. The thing that's causing the problems
2 here is the fuel growth. We have a governor who is
3 going to pay people to bring industry in here. It
4 happens every day; they use our tax dollars. We are
5 like a cat chasing its tail. There is no way we
6 will ever clean up this problem. This is a finite,
7 small area. We're in a bowl, and the more people we
8 bring in, the worse. So when you say I'm going to
9 subsidize jobs, excuse me, I don't want to go there.

10 I think utility rates should be cost
11 of service plus a reasonable rate of return, and
12 that isn't what they are anymore. They just passed
13 the STEP Legislation -- this was Rocky Mountain
14 Power -- and there's \$3.31 on our power bills that
15 have literally nothing to do with cost of service
16 for residential. Now, I want to know that -- there
17 were a lot of people out there opposing that, and it
18 fractured. We killed that bill, and when -- many of
19 these same people that support solar changed their
20 position -- and the clean air groups -- that's when
21 the bill came back and went through. And so quite
22 frankly, they have to understand this stuff hurts
23 everybody, and they want us to support them. I
24 believe that it should go both ways, and I don't
25 believe that our utility bills should be for

1 economic development or anything.

2 There's too many people -- this is a
3 life and death issue for a lot of people. And if
4 you really want to know who is doing the most for
5 the air on the Wasatch Front, it's seniors. We
6 don't drive, we have a much smaller footprint, but
7 we can't afford what they've got. Many of them live
8 on social security which, believe me, isn't easy. I
9 live on a little more than that. And every bit of
10 work I've done, I've done pro bono. I don't get
11 paid for any of it. And I'm here only because I've
12 worked for 25 years to try to keep rates reasonable
13 and make sure they're fair. And I look at this
14 issue and I think we're adding everything in. This
15 is a Christmas tree. Once you open this up, the
16 next person -- you've got a legislature up there
17 that's looking for ways to support their pet
18 projects.

19 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Do you need more
20 time? We can bring you back at the end if you need
21 more time.

22 MS. GEDDES: That's fine. I'll just
23 finish that. They're looking at our utility bills
24 because then they don't have to raise taxes. So I
25 urge you to be very cautious when you look at this,

1 and think about all ratepayers. Thank you.

2 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Ray
3 Wheeler, then Jill Sheinberg, and Leon Fredrickson.

4 MR. WHEELER: My name is Ray Wheeler.
5 I live in Salt Lake City. I'm testifying, I guess,
6 sworn testimony here. I'm going to depart a little
7 bit from my written comments which I've submitted
8 just now.

9 As my wife, Amy, mentioned in the
10 first session, we installed a 4.7 megawatt solar
11 power system in 2013, for which we paid \$12,000 out
12 of our own pockets after tax credits. At that
13 time -- and I'm now on a fixed income, and I am
14 equally concerned that people like me in retirement
15 can pay their power bills and receive power -- but
16 at the time we made this investment, it was a
17 substantial use of our personal savings. And we did
18 it not to save money; we did it for all of the
19 reasons you have heard so much about already.
20 Reasons, which I have learned today, are technically
21 not to be considered by this Commission. Namely,
22 global warming and its risks to every person on this
23 planet, the destruction of the biosphere, the
24 destruction of economies worldwide -- and I'll talk
25 about that a little more in a minute -- but in our

1 situation, we projected that it could take 12 to 17
2 years to pay back our investment. I may not live
3 that long. If the current proposal from Rocky
4 Mountain Power for a net metering rate hike succeeds
5 in increasing our costs for electrical power by
6 300 percent, even after we made this huge
7 investment, I'm going to be pretty disappointed.

8 But it's a tragedy that we would do
9 this to people who, like my household, have stepped
10 up to subsidize the power grid with free power from
11 our excess. The proposed rate hike will increase
12 our utility rate probably from \$9.00 to \$42.00 a
13 month. That's a 400 percent increase. However, if
14 we were to make an additional investment in an
15 electric car and charge that car off our system, we
16 would receive an 800 percent increase in our power
17 costs. This is powerful disincentive to solar power
18 expansion at consumer capital cost and risk. That's
19 crazy, especially when you consider the fact that by
20 converting to electronic cars, we will hugely
21 reduce -- as the previous person just mentioned --
22 our air pollution in this city, which has created a
23 huge problem for people with lung problems and
24 asthma as we have heard.

25 We had four reasons for wanting to

1 take on this financial risk and invest my retirement
2 savings in a solar power system not having to do
3 with our personal well-being. And those are
4 considered to be externalities according to Utah
5 law, and are not to be considered by this
6 Commission. But they are in order of importance:
7 global warming. We're going to lose -- we've
8 already lost 25 percent of the world's coral reefs,
9 which are a breeding ground for fish that many
10 people in the world subsist on for food. And the
11 projections are we're going to lose all the coral
12 reefs within a relatively short amount of time.
13 We're going to lose tropical forests --

14 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Mr. Wheeler, do
15 you need more time? We can bring you back after
16 everyone has spoken if you need more time.

17 MR. WHEELER: Come back after many
18 hours? Let me see if I can put this in a nutshell
19 for you. I want to dispute one thing. I want to
20 dispute the assumption that solar power will only be
21 a fraction of the power supply in this state, ever.
22 There is a book called Clean Disruption of Energy
23 and Transportation by Tony Seba, a Silicon Valley
24 guru, which I would encourage all of you to read
25 because it predicts that power utilities, like Rocky

1 Mountain Power, PacifiCorp, will cease to exist
2 within 12 years by 2030. Think about that. If
3 profits for Rocky Mountain Power are actually not to
4 be considered as an externality -- as I think they
5 shouldn't be -- if the Public Service Commission
6 serves the public, not just the ratepayers but the
7 public, then Rocky Mountain Power's profit margin is
8 an externality as well. And if we look only at the
9 survival of Rocky Mountain Power, they need to
10 recognize that the world is changing and they need
11 to change their business model or they will perish.
12 Thank you so much.

13 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: And I'll just
14 mention that the reason we're doing time
15 restrictions is we still have -- we've gotten
16 through 30 as of the last break -- we have a total
17 of about 85 people who have signed up. In fairness
18 of those who are wanting to speak and have busy
19 lives, we want to give everyone an opportunity
20 without having to wait any longer than necessary, so
21 we'll ask you to keep your comments to three
22 minutes. Again, if you need more time, we're happy
23 to bring you back after everyone here that wants to
24 speak has had an opportunity, but we are going to
25 limit comments to three minutes on this first round.

1 So we have Jill Sheinberg, followed by Leon
2 Fredrickson and Shawn Black. Thank you.

3 MS. SHEINBERG: I'm from Park City
4 and I have very brief remarks. Again, asking that
5 you reject the request of Rocky Mountain Power.

6 We are one of many Utah families that
7 has purchased solar for our residence. The
8 government, both state and federal, encouraged this
9 purchase by giving us a tax break for installing
10 solar panels. Even so, at our ages, we cannot
11 expect to recover our investment in our lifetime.
12 We made this purchase because we believe that
13 renewable energy is good for our environment and for
14 the future well-being of our planet. Rocky Mountain
15 Power's attempts to charge us for our investment in
16 solar is against public policy. By encouraging our
17 investment in solar, the state of Utah has made a
18 commitment to renewable energy and to those of us
19 who have invested in the installation of solar
20 panels. To turn around now after this investment
21 has been made and charge us for saving energy is
22 entirely unreasonable. It both has a chilling
23 effect on the continued installation of solar which,
24 presumably, the state of Utah encourages, and
25 punishes those of us who invested our money in a

1 program solely to help reduce the carbon footprint
2 of our community. Thank you.

3 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Leon
4 Fredrickson, followed by Shawn Black and Bob
5 Stevenson.

6 MR. FREDRICKSON: Thank you,
7 Commissioners. I appreciate the opportunity to
8 stand before you at this time. I'm Leon Fredrickson
9 from Springville, Utah. It's a locally-owned public
10 power entity down in South Utah County, and we are
11 in the process of trying to develop a fair and
12 equitable policy for customers that want to install
13 solar there in Springville. We look forward to the
14 opportunity to serve them and include that as part
15 of our diverse portfolio, which I know that Rocky
16 Mountain Power individuals are trying to do, too, as
17 they build the diversified portfolio to meet the
18 needs and reliability of what we have here in the
19 state.

20 And I hope that everybody does
21 realize that it takes great infrastructure to create
22 reliability. It just doesn't happen. We had an
23 outage on Sunday just out of the blue. At 12:15 in
24 the afternoon, a circuit goes down. We have
25 Wal-Mart go down, we have other key customers down,

1 and, you know, that's the result of unfortunately
2 for us, a raptor getting in the wrong place at the
3 wrong time, but those are costs. That
4 infrastructure is all costs, and we want to make
5 sure that every individual that is connected to the
6 local utility there meets the cost associated with
7 that.

8 And I would concur with the
9 electrical engineer from Dixie that transparency in
10 what those costs are is something that we all as an
11 industry need to move towards so that individuals,
12 solar, wind, bio -- whatever comes up -- fuel cells,
13 you know, the future will change in front of us, and
14 we do need to be in the front and be relevant to
15 show how those impact the system as a whole and its
16 reliability costs. And I hope that transparency
17 continues to be a part of Rocky Mountain Power's
18 desire to address all of their customers, as well as
19 Springville City as a public power entity will move
20 forward to include transparency and work towards
21 that and bring the greatest benefit to not only
22 Springville City as part of the state of the Utah,
23 but the overall community. I leave that with you at
24 this time.

25 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.

1 Shawn Black, Bob Stevenson, and Marla Mott-Smith.

2 MR. BLACK: Hello, Commissioners. I
3 work for Springville City Power. I have been there
4 22 years. Leon, me and him have been together 22
5 years now.

6 We work for a public power company,
7 we're owned by our citizens, we try to work on their
8 behalf. We currently own two wind farms, one
9 biomass farm, one solar installation, five hydros,
10 so we have been shifting away from coal towards
11 other generating assets for the last ten years or
12 so. We were able to do this under budget so we did,
13 and it seemed like a good thing at the time. As the
14 infiltration of panels started, or distributed
15 generation, we started to realize that we were
16 having cross-subsidization problems between
17 customers where some customers that were low income
18 were having to pay for the infrastructure costs, and
19 those who had higher income were getting tax breaks
20 on installing the panels.

21 Electricity is interesting because
22 it's traded on an hourly basis. Each hour has a
23 different value, and it's hard to create averages
24 that compensate for those values, whether it's solar
25 or wherever you're getting your power from. The

1 last couple of years, this energy that's been
2 created during the time solar panels are generating
3 is usually about three cents kilowatt hour, so it's
4 a lot lower than the retail prices that are getting
5 compensated for in traditional net metering. Many
6 of our infrastructure costs are fixed. Our
7 generating assets, our different resources have a
8 lot of fixed costs as we don't use them, we still
9 pay for them. And so as we bring the influx of
10 renewables in, we're still having to pay all those
11 fixed costs, and our other customers are having to
12 pay that didn't make that choice.

13 Solar generation is good for the
14 country as far as it does lower the usage of natural
15 gas, but you still have the intermittent and
16 intermediate generating resources that you're still
17 paying for that have to be waiting online, ready to
18 go, in case the sun isn't there or you have other
19 problems. So as I look at this rate case, I think
20 that the premise is correct, as far as looking at a
21 customer service rate that is -- it looks pretty
22 fair. It could even be a little higher. The demand
23 may be a little high, somewhat off. Actually, the
24 wholesale that these people are going to be paying
25 is really good. I wish we could pay that all the

1 time for our resources. And so I would support the
2 idea of what Rocky Mountain Power is doing, but
3 maybe look closer at some of the demand charges,
4 things like that, and the profitability. Ours would
5 probably be lower, we don't have profit.

6 And I guess what -- the whole idea of
7 public utility is we're trying to create choice. We
8 do want the solar customers. They will have their
9 ability to generate if there's wind, whatever
10 distributed resources there are that they adopt
11 them, but we also want to protect the customers who
12 don't want those things. So just try and make it
13 fair so that everyone has a choice. Thank you.

14 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Bob
15 Stevenson, Marla Mott-Smith, and then Joseph Blake
16 Quinton.

17 MR. STEVENSON: Gentlemen, I
18 appreciate your time, and I will be quick because my
19 parking meter expires in five minutes and I'm not
20 paying \$30.

21 My curiosity in this is that I'm
22 actually getting ready to build a new home and I am
23 planning on putting solar panels on my home. I
24 haven't informed my wife yet about the Tesla that
25 I've ordered that I'm going to charge it with, but

1 that's part of the reason why I'm doing it.

2 As I come here and listen, I'm
3 curious to hear the different realities of it, and I
4 do believe solar panels are something right now that
5 is very important. But I think the thing that we as
6 consumers forget when we put these on our home is
7 that we take two roles, and I haven't heard anybody
8 talk about this. And the two roles are that we
9 become a wholesaler in the fact that we're producing
10 power that goes back into the grid, and we also
11 become a user. Now, I don't know very many business
12 models that take the fact of a wholesaler and give a
13 wholesaler retail prices for their product. And
14 that is something that, as I listen here, is what
15 people are wanting, and I don't think -- even as a
16 solar panel user here shortly -- that I would expect
17 that. I think that I have to be realistic that I am
18 a producer, and I have an opportunity that there is
19 a buyer -- being Rocky Mountain Power and the
20 grid -- I have to respect the aspect that if that
21 grid wasn't there, I would have nowhere to send my
22 power unless I happen to own batteries, which are
23 very expensive right now and not quite as efficient.

24 So I think realistically you have to
25 take a look at it as consumers, and those who hold

1 the panels that you are a wholesaler, you're a
2 producer at this time. But you can't expect to turn
3 around and get the same price as you would as far as
4 being a user of the product if you're sending it
5 back into somebody's service to be able to do it.
6 And that would be my thinking on it.

7 And I believe these increases are
8 important because they will not only support what
9 Rocky Mountain Power has to do in the future as far
10 as them continuing to be able to expand and bring
11 new ways into it, but I think we also have to
12 respect the fact that -- it hasn't been talked about
13 a lot -- that if we continue to give retail prices
14 back to the wholesalers, then that means somebody is
15 going to have to be paying more money to be able to
16 create the profits that Rocky Mountain Power needs
17 to be able to re-invest in their company. And
18 that's going to go to the people who can't afford to
19 put panels on their homes, which means it's going to
20 affect the low income more than those who have more
21 money, because that's who usually uses it. So with
22 that, thank you.

23 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.
24 Marla Mott-Smith is next, and then Joseph Blake
25 Quinton, and Tom Brooks. Is Marla Mott-Smith here?

1 Okay. We'll move on to Joseph Blake Quinton, then
2 Tom Brooks and Jane Myers.

3 MR. QUINTON: Hello. Thank you for
4 having me. I'm Joseph Blake Quinton. I'm a civil
5 engineer and an economist. I have run the
6 estimates, budgets, and forecasts on billion-dollar
7 plus construction projects, so I have significant
8 experience in double-checking others' work as well
9 as doing my own.

10 One of the things that more brilliant
11 people than myself taught me to do were to make a
12 simple model to verify a complex model. The model
13 submitted by Rocky Mountain Power, as I think you'll
14 agree, is fairly complex. It takes 40 hours to go
15 through. So I thought a simple model would help
16 validate what they're doing. So as a basis of this,
17 a net-zero electric home generally produces excess
18 electricity from the spring equinox to the fall
19 equinox, or six months of the year. That excess
20 electricity is distributed and sold to homes in its
21 local neighborhood at summertime rates. The average
22 user, according to Rocky Mountain Power, uses 800
23 kilowatt hours per month, and the summertime average
24 rate at 800 kilowatt hours per month is 10.2 cents
25 per kilowatt hour. This electricity doesn't use

1 generation or transmission assets, and thus Rocky
2 Mountain Power is banking this money produced by the
3 solar home.

4 A net-zero energy home generally
5 purchases electricity from the fall equinox to the
6 spring equinox for the other six months of the year.
7 This energy is purchased off the credits that were
8 built up from the spring equinox to the fall
9 equinox. During this time of year, the rates are
10 lower and Rocky Mountain Power reimburses the
11 credits at less than 9.78 cents per kilowatt hour.
12 This cost includes generation and distribution.
13 Rocky Mountain Power gets to keep the difference
14 between the average rate billed to the solar
15 producers' neighbors during the summer and what the
16 solar producer gets credited during the winter.
17 This is .42 cents per kilowatt hour. Additionally,
18 Rocky Mountain Power gets to bank the generation and
19 transmission savings during the summer.

20 According to the Cost of Service
21 Model, Rebuttal A, Cost of Service Utah,
22 December 2015, Net Energy Metering Breakout by
23 Meredith -- otherwise Rocky Mountain Power --
24 generation transmission account for 71 percent of
25 the total cost of service. This means that Rocky

1 Mountain Power gets to bank 71 percent of the total
2 cost of service during the summer, plus the .42
3 cents per kilowatt hour because of the summer-winter
4 pricing difference. The question is, is the current
5 71 percent plus return on investment during the
6 summer tariff schedule fair to Rocky Mountain
7 Power's investors, to the solar producers, and to
8 the other ratepayers? I believe that the existing
9 net metering tariff should remain in its state, and
10 that if there is to be further review, it should be
11 done under the general rate study. My basic model
12 does not validate or come anywhere close to
13 validating Rocky Mountain Power's model of how net
14 metering works. Thank you.

15 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Tom
16 Brooks followed by Jane Myers, followed by
17 Forrest -- I can't make out the last name. Forrest
18 is the first name -- Sheare. Okay. Mr. Brooks.

19 MR. BROOKS: Thanks for the
20 opportunity. My wife and I bought solar panels and
21 put them on our rooftop. We did so with no, I
22 guess, hope of outliving what the obligation would
23 be. We primarily did this for clean air and the
24 future of, you know, the next generation. I had an
25 anecdote I was going to share, and I also wanted to

1 say we have a Chevy Volt. So with 14 panels, we
2 have never had to pay more than net meter, and we've
3 never had to buy gas for our Volt hardly ever, just
4 one time on a trip to St. George. So my anecdote
5 was just that I have a friend who is a really
6 staunch Republican, and he said he hated all this
7 clean air crap and didn't believe in global warming.
8 And I said, "Well, seriously, you don't want clean
9 air and clean water?" And he said, "Oh, no. I want
10 all those things." He said, "I just really
11 object -- people -- I'm driving my Cadillac and
12 people kind of look down at me, and I presume it's
13 because they think I'm a gas, you know, driving a
14 gas hog vehicle and all." So he just said, "I just
15 want to punish people for trying to achieve those
16 goals." You know, clean air and all. And I just
17 feel like that's how this is. We signed up for
18 solar panels on the prospect that we were going to
19 have this net meter where it is right now and that
20 we already don't have, you know, we're not likely to
21 outlive the commitment. So, you know, we just hate
22 to see it get worse. We don't want to see the
23 Commission do anything against people trying to do
24 things that give us clean air.

25 We have been suffering this whole

1 summer, really, inversions and horrible air. And I
2 just hate to see, you know, you do anything that
3 would discourage people from going to solar. And I
4 guess the only other comment I have is it seems like
5 you're committed to burning a lot of coal. And coal
6 reserves are building up and just you're sending
7 mixed messages. You're saying do Blue Sky, get
8 solar, and then now we're going to punish you for
9 it. People need to plan for their future and not
10 continually fear, kind of like I said, a punishment
11 for doing the right thing. Thank you.

12 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.
13 Jane Myers, then Forrest Sheare, and Mark Larsen.

14 MS. MYERS: I'm Jane Myers. My
15 family has been in Utah for generations. My husband
16 and I had paid off our home and -- like most of the
17 people in this room and those with solar now -- have
18 paid for the grid for most of our lives. Perhaps an
19 originating fee could be assessed for new buildings
20 and new power for a certain area in a development.
21 That would be fair and it would be equitable because
22 we have been paying for those all of our lives.

23 We put in 17 solar panels in March
24 because we felt strongly that we wanted our
25 grandkids and our great grandkids to have clean air.

1 We aimed to continue to live in our house and during
2 retirement so that we could afford to do that. We
3 paid it up front to buy those solar panels.

4 As a solar homeowner, a teacher, and
5 an asthma sufferer, I have three reasons for
6 promoting solar power. My neighbors benefit from my
7 panels and draw in less power from coal-fired plants
8 during the summer when I'm producing power. It is
9 because of the energy our house produces. As a
10 teacher who has many students at my junior high and
11 at the University of Utah in the summertime, I have
12 a lot of students with asthma in my classes of
13 almost 40 in 10 classes. I promote solar to reduce
14 the amount of ozone and particulates soaring and
15 scarring in their lungs.

16 As a citizen thinking of national
17 security and natural disasters, earthquakes, I
18 promote more individual people and businesses having
19 solar so that if the grid goes down, with the
20 improved technology in batteries, more people would
21 have power. And that -- if you meant to look at a
22 PBS special on batteries, it's very informative.
23 They're really promoting and predicting that
24 batteries will increase in their efficiency in the
25 next four years. Most of the batteries right now

1 are produced in China, which makes us really reliant
2 on China. If we continue with the promotion of
3 solar in Utah and in the United States, you will see
4 that change. Solar and the batteries will increase
5 and be produced in the United States. If you cut
6 off the promotion of that, that's going to change,
7 too.

8 If rooftop solar continues to grow,
9 there will be local production of power for
10 emergencies of all kinds. Those neighbors and
11 companies will be able to assist those without power
12 when battery backup becomes more affordable. The
13 country will be more secure. So I am saying that
14 you still need to promote solar. It is vital, not
15 only for our health, but better for our national
16 security, which has been not talked about except by
17 one speaker earlier. And I feel very strongly on
18 that. Thank you.

19 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.
20 Forrest Sheare is next, followed by Mark Larsen and
21 Solar Steve Horton.

22 MR. SHEARE: Hello. I'm Forrest
23 Sheare. I'm a professional snowboarder based here
24 in Utah.

25 The recent Rocky Mountain Power

1 proposal to increase net metering fees on its solar
2 customers is a drastic step in the wrong direction.
3 People in Utah who are investing in solar are doing
4 their part for air quality, the climate, and our
5 recreation economy. But this recent proposal
6 penalizes their efforts rather than rewards them.
7 As a professional snowboarder, I've witnessed the
8 impacts of climate change on a global scale,
9 however, few things concern me as much as the
10 changes I'm seeing here in my home state right in
11 the Wasatch.

12 Here in Utah, we pride ourselves on
13 our world-class outdoor recreations and boast the
14 greatest snow on earth. Our state thrives from
15 economic contributions from the outdoor recreation
16 and snow sports industry. But carbon pollution
17 threatens this economy's very existence. Each year
18 in Utah, outdoor recreation generates billions of
19 dollars. In addition, outdoor recreation is
20 responsible for employing 110,000 Utahns, which is
21 more than twice as many jobs than in mining --
22 32,000 -- and energy -- 18,000 combined. This
23 important sector of Utah's economy is threatened by
24 climate change. Consequences will include poor air
25 quality, a decreasing, inconsistent snow pack,

1 warmer rivers with little water, and warmer
2 temperatures. If we continue to rely on fossil
3 fuels for energy and continue to increase greenhouse
4 gas emissions, we'll be left with a state too hot to
5 recreate in with dry rivers, without any snow to ski
6 on. We must actively address climate change now.
7 We can combat climate change by investing in clean
8 energy economy. We can quite literally harness
9 energy from the sun, a renewable resource, to fuel
10 our electricity needs in a manner that does not
11 pollute our air or increase our carbon emissions.

12 Rocky Mountain Power's proposal would
13 make it extremely challenging for Utah families and
14 businesses to reduce their emissions through
15 personal investments in rooftop solar. Their
16 proposal does away with net metering, the billing
17 mechanism that encourages individuals and businesses
18 to generate their own solar energy and to receive
19 fair credit for the excess energy that they produce.
20 Utah should be growing its solar market, not killing
21 it.

22 Rocky Mountain Power is taking away
23 Utah's choice when it comes to energy. This action
24 will only lead to negative impacts in our
25 recreation-based economy. We need clean power that

1 supports our state's important snow sports and
2 outdoor industries. Even though Outdoor Retailer is
3 gone, Utah's outdoor industry is thriving, and it's
4 here to stay.

5 I can tell you firsthand that the
6 impacts of climate change are happening right now.
7 From ski resorts to individual homeowners, countless
8 Utahns about are trying to take ambitious steps to
9 reduce the state's carbon footprint. Let's work
10 alongside our neighbors and oppose Rocky Mountain
11 Power's proposal in order to protect our iconic and
12 beautiful state of Utah. Thank you.

13 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Mark
14 Larsen, then Solar Steve Horton, and Kathryn Hurn.

15 MR. LARSEN: Thank you for letting me
16 voice my concerns. My name is Mark Larsen. I live
17 in Ivins, Utah, and installed rooftop solar on our
18 home in 2010.

19 I already submitted comments to the
20 docket to give an example of how Rocky Mountain
21 Power's rate hike in net metering applies to an
22 actual solar homeowner. In other words, giving my
23 own home as a guinea pig here so you can see how it
24 actually works. Those data reflect five years of
25 net metering averaged out. Given the time limits, I

1 won't read the entire comments here today, but I'll
2 only highlight five points. I do have, however,
3 several copies of my comments if anybody else here
4 would like to have some. You're welcome to them.

5 The five points I'd like to raise:
6 First, RMP claims that solar customers are selling
7 them our kilowatts. This is inaccurate and
8 misleading. We do not sell RMP anything. The only
9 transaction taking place is that we trade straight
10 across our excess clean, renewable kilowatts in the
11 day for Rocky Mountain Power's dirty fossil fuel
12 kilowatts generated at night. So who's getting the
13 better deal on that trade? Are dirty kilowatts more
14 valuable than clean kilowatts? If that's true, then
15 why does Rocky Mountain Power charge customers more
16 for renewable kilowatts in its Blue Sky Program?
17 This contradicts its own claim that clean kilowatts
18 are less valuable.

19 Yet, RMP is now proposing to alter
20 the trade. In the past, its been traded one-on-one.
21 What they're really saying with this rate hike --
22 they put it in dollars and cents -- but what it's
23 really saying is for every three kilowatts we donate
24 to them in the day, they will only give us one back
25 at night. RMP justifies this three-for-one trade

1 with the claim that solar customers are not paying
2 their fair share of infrastructure. This is false.
3 RMP sells the kilowatt hours we trade them at the
4 full rate to our nearest neighbors, even though the
5 utility hasn't used one high-power line, burned one
6 lump of coal, or generated even one of those
7 kilowatts. Consequently, the infrastructure costs
8 we take out of the grid at night are fully paid for,
9 the high-power lines, the coal, everything. Like
10 other customers, solar homeowners pay for as much of
11 the grid as we actually use. If not in dollars,
12 certainly in kilowatt hours that RMP sells for
13 dollars at the full rate.

14 But there's more to the story than
15 that. This is point three. What if solar customers
16 put more kilowatts into RMP's grid than they take
17 out of it? Well, then RMP confiscates those
18 kilowatt hours in March every year and also sells
19 them for pure profit to our nearest neighbors. So
20 far --

21 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Do you need more
22 time?

23 MR. LARSEN: I've only got two more
24 points. Most egregious of all, the utility
25 anticipates that since it will only trade one dirty

1 kilowatt for every three, customers might rightfully
2 conclude they might as well use as many of their own
3 solar kilowatts as they can during the day. But now
4 Rocky Mountain Power wants to levy penalty fees on
5 them for demand charges so that they don't use their
6 solar kilowatts in the day. And I don't think it's
7 any of Rocky Mountain Power's business if solar
8 customers want to use their own solar kilowatts to
9 run their washer and dryer, dishwasher, bake in
10 their oven, or anything else.

11 And, finally, last point.
12 Anthropogenic climate change is real. Just like
13 everywhere else, Utah needs to transition away from
14 fossil fuels. Scientists have been warning about
15 this for decades, and RMP has dragged its feet. So
16 individual Utahns have shouldered the
17 responsibility themselves. They should be rewarded
18 for their efforts, not punished.

19 I implore you as Commissioners to
20 reject these proposed rate hikes for the sake of our
21 air, water, environment, health, state, nation,
22 world, our children, and grandchildren. There comes
23 a time when people and planet matter more than
24 profit. Thank you for your time.

25 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Solar Steve

1 Horton, Kathryn Hurn, and Jan Ellen Burton.

2 MR. HORTON: Honorable ladies and
3 gentlemen, I'm Steve Horton. My public name is
4 Solar Steve, my wife is Photon Patty, and my dog is
5 Kilowatt Khaki, and we are all against Rocky
6 Mountain Power's plans to penalize solar customers.

7 I, along with thousands of others,
8 will likely lose their job. Jobs that we love. I
9 live in Sandy, and I've lived here most of my life.
10 I recently graduated from the Solar Program at Salt
11 Lake Community College, working toward my Nabcep
12 certification. After working for 30 years at a
13 large, West Valley construction equipment
14 Caterpillar distributor as an inventory manager, I
15 found myself looking for a new job. And after
16 working a few positions, including realtor and radio
17 ad salesman, I landed in solar. At 61-years old, I
18 was part of a minority, an old guy looking for a job
19 in a young man's world. It's not an appealing
20 person for a lot of companies, but fortunately in
21 solar, your qualifications and your experience and
22 fortunately, my education was looked at. Now I
23 happily work as a consultant for residential and
24 commercial customers at one of Utah's top-quality
25 solar contractors. I'm so thankful to work in

1 solar, which makes a difference for good in the
2 world.

3 I've just returned with my wife
4 celebrating our 40th anniversary traveling to
5 Bavaria, Germany, where solar panels were virtually
6 everywhere. Chalets, restaurants, business
7 buildings, farmhouses. Countries around the world
8 are embracing solar, and we in the U.S. are slowly
9 falling behind. Actually, we're number five in the
10 world, but if we don't do something here in Utah,
11 it's going to hurt. It could have reverberating
12 effects, trickle down.

13 I challenge this honorable Commission
14 to consider applying the golden rule to the
15 situation, to do unto others as you would have them
16 do unto you. Please don't allow my new job to be
17 dissolved to benefit a multibillion-dollar company.
18 If a rate increase is approved, I plead the
19 Commission advises that an equal rate is applied
20 evenly to every customer. If it needs to go from \$6
21 to \$10, that's not a big deal.

22 Our air in Salt Lake City is among
23 the worst in the country, and that's not fake news.
24 So carbon-based emissions will continue to inspire
25 the buyers of electric cars, although Tesla is not

1 even allowed to sell new cars in Utah, only used
2 cars. When combined with this solar-offensive
3 tactic -- there is an obvious move against
4 renewable, distributed integration in our country.
5 At a national level when the grid is redesigned,
6 when we do our rebuilding, renewables will be
7 integrated within each state's grid line. I can't
8 imagine the U.S. government redesigning the grid
9 with old technology. It won't happen. Smokestacks
10 won't be lining the grid. Rocky Mountain Power is
11 investing upwards of \$3 billion on renewables.
12 Wyoming, wind blade extensions, solar farms,
13 renewable technology is embraced by RMP as a viable
14 low cost and profitable solution. It is not a
15 misunderstood technology. Rocky Mountain Power's
16 proposal for putting deep financial drains targeting
17 solar customers is a profit-seeking,
18 market-controlling maneuver. There is a high
19 standard --

20 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: If you need more
21 time, we can give it to you at the end.

22 MR. HORTON: Okay. I'll hurry.
23 There is a high standard required from our public
24 officials and companies which requires transparent
25 honesty and fiduciary duty to citizens, presentation

1 of financial numbers. There are fundamental
2 questions of calculations' veracity spoken by others
3 identified in the RMP presentation. These must be
4 scrutinized. The veracity of which must be
5 scrutinized to be embraced by customers and the
6 public. Carbon-based fuels have proven years
7 reserves with limitations. Harvesting the sun --

8 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Mr. Horton, we
9 need to move on to the next person.

10 MR. HORTON: I've got two paragraphs.

11 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: We're happy to
12 bring you back at the end, but we have to move on.

13 MR. HORTON: I plead the honorable
14 Commission to not kill the solar business in Utah.
15 Let me keep my job. I thank you for all that you
16 do.

17 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.
18 Kathryn Hurn, Jan Ellen Burton, then Therese
19 Huhtala.

20 MS. HURN: Good afternoon. My name
21 is Kathryn Hurn. I would like to remind you of some
22 words by Rachel Carson, who wrote The Silent Spring
23 many decades ago. "We now stand where two roads
24 diverge." But, unlike the roads in Robert Frost's
25 famous poem, they are not equally fair. The road we

1 have long been traveling is deceptively easy, a
2 smooth superhighway on which we progress with great
3 speed, but at its ends lies disaster. The other
4 fork in the road, the one less traveled by, offers
5 our last, our only chance to reach a destination
6 that assures the preservation of our species.

7 I want to ask you to tell Rocky
8 Mountain Power to put their profits aside and work
9 with the people of Utah towards a fair transition
10 towards clean energy. Fair. This proposal is not
11 fair. Thank you.

12 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Jan
13 Ellen Burton, then Therese Huhtala, then Dan
14 Willems. Is Jan Ellen Burton here? Okay. We'll go
15 on to Therese Huhtala. I'm sorry if I'm butchering
16 your name. You can correct me now.

17 MS. HUHTALA: Thank you. My name is
18 Therese Huhtala. I have been a Salt Lake resident
19 for 17 years, and I purchased rooftop solar three
20 years ago. I'm also part of a neighborhood solar
21 group that I think has been mentioned a couple of
22 times.

23 I agree with much of the submitted
24 testimony and comments that oppose this current
25 proposal and urge you, the Public Service

1 Commission, to shift this proposal into a general
2 rate case and require Rocky Mountain Power to use
3 up-to-date methodology over a sufficient length of
4 time and with a much larger sample size in order to
5 determine actual energy cost and come up with a fair
6 and reasonable rate structure for everyone. I do
7 not agree that, although it is a growing segment of
8 our city and probably of Utah our state, solar
9 customers should be shifted into an entirely
10 different class. I think that is a terrible
11 precedent, and I think what about customers with
12 pools, what about customers with other different
13 needs that not everyone has. Are they going to come
14 back later and will this be a precedent for shifting
15 those customers into another customer pool in order
16 to charge them different rates? I think that people
17 with electric cars could also fall into this. I
18 drove here with my neighbor in her electric car to
19 come to testify today.

20 I think that I have heard a few
21 people say, well, people should just get battery
22 banks and go off the grid. I think that's a well
23 and good idea, although it's not something that I'm
24 going to be able to do, and I would much rather buy
25 an electric car, which actually impacts air quality

1 in our valley, than buy a battery bank if I have to
2 be faced with that choice. I think that the main
3 thing -- I've looked over hundreds of pages of
4 testimony, not as much as you guys will be -- but in
5 the docket number, and it just seems very clear to
6 me that Rocky Mountain Power -- the study they used,
7 the numbers they used, the methodology they used,
8 the sample size, all that stuff -- does not convince
9 me that what their proposal is trying to do is fair.

10 I will pay more for my power. I'm
11 hooked up to the grid, and I'll pay more for my
12 power. I think that's fair. But I really would
13 like to see a proposal that would be fair, and I
14 would like their proposal to reflect a fair study
15 and to be -- I think they should have to come back
16 to the table in a general rate case and be forced to
17 show what it wants to do in better, more legitimate
18 terms. Thank you.

19 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Next
20 is Dan Willems, then Peter Brownstein, and Neil
21 Swaby. Is Dan Willems here? We'll move on to Peter
22 Brownstein.

23 MR. BROWNSTEIN: My name is Peter
24 Brownstein. Good afternoon. I'd like to thank
25 Rocky Mountain Power for keeping the lights on in my

1 home over the years. I'd like to thank those who
2 have labored over the years to provide the coal to
3 burn, even at the expense of their own health, and
4 everyone who has kept a great network going for so
5 many years. I'm speaking as a shareholder in the
6 Company and as a concerned citizen. We park a Prius
7 next to our pickup.

8 Public Service Utility Commissions
9 were created many years ago by the Public Utilities
10 Act of 1917 to help balance the interests of both
11 the consumer and providers and utilities which, at
12 the time, had been declared as part of the doctrine
13 of public convenience and necessity. During these
14 past hundred years, many things, including the
15 technologies available to provide many of these
16 services, have changed. I regret that addressing
17 climate issues may be outside of your actual
18 jurisdiction and part of this may need to be
19 addressed at the legislature.

20 In many parts of our nation, utility
21 bills are broken down into two or more separate
22 components, one being the cost of electricity being
23 provided, and second, the cost of distribution of
24 energy over a network which continues to function no
25 matter what the weather. In our current system, we

1 are simply charged one amount, which includes two
2 different components grouped together without any
3 consideration of the services we need. I would like
4 to thank the gentlemen from Dixie Power for
5 providing more detail on this. I believe that it is
6 an appropriate option to separate the costs of
7 generation from the costs of distribution, show the
8 separate costs and allow consumers to purchase what
9 they need. This would also allow for a future where
10 public utilities can continue to generate power and
11 start to figure out ways in which they can do this
12 that are healthy for the environment.

13 I agree with everyone else who talks
14 about the need for the business model of Rocky
15 Mountain Power to change. I'm not sure if this is
16 the right venue or if it is an issue of a number of
17 us, as I stated, having to go to the legislature to
18 possibly modify what the jurisdiction of a Public
19 Utilities Commission should look like. I do not
20 know. This is not an "us versus them" issue. I
21 view it as how to find a proper balance that can
22 provide for the health of the planet, while at the
23 same time allowing for a public utility to remain in
24 business to continue to provide the important
25 services that they do.

1 I would request that you deny Rocky
2 Mountain Power's request until better data can be
3 provided to the Commission. Thank you all for your
4 service.

5 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. I
6 think we'll do two more and then we'll take a short
7 break. Nigel Swaby and then David Saltsman.

8 MR. SWABY: My name is Nigel Swaby.
9 I'm here as a representative of the Fair Park
10 Community Council. We submitted a resolution
11 through our secretary to you earlier today by email.
12 In it, it dealt with a number of issues concerning
13 this. I want to let you know that we have a fairly
14 diverse board in terms of thought on this, yet we
15 came to a unanimous decision. In the interest of
16 time, I'm just going to read you a summary of the
17 resolution's stated points.

18 The first one is that we support Salt
19 Lake's strategic goal of transitioning from fossil
20 fuels towards renewable energy. We call upon you to
21 decline Rocky Mountain Power's solar net metering
22 rate increase request, and we urge you to direct
23 Rocky Mountain Power to develop energy generation
24 and rate structures that diminish reliance on fossil
25 fuels. Our ZIP Code, we have the lowest -- one of

1 the lowest incomes in the area, median incomes, so
2 our residents are very rate sensitive. And when you
3 talk about the choice of installing solar for
4 homeowners and Rocky Mountain's proposal, that would
5 basically diminish any cost benefits for them. I
6 think it's very important that you decline this rate
7 at this time.

8 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.
9 David Saltsman.

10 MR. SALTSMAN: Hello. My name is
11 David Saltsman. I am both a rooftop solar customer
12 and the CEO of a local business. I run Whipple
13 Service Champions. We're a residential plumbing and
14 heating company.

15 So I kind of have two points to speak
16 of. From both of those viewpoints, I object to
17 Rocky Mountain Power's proposal. As a rooftop solar
18 customer, I think going to clean energy is one of
19 the best things this city and this state can do.
20 I've had sinus issues my whole life. Since I moved
21 to Utah six years ago, I've had to have two sinus
22 surgeries. I can't directly link one to the other,
23 but I never needed surgery before. I put rooftop
24 solar on my house because pretty soon I will have a
25 battery system in my house, and I will have an

1 electric car, and I will be able to transport myself
2 across the valley and attend to my business and not
3 have to dump any extra pollution into it. That was
4 my motivation. That is the future of that industry.
5 You know, most major car makers have committed to an
6 electric fleet. Some have committed to all electric
7 fleets by pretty aggressive goals in the near
8 future.

9 As a business person, solar dovetails
10 perfectly with what we already do. We install
11 high-efficient plumbing and heating systems,
12 tankless hot water heaters, modulating furnaces with
13 variable motors in them, and high efficiency air
14 conditioners. My personal power usage at my house
15 was kind of a test case for this. I have put
16 high-efficiency, top-of-the-line equipment in and
17 paired it with rooftop solar, and I'm going to give
18 Rocky Mountain Power about a megawatt of free energy
19 this year because I'm not using it. I don't need
20 to.

21 We employ 80 people at our company,
22 and our newest division is our electrical and solar
23 division. We are not installing solar ourselves,
24 but we are paired with other local solar companies,
25 and it is an important growth factor in our

1 continued success.

2 On both those fronts, I must disagree
3 with this proposal. Thank you for hearing me.

4 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.

5 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: I'm
6 sorry to interrupt. It would be helpful -- there
7 are a lot of people in the hallway waiting and
8 tracking the number, so it would also be helpful if
9 you would say what number we're on, occasionally.

10 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Okay. We just
11 finished number 51. As of a few minutes ago, we
12 have a total of 126 who are wanting to speak, so
13 that's 75 more who are wanting to speak. So we'll
14 take a short break now. Let me just give you the
15 next five names. Starting with number 53, Jim
16 French, Rebecca Rosebrecht, Colin Rosebrecht, Larry
17 -- I'm not sure I can say Larry's last name -- and
18 Doug Vilnius.

19 As I mentioned, we have, as of right
20 now, about 75 more people to speak. With our
21 three-minute limit, that will take us a while to get
22 through all of those. I encourage you to please be
23 sensitive to the people who are below you on the
24 list. There are a lot of people who want to speak
25 to us today, and there are people with time

1 constraints, so please be sensitive to the people
2 who are signed up after you. If you need more time,
3 again, we're happy to bring you back at the end, but
4 I will enforce those time limitations in the
5 interest of those who are waiting to speak to us.
6 We'll reconvene at about 5:00. Thank you.

7 (Break)

8 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: We are back on
9 the record. We're here for the public witness
10 hearing in Public Service Commission Docket
11 14-035-114. I won't read the full name of the
12 docket again, but this is the net metering docket.
13 And today is the day for public witness testimony
14 where anyone from the public may provide comments to
15 us on the filing by Rocky Mountain Power.

16 Since we've got some different people
17 here that weren't here at the beginning, I'll just
18 make a couple of comments. We have a significant
19 list of people who have signed up to provide
20 comments to us. We're up to, I think, about 150
21 names. So far, we have gotten through about 51. So
22 in the interest and to be sensitive to those who
23 were not fortunate enough to get signed up early on
24 the list and were later, we are imposing some time
25 restrictions. We'll ask everyone to keep your

1 initial comments to three minutes. If you need more
2 time than that, we're happy to bring you back at the
3 end after everyone has had an opportunity to speak.

4 On our notice, we provided that
5 anyone who is present by 6:30 can sign up by 6:30,
6 so we don't know yet how many more people will sign
7 up. I'll just mention if every speaker takes one
8 extra minute, that adds about two hours of wait time
9 for the people at the end of the list. If we have
10 30 seconds of applause after each speaker, that adds
11 about an hour of wait time to the people who signed
12 up later. We're happy to stay and listen to
13 everything you want to say, but we want to give
14 everybody an initial opportunity in a fair manner
15 first, so we'll be enforcing those time limits as we
16 go forward. We're up to number 53 on the sign-up
17 sheet. The next speaker is Jim French.

18 MR. FRENCH: My name is Jim French,
19 and it's nice to be back here again. I think it's
20 the third time I've been here on this topic.

21 We have had solar panels on our house
22 since 2009, and we currently produce about
23 85 percent of our power from the sun. In 2008,
24 which is nine years ago, I attended net metering
25 meetings in this very building upstairs in a small

1 conference room. So in 2008, excess residential
2 solar production was credited at the wholesale rate,
3 which was about 3.8 cents at the time. Because of
4 that wholesale rate credit plus the high price of
5 solar, only the greenest of the tree huggers
6 installed solar panels, and I was not among them at
7 that time. But in 2009, net metering was adjusted
8 and now it's retail.

9 So during the net metering meetings
10 in 2008, Mr. Dave Eskelsen from Rocky Mountain Power
11 and the Company lawyers were extremely confident.
12 There was no way that the Public Service Commission
13 would rule in favor of crediting excess residential
14 solar production at the retail rate, but the PSC
15 did, in fact, do just that. As a result of this,
16 plus solar's reduced cost, residential solar PV
17 installs have slowly increased in our state, and
18 over 4,400 people are employed by the solar industry
19 in Utah.

20 Now, Rocky Mountain Power wants to
21 burden new residential solar customers with (1)
22 avoided costs crediting for excess residential power
23 production, (2) a \$13 monthly charge, (3) a demand
24 charge of at least \$8.25 per month, and (4) a \$60
25 application fee. So Stan Holmes, UCARE's excellent

1 spokesperson, gave an excellent summation, which I
2 read, and I admire his ability to make this halfway
3 understandable. It is complicated. So is a
4 kilowatt hour produced on my roof worth a kilowatt
5 hour produced by one of Rocky Mountain Power's coal
6 or gas power plants or solar plants? I think so.
7 And should new solar customers be punished
8 financially for wanting to produce clean energy from
9 the sun? I would hope not. I urge the PSC to look
10 forward in this matter, not into the past. Thank
11 you.

12 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Rebecca
13 Rosebrecht -- and I apologize if I'm mispronouncing
14 the last name -- I'm not seeing anyone. Colin
15 Rosebrecht? (No response). Okay. And you told me
16 how to pronounce your last name, Larry, you're next,
17 and then Doug Vilnius, and then Clayton Schmoehol
18 with Americans for Prosperity is the third one.

19 MR. CERENZIE: My name is Larry
20 Cerenzie. I am a chemical engineer. My background
21 is energy, all kinds. I have looked at everything
22 from dams, the cost of production, to the largest
23 oil fields. My concern here today -- and just to
24 give you a little bit more, I've done things like,
25 if you remember the Toyotas when the Toyota's

1 shifters were sticking and the brakes didn't work,
2 and the motors couldn't be turned on and off, they
3 would be locked in full speed and all that, I wrote
4 the plan to fix them for Congress. So I'm just
5 saying I have a little background. And my concern
6 today is as the homeowners that don't have solar.
7 The debt. My kids. I have looked at similar
8 projects, and many of those projects
9 are -- 50 percent or more -- end up going to be paid
10 back by tax credits or some way through the
11 government. So that means if we have a \$40,000
12 project, \$20,000 of that ends up on the federal
13 deficit or against the state. Those debts are not
14 being paid down, they're accruing. How many
15 hundreds of billions of dollars have gone on there
16 so far? And what I'm concerned about is continuing
17 large benefits to the industry when, in fact, we
18 should be weaning it off so it can become more
19 economic and carry itself.

20 I'm for solar. I don't put it on my
21 house because -- even though like everybody else, I
22 want to get all those tax credits -- because I don't
23 think it's right. It's not fair, and the cost of
24 distribution, who's paying for that? That's huge.

25 So my recommendation to you is to

1 consider the whole proposal in itself. I can't say
2 that I think that that is all the best way to do it,
3 but what I can say is I hope that you will look at
4 and consider formats that will help, and maybe take
5 some of the money that comes back -- at least, the
6 drop-in rates back to the solar folks -- maybe some
7 of that goes toward paying off the actual cost of
8 the system that goes toward putting it on their
9 homes so that it's fair to everyone. Does that make
10 sense? So that's my concern. For my kids. I'm 65,
11 I'm not going to be around -- well, maybe I'm going
12 to be around a whole lot longer, but there's a good
13 chance I'm not. But guess what? My kids and my
14 grandkids have to carry that, and I thank you.

15 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Doug
16 Vilnius is next, and then Clayton Schmoehol with
17 Americans for Prosperity, and then Nick Farley is
18 next. Is Doug Vilnius here? Okay. Clayton with
19 Americans for Prosperity? No? Is Nick Farley here?
20 Okay. Let's go to the next three then. John
21 Rosales, Alan Naumann, I believe is the last name,
22 and Evelyn Everton. So is John Rosales here? Okay.
23 Alan, I believe its Naumann, with Rocky Mountain
24 Energy. No? Okay. Evelyn Everton with Americans
25 for Prosperity. No? Okay. Michael Otterson. Is

1 Michael Otterson here? Okay. And the next two will
2 be Doug Shipley and Jennifer Desha.

3 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Did you
4 call Evelyn Everton?

5 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Yes. I'll take
6 you after Mr. Otterson.

7 MR. OTTERSON: I'm Michael Otterson.
8 I'm a solar customer and I also work for a local
9 solar company. I'd like to start by thanking Rocky
10 Mountain Power and the many employees over the years
11 who have provided reliable power to our community.
12 They do a very important job.

13 As some have mentioned, even with
14 solar, we currently rely upon the grid when the sun
15 doesn't shine or when our solar production is less
16 than our solar consumption. I feel it is fair for
17 all customers to share the costs of maintaining the
18 grid, but what are those true costs? As a solar
19 customer, I am putting less demand on the grid by
20 generating power on my rooftop, and excess power
21 goes to my neighbors. Am I not costing less than a
22 non-solar customer? What are the costs to all of us
23 to have polluted air? Health costs, economic costs.
24 Perhaps solar customers should be subsidized for
25 their contribution to society.

1 I implore you to look to the future.

2 Growth in the electric car market is real. That
3 will increase the need for electricity. Look at the
4 environmental impact. During certain times of the
5 year, Salt Lake City has the worst air quality in
6 the country. That is an embarrassment. Look at the
7 economic impact. Visitors to our state will start
8 to choose alternative destinations with our horrible
9 air quality. Solar will continue to grow. Utah can
10 be a leader in this space. Please embrace solar.

11 Help foster a political environment
12 to address climate change by encouraging our
13 citizens to make investments in clean energy. Rocky
14 Mountain Power needs to adopt to a changing
15 landscape. They can see how much solar production
16 is coming from rooftops, and they will need to adopt
17 to weather patterns, but they can do it. They're
18 smart and hard-working people.

19 Statute requires this Commission to
20 establish rates that are fair. That doesn't just
21 mean you look at the costs, but also the benefits.
22 Over the past five years, net metering has been
23 protected or expanded 32 times and only reduced six
24 times. When net metering was reduced, it was often
25 overturned when the full set of facts were

1 appropriately evaluated. I urge the Commission to
2 reject Rocky Mountain Power's proposal and to look
3 at issues beyond just the rates. Do the right
4 thing. Thank you.

5 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Next
6 we'll have Evelyn Everton, and then Doug Shipley and
7 Jennifer Desha.

8 MS. EVERTON: Thank you. My name is
9 Evelyn Everton. I'm the state director for
10 Americans for Prosperity in Utah. Americans for
11 Prosperity advocates for free market policies.
12 Certainly, we would advocate in this case for no
13 monopolies and no tax subsidies and no net metering,
14 but since that's not the world we're living in, we
15 are here to support the Rocky Mountain proposal to
16 purchase solar energy from solar customers at a fair
17 market price.

18 The practice of net metering
19 essentially means that some consumers have the
20 ability to lower their own utility bills at the
21 expense of their friends and neighbors. For many of
22 us who do not have the means to install solar panels
23 on our roofs, we are forced to pick up the tab for
24 those who do. Anytime the government intervenes and
25 determines regulations and pricing, a business has

1 to absorb the cost of that, and, of course, that
2 means they will be passing that cost down to
3 consumers.

4 A recent study that was done by HEAL
5 Utah and Westminster College showed that 61 percent
6 of solar customers make over \$100,000. Compare that
7 to the 198,000 Utah households that earn less than
8 \$30,000. 18 percent of their monthly budget is
9 consumed by energy costs, and that's -- compared to
10 those in higher income where it's only 5 percent of
11 their monthly budgets go to the energy costs.

12 Not only are we talking about an
13 increase in electricity rates, but we're also
14 talking about the cost of all goods that consumers
15 buy. The grocery store that sells our food would
16 have to increase their cost of that food in order to
17 absorb that utility cost increase. So you can see
18 how this would further hurt low-income families.
19 Electricity is not a luxury budget item; it's a
20 necessity. We should not be forcing lower-income
21 Utah families to pay higher rates in order to
22 continue to subsidize solar customers who can afford
23 it.

24 Additionally, there's been a lot of
25 discussion here about the impact to our economy and

1 the loss of jobs in the solar industry, should net
2 metering go away. Utah currently enjoys some of the
3 lowest energy prices in our country, and because
4 those costs are so low -- actually about 31 percent
5 below the national average -- businesses and jobs
6 are attracted to our state, because the cost of
7 business is so low here. A potential rate increase
8 could certainly jeopardize our ability to attract
9 those business and those jobs. So we would
10 encourage you to support fair market pricing in the
11 solar industry. Thank you.

12 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Next
13 we have Doug Shipley, Jennifer Desha, and then Brian
14 Jackson. Is Doug Shipley here? No? Okay.
15 Jennifer Desha? (No response). Brian Jackson?
16 Then the next two will be BJ Christianson and Joel
17 Eves.

18 MR. JACKSON: Thank you. Hello. My
19 name is Brian, and I adamantly oppose the proposal
20 submitted by the Division of Public Utilities and
21 the Office of Consumer Services. I share similar
22 feelings to those of my 150 coworkers, hundreds of
23 solar customers, and hundreds of thousands of Utah
24 homeowners that may want to choose solar in the
25 future.

1 First, I want to share my gratitude
2 for the proposal, including a provision whereby
3 those with solar will be grandfathered on their
4 current net metering policy. While I disagree with
5 the proposed term, I feel it should be a minimum of
6 20 years. I am thankful that they took existing
7 customers into consideration. I am pleased to see
8 that the proposal defines the customer as the meter
9 and not the homeowner. I am disappointed but not
10 surprised to read in the proposal, a \$60
11 administrative fee to be determined in incremental
12 monitoring fee.

13 While Rocky Mountain Power is a
14 monopoly that we have no choice but to do business
15 with, we cannot allow them to act like one. Their
16 margins are sufficiently healthy, and they have more
17 than enough low-hanging fruit to become more
18 efficient and cut costs so that these incremental
19 fees are not needed to be charged. We must not
20 enable them to think like a monopoly. They are, and
21 dictate what fees will be charged. While anything
22 other than true net metering is a negative for
23 solar, I understand that due to Rocky Mountain
24 Power's rhetoric and questionable costs and benefits
25 solar brings to the grid, that a change is highly

1 likely to be made.

2 After digesting the proposal, I may
3 begrudgingly support a structure that includes an
4 import and export fee. However it's proposed, I
5 cannot support for the following reasons: The
6 proposal suggests the export fee only at 9.79 cents
7 per watt. They justify this rate by claiming it is
8 95 percent of the average rate charged. While it
9 may be the average rate charged due to apartments,
10 condos, and townhomes, it is not 95 percent of the
11 average rate cost of those who choose to go solar.
12 The proposal suggests that the export fee be fixed
13 while the import fee is whatever the current rate
14 is. How can this be justified? This only benefits
15 Rocky Mountain Power as they can continue to
16 increase their rates over the next 15 years, yet
17 have a fixed credit for solar customers.

18 The number one problem with the
19 proposal is the true-up every 15 minutes. Rocky
20 Mountain Power has never provided customers with
21 their consumption data in 15-minute increments.
22 Outside of this being completely unjustifiable, it
23 also makes it impossible for a customer to
24 accurately forecast the results of their investment.
25 In addition to Rocky Mountain Power never providing

1 this data, customer consumption behaviors deviate
2 significantly, even on a individual basis. No
3 reasonable person would suggest that one's
4 consumption would remain constant in 15-minute
5 increments.

6 While I strongly disagree with the
7 cost claims of Rocky Mountain Power, the need for a
8 change to the current net metering program, I
9 personally could support the proposal if the
10 following changes were made: (1) Eliminate the
11 proposed admin and incremental monitoring fee, (2)
12 the export fee be 95 percent of homeowner's
13 then-current rate and the true-up be on a monthly
14 basis instead of every 15 minutes. At stake is
15 thousands of jobs, millions in revenue for the
16 state, clean air, and customers' right to choose.
17 Thank you for your consideration.

18 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: The next three
19 names I have are BJ Christianson, Joel Eves, and
20 France Barrol.

21 MR. CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for your
22 time, gentlemen. It's a pleasure being here. My
23 name is BJ Christianson. I'm a local realtor and
24 the co-founder of the Real Estate Solar Coalition of
25 Utah -- or RESCUE for short -- it's an organization

1 created to educate real estate agents, appraisers,
2 lenders, title companies, and the general public on
3 the value of residential rooftop solar as it relates
4 to the real estate transaction.

5 At RESCUE, we see a bright future for
6 solar in the state of Utah, both literally and
7 figuratively speaking. Solar energy is clean and
8 essentially free power given to us by the sun, which
9 is why Rocky Mountain Power feels threatened by it.
10 Rather than seeing residential rooftop solar owners
11 as partners in power creation for communities, they
12 see them as adversaries whereas in truth, rooftop
13 solar actually aids Rocky Mountain Power by feeding
14 additional power back into the grid to be used by
15 other consumers during peak times. We see these
16 rate hikes as a direct attack on those homeowners
17 who have invested in solar power systems and on
18 other homeowners who are considering investing in
19 rooftop solar for their homes. And, on the solar
20 industry in general -- which has been said many
21 times over in this meeting -- currently employs over
22 4,400 people here in Utah.

23 I'll remind the Commission that two
24 years ago we saw drastic changes in net metering
25 policies such as these in Nevada, which decimated

1 the solar industry in that state and grossly
2 affected almost 20,000 families who had invested in
3 solar power systems for their homes. The public
4 outcry that followed led not only to the state
5 overturning those policies just two months ago, but
6 also threatened the re-election campaigns of many
7 officials there and associated Commissions. Like
8 Nevada, these rate hikes would be nothing short of
9 destructive for a currently thriving solar industry.
10 And while that may please Rocky Mountain Power, it
11 would destroy thousands of jobs throughout the state
12 and do harm to the thousands of families who have
13 invested in making the world a better place, not
14 just talking about climate change in the world, but
15 here locally, the continued use of fossil fuels for
16 energy is leaving the Wasatch Front with literally
17 the worst air quality in the U.S.

18 My time is almost up. Well, just to
19 say real quick and to see -- if you look at things
20 like Germany, other places and their countries in
21 the world where you have people using solar energy
22 and they have batteries in their garages, and the
23 power company uses that power at peak times. They
24 pull from those homes to feed everybody else, and it
25 creates an ecosystem that is the beneficial for

1 everyone. So, yes, Rocky Mountain Power needs to,
2 in my opinion, adopt and change and learn how to
3 work. We can all work together on this, and the
4 current proposal as they have it now is not the way
5 to do it. It needs some adjustments.

6 So at RESCUE, we ask you to please
7 not accept this proposal from Rocky Mountain Power.
8 Thank you.

9 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. The
10 next three are Joel Eves, France Barrol and
11 Shelleice Stokes. Is Joel Eves here with Lehi
12 Power?

13 MR. EVES: I'm Joel Eves with Lehi
14 City Power. I'm here and I just want to address two
15 topics, and that's the cost and choice. We're
16 facing some similar issues in Lehi. There are two
17 things we're considering. As you know, Lehi is
18 experiencing a large amount of growth. We saw a
19 5 percent peak growth last year and a 10 percent
20 energy growth. We have 20,000 customers, we had
21 about a thousand a year, so we're seeing 5 percent
22 growth. And our concern, the big challenge in Lehi,
23 is stabilizing those rates for those who have lived
24 there a long time. So it's important for us to
25 maintain a good product for an affordable price to

1 our existing customers.

2 So when we have solar customers
3 coming in, our concern is we're not paying those
4 costs, then they're going to be passed on to the
5 other 19,800 people. So in Lehi, we have 200 solar
6 customers -- about 1 percent -- and we'll cross
7 20,000 customers this year. So cost is a big thing
8 to protect those 19,800.

9 And additionally, the other point
10 I'll make is the choice. We want everybody to have
11 that choice to put solar on their home or not. If
12 they chose not to, we don't want them to have to pay
13 for those that don't choose to do that. So we're in
14 a similar position as Rocky Mountain Power. We're
15 evaluating five options that we're looking at doing
16 to make changes there, and we just want to protect
17 the choice of those other 19,800 of our citizens
18 there in Lehi, so we're supportive of Rocky Mountain
19 Power's approach to cover those costs. Thank you.

20 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: France Barrol,
21 Shelleice Stokes, and Monte Stokes.

22 MS. BARROL: Good afternoon. My name
23 is France Barrol. I'm a long-time Utah resident, as
24 well as a recent solar customer. Thank you for the
25 opportunity that you're giving us, and me, to talk.

1 I have also submitted written comments that are much
2 more detailed than this testimony.

3 I would say that the problem of the
4 utility company is that they enjoy a monopoly and
5 that they can safely disregard consumers' choices
6 and wishes. Consumers want reliable electricity,
7 they also want clean energy, and the success of the
8 rooftop solar program is a testament to that, right?
9 I mean, the difference between the expectations and
10 the actual. But RMP is not listening. They can do
11 that. Furthermore, they are guaranteed over
12 10 percent profitability rate, which private and
13 public companies cannot claim. For me, this is
14 fundamentally uncapitalistic, socialistic and
15 un-American.

16 There are many problems with the
17 study of RMP. I mean, just starting with the fact
18 that it's based on 2015 data, which is, of course,
19 super old and not representative of the sample of
20 customers that you have up to 2017. So I would
21 recommend to the Commission that we redo a survey
22 that includes these new customers, because you will
23 see that the trends that Rocky Mountain Power is
24 claiming on the 2015 sample is simply not
25 necessarily follow-through on the 2017 customer

1 base.

2 Further, the study was commissioned
3 by an inherently biased party that stands to benefit
4 from its own results. I recommend the Commission --
5 that the Commission and an independent firm,
6 reputable firm, to do another survey. And then the
7 survey is based, of course, on a very few meters,
8 like, I believe, 62 meters. Samples,
9 extrapolations, approximations, estimations. I
10 recommend a survey be done based on facts.

11 There is no question that solar
12 customers are grid users. I have verified it
13 myself. I was shocked about the results. I rely
14 heavily on the grid, and I want to pay the price for
15 that. But RMP has not provided me the means to
16 calculate my impact on the grid and to try to lower
17 it. I do not know when I'm actually using the power
18 from Rocky Mountain, and I would like to know that.
19 Instead of that, I was given a bidirectional meter
20 that I believe is pretty dumb, analog, and I don't
21 have a smart meter. Why is that? I would recommend
22 the Commission to impose the smart meters on all
23 customers' rooftops.

24 I also want to say that looking even
25 at the cost survey of Rocky Mountain -- just taking

1 it as fact, not even disputing anything -- the rate
2 that it came up with does not follow at all. I'm an
3 accountant, CPA, and there are many ways to create a
4 rate. I propose another way to create a rate.
5 First, it's very clear the proposed rate won't hold
6 the entire industry, which is, they proposed a rate
7 that will be imposed on new customers, but there
8 will be no new customers because no one will go for
9 solar. And the cost that is supposedly bearing on
10 the old customer will actually not, you know, be
11 applicable since they don't want this cost to be
12 applied to existing groups of customers.

13 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Ms. Barrol, do
14 you need more time? We can bring you back at the
15 end if you need more time.

16 MS. BARROL: Let me just finish. One
17 minute. What I would like to say is that in the
18 19th and 20th centuries, we have seen a lot of
19 fights. We've seen the abolition of slavery, we've
20 seen the right to fight for women, and we have also
21 seen the acknowledging of the devastating effects of
22 tobacco. And I see this fight as a similar fight.
23 You have a lot of people on the other side, but at
24 the end of the day, there is justice somewhere, and
25 I think justice just does not support Rocky Mountain

1 Power's rate proposal. Thank you.

2 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Next, we have
3 Shelleice Stokes, and then Monte Stokes, and Daniel
4 Graham. Is Shelleice Stokes here? Is Monte Stokes
5 here? Daniel Graham? Okay. I'll have Daniel
6 Graham. The next two are Julie Stewart and Bryan
7 Luftglass.

8 UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: What
9 number are you up to?

10 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: We're on to 74.
11 Daniel Graham is number 74.

12 MR. GRAHAM: Howdy, y'all. My name
13 is Danny Graham, and I'm a permanent resident here
14 in Salt Lake City. First, I just really want to
15 thank you for previously supporting some of the most
16 progressive solar legislation in the entire United
17 States. I think thus far that this Commission has
18 been a huge ally to solar, so thank you so much.

19 Simply, today, I really think in the
20 next few days when you're making this decision, the
21 decision is really simple. It's whether or not to
22 support the public, to support the public interest
23 in Utah consumers, or to support a multi-billion
24 dollar monopoly that's a century old and their
25 profits.

1 So there's a few things that I think
2 that all Utahns really do believe, and why this
3 proposal really contradicts them. The first is
4 free-market capitalism. I mean, really, how many
5 products as an American citizen do we only have one
6 choice between? Utilities and electricity being one
7 of them, and we all know that the federal and state
8 government subsidizes fossil fuels and thus our
9 energy sector is not a free market. Any rate
10 changes that take place here in the Utah solar
11 market is going to make this product a product that
12 only a very small percentage of Utahns can afford.
13 So this decision will thus monopolize this product,
14 electricity, for all consumers here in Utah, and
15 that's just straight up not American. The other is
16 jobs. We all know that everybody loves jobs and
17 this decision would get rid of a whole bunch of
18 jobs. And another thing that I think is really key
19 to Utah is -- since I've lived here for the last
20 year -- is doomsday preparation. And there's
21 nothing more doomsday to prep than getting solar
22 panels and a battery.

23 I agree that everybody does need to
24 pay their fair share. Everybody's been saying cost,
25 cost, cost. Solar homeowners represent right now

1 roughly .3 percent of the homeowner market, and the
2 current fee, the interconnection fee, of \$9 a month
3 is a fair and honorable dollar amount. I'm a
4 believer that this product needs to be affordable,
5 accessible, and transparent for our state's
6 citizens. The decision to support Rocky Mountain
7 Power's proposal will kill solar, destroying
8 thousands of jobs and forfeiting our chances to get
9 clean air. This bill is not a compromise. This
10 bill is obviously to kill the industry. So please,
11 again, thank you so much for being our ally in the
12 solar field. And thank you, and I hope that you
13 guys will continue to be our ally. Thanks again.

14 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Next
15 is Julie Stewart and Bryan Luftglass, and then
16 William Quapp. Is Julie Stewart here? Okay. Bryan
17 Luftglass is number 76.

18 MR. LUFTGLASS: My name is Bryan
19 Luftglass. I have been involved in conventional and
20 alternative energy businesses for over 30 years,
21 including the electric power industry.

22 Polling shows the majority of Utah
23 residents want more solar, but it's already taken
24 two hits as first, state incentives and second,
25 federal incentives sunset over the next four to five

1 years. Increasing net metering costs as Rocky
2 Mountain Power proposes would be strike three. It
3 will have many negative consequences that have
4 already been pointed out today. I believe the
5 prudent course of action would be a rejection of
6 Rocky Mountain Power's proposal at this time, as
7 stated by the vast majority of people who have
8 spoken today. Thank you.

9 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.
10 We're up to number 77, William Quapp, and the next
11 two are Adam Guynion and Jessica Brown. Mr. Quapp?
12 Okay. Adam Guynion.

13 MR. GUYNION: My name is Adam
14 Guynion, and I am a part of the Green Party of Utah.
15 And I have been disabled my entire life, but at the
16 same time, I highly believe that solar and renewable
17 forms of energy need to be a must.

18 Right now on my app that I have, I
19 track what the weather is like and what the air
20 quality is like. Right now, we're at 47 -- it's
21 actually worse than San Diego, California, right
22 now. I believe that Rocky Mountain Power -- they're
23 a private corporation, and we hear them mentioned as
24 a public entity, but if they are a public entity,
25 they should not be making a profit. And there's a

1 lot of people with disabilities on low, fixed
2 incomes that struggle just to either pay their bill
3 or -- they have to make a choice to pay a high bill
4 or not run air conditioning. And right now, I don't
5 even have the money to even pay for air conditioning
6 in my apartment. So in my apartment right now, it's
7 about 110 to 125 degrees with the windows open, and
8 that's not good for a lot of people's health, let
9 alone the people who are perfectly healthy and may
10 not be able to pay for the power.

11 So I highly suggest that we keep
12 things that are supposed to be a right, which is a
13 public entity needs to stay as a public entity, and
14 I highly believe that no one should have to pay for
15 power because we all have to use it. It's not
16 supposed to be a luxury, it's supposed to be an
17 absolute. It's supposed to be something that we
18 have to use to survive, and I believe that everyone
19 should not have to pay any power bill unless they
20 either use more than a reasonable amount of power
21 and/or they have the money and the power bill to
22 them is nothing. Thank you.

23 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. I
24 think Jessica Brown is next, then the next one is
25 Robert Jacobs, and the next one is Colin Green.

1 MS. BROWN: Thank you. So I'm here
2 as a solar rooftop solar homeowner. My husband and
3 I installed a 2.5 kilowatt system last year, and
4 this more than covers our usage. We produce about
5 an excess of 200 kilowatt hours every month. And we
6 chose to build this larger capacity system because,
7 like a majority of Utahns, we're concerned about the
8 environmental quality and the air quality, and Rocky
9 Mountain Power, we think, does not at all reflect
10 this concern and that their current power sources
11 are very heavily favoring old technology that is
12 heavily polluting. However, we do agree that solar
13 users should be paying to support the grid. We use
14 the grid, and we're interested in its upkeep, and we
15 have a vested interest in contributing to our
16 community.

17 However, as a scientist and science
18 professor at the U, Rocky Mountain Power's study on
19 the cost of grid usage was severely flawed. It was
20 extremely poorly designed, and this was not
21 something I would have accepted from any of my
22 students. So they did not put together proper
23 comparisons. What they should have done is compared
24 solar -- the cost to the grid of the same house
25 before and after they put in solar panels. These

1 data would have been easily available. When they
2 did their study, if they had the data to do the
3 study and they did, they would have had the data to
4 do the study I'm proposing. Moreover, they used an
5 extremely small sample size, and considering some of
6 the surveys done by the students at Westminster
7 College, they could have very easily expanded their
8 sample size with minimal cost to increase their
9 study.

10 I therefore propose that this study
11 should be redone by someone who can actually design
12 and build a study, and that they should have the
13 proper comparisons between their controls before and
14 after the installation of solar panels. They didn't
15 take into account consumer behavior, and my husband
16 and I are fortunate enough to be able to go
17 off-grid, which we would do if this proposal were to
18 be implemented. We would also team up with our
19 neighbors who have solar panels, including those who
20 aren't fully capable of covering their own access,
21 to put together a community bank of batteries. And
22 with the falling cost of batteries, we think that
23 this is a viable proposal in the future for people
24 who are opposed to Rocky Mountain Power's attempts
25 at maintaining this old technology.

1 Moreover, we suggest that a possible
2 solution to this would be a charge that takes into
3 account the time of use. So there's been a lot of
4 talk about peak and peak flow, and so we therefore
5 propose that all residential customers are
6 maintained in the same group for charges, but that
7 people are charged based on time of use, so if
8 they're using power at 3:00 p.m., then they would be
9 charged the 3:00 p.m. rate, regardless of whether
10 they have rooftop solar or not. Thank you.

11 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Next
12 is Robert Jacobs, and Mr. Jacobs is number 80 for
13 those of you who need to know that.

14 MR. JACOBS: My name is Robert
15 Jacobs. Let's see here. I'm a retired person
16 living primarily on social security, and I know a
17 lot of people in my situation that have also
18 installed solar panels on the roof. So I don't look
19 at it as an issue that's addressing just rich
20 people. I think it affects everybody.

21 The way I got started in it was Rocky
22 Mountain Power used to send out a thing called a
23 Home Energy Report, and it would compare my usage to
24 all my neighbors, or a hundred of my neighbors, and
25 mine was always 50 to 80 percent above the average,

1 and 100 to 300 percent above what they call the
2 efficient users, which are the bottom 20 percent.
3 So I looked into how I could bring mine more into
4 line with everybody else, and we ended up putting a
5 2.2 kilowatt solar system on. 8,500 bucks. I guess
6 when I look at it, with my system, I'm able to
7 monitor my production and my usage. And typically,
8 I can generate anywhere from 91 -- I can generate 91
9 kilowatt hours in January, up to 388 in June. I've
10 had it in for a little over seven months, and out of
11 that, the most that I ever returned to the grid was
12 105 kilowatts in June and 11 kilowatts in January.

13 So even though I'm a solar user, I'm
14 still utilizing the grid for my electric services.
15 Not just as a storage thing, I'm still using -- the
16 last bill I got was 900 kilowatts of energy still.
17 So I'm still a normal user, really, even though I
18 have a solar panel system on my roof. So I don't
19 understand why I should have to be penalized for the
20 fact that I put solar on. When I was looking at the
21 proposals from Rocky Mountain Power with their peak
22 usage stuff, I would end up paying more for my
23 electric than I did before I even put solar panels
24 on my roof.

25 Another issue that comes up is there

1 was an article in the paper Sunday about Rocky
2 Mountain Power buying back power from users, and
3 this Mr. Ashley Brown had an article, and he says,
4 "The state's current policy pays households with
5 rooftop solar for the energy they add to the grid."
6 Do you believe that's an accurate statement? It's
7 not. And there's -- and I see articles like that
8 all the time implying that Rocky Mountain Power is
9 paying us for our excess grid. In fact, any rooftop
10 solar user, I guarantee you, is either one of two
11 cases. Either they're still paying for electricity
12 from Rocky Mountain Power in addition to what they
13 produce, or they're giving them a free gift in
14 March, nobody is zeroing out their account. The
15 other item I'd like to bring up, I guess --

16 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Mr. Jacobs, if
17 you need more time we can bring you back.

18 MR. JACOBS: Just real quick. I did
19 several -- upgraded my installation to triple-pane
20 windows, Energy Star appliances, thermostat
21 settings, LED lights, and I conserved almost as much
22 energy from doing that as I did from my solar
23 panels, and nobody talked to me about changing my
24 rate because I did those conservation things. Why
25 are we treating solar energy differently? Thank

1 you.

2 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Sir,

3 I'm so sorry that happened to you --

4 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Next is number

5 81, Mr. Colin Green, the next is Greg Burgoyne, and

6 then Larry Cernzie.

7 MR. GREEN: Thank you. My name is

8 Colin Green. I'm a student at the University of

9 Utah --

10 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Excuse me. If

11 you guys want to take that conversation in the

12 hallway, you're making it difficult for our court

13 reporter to get a transcript.

14 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: I'm

15 sorry, sir. I apologize.

16 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Mr. Green.

17 MR. GREEN: Thanks. I understand

18 that the governor supports an "all-of-the-above"

19 energy policy, and although I disagree with him

20 because I think we need to be transitioning away

21 from fossil fuels because of the climatic changes

22 that are happening, this proposed rate change does

23 not support an "all-of-the-above" energy policy,

24 because it will likely push out our booming solar

25 industry.

1 So I urge you to deny the utility's
2 request, but work with towards further collaboration
3 between the utility and solar providers to find
4 solutions for both parties.

5 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.
6 Greg Burgoyne, then Baocai Zhang, and then Leo
7 Balitski.

8 MR. BURGOYNE: Thank you for this
9 opportunity to speak. My name is Gregory Burgoyne,
10 and I have lived in Taylorsville for 32 years. And
11 as a child, I watched the space program on TV
12 blossom before my eyes, and as I saw solar panels in
13 space, I often wondered to myself or thought to
14 myself, I'd like to have solar panels on my house
15 one day.

16 In August of 2013, that became a
17 reality when we put solar panels on our house. That
18 dream came true, but thanks to Rocky Mountain, that
19 dream has become a nightmare. I cannot imagine the
20 pressure you all are under regarding this issue.
21 You are our greatest hope for fair reconciliation.
22 We ask that you support us, as rooftop solar panel
23 owners, in our desire to have clean air to breathe
24 and not allow us to be punished with peak demand
25 rates and fees.

1 We are not against paying our fair
2 share. We appreciate the service Rocky Mountain
3 Power provides. My grandfather retired from Utah
4 Power and Light after 45 years, so I have -- it's in
5 my genes, I guess. But the source of power is not
6 the only source. We have coal, solar, and wind
7 power. All our viable options that can be utilized.
8 Rocky Mountain Power clearly sees the benefit of
9 solar power because they have solar farms in Delta
10 and Holden. Why are we being targeted because we
11 want to access the same solar power?

12 I ask you to rethink and not give
13 Rocky Mountain Power what they want. Thank you.

14 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you,
15 Mr. Burgoyne. Next is Baocai Zhang. Is Mr. Zhang
16 here? (No response). Leo Balitski, number 86, and
17 then next would be Brad Creer and Eric Martino.

18 MR. BALITSKI: Hello, my name is Leo
19 Balitski. I'm a Sandy resident for the past eight
20 years, taxpayer, I have my master's degree in
21 electrical engineering. I'm here, I'm trying to
22 understand the whole proposal, and it's not coming
23 to my mind.

24 I think that the current rate
25 structure by Rocky Mountain Power is already unfair

1 to the solar installers, and the proposed rate
2 increase is absolutely absurd for educated people
3 who can count. My point is that many people here
4 tried to speak on the side of Rocky Mountain Power,
5 that they have capital investments, that they are
6 spending money on the distribution costs and
7 infrastructure. Infrastructure -- this word has
8 been used many, many times, infrastructure --
9 however, nobody is taking into account the other
10 side, the side of the solar installers. So
11 investors, basically people who are installing solar
12 panels on their roof, are spending thousands of
13 dollars of their own money, they're taking all the
14 risks, and I repeat, all the risks. By nature,
15 economical [sic]. Some may argue that solar panels
16 never pay for themselves for some people, they're
17 paid in, like, five years. It doesn't matter.
18 These people are taking the risk on themselves
19 spending thousands of dollars for putting micropower
20 plants that are adding capacity to the grid that
21 helps to level our -- make it more robust, make it
22 more reliable, and adding clean energy to all of us.

23 On the same token, our local
24 government is trying to bring more people into the
25 valley, and the fluctuations between the peak power

1 and the power -- basically, the solar consumers are
2 absorbing excessive power in the nighttime. In
3 other words, make it more level.

4 I feel very uncomfortable why this
5 issue went so far, and it's continuing for so long,
6 and my taxpayer money is going -- but nobody stepped
7 ahead and said Rocky Mountain, you're out of your
8 mind. I mean, actually, solar consumers are
9 contributing into the lower rates rather than
10 increasing the rates of the people who don't have
11 solar.

12 I want you to stop this bill as soon
13 as possible. Thank you for overseeing Rocky
14 Mountain Power, and thank you for letting me speak
15 here.

16 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Brad
17 Creer, then Eric Martino, then Marie Green.

18 MR. CREER: My name is Brad Creer.
19 I'm the owner of a rooftop solar installation and
20 sales company called New Star Solar. I've owned
21 this company here in Utah since 1999. We actually
22 worked for another home services provider and we'll
23 acquire over 25,000 new customers from that home
24 service provider.

25 Two years ago, we decided that we

1 needed to diversify and go into what would be the
2 future, and in my estimation that was solar power
3 and rooftop solar. On December 9th, we all got an
4 unpleasant surprise, nice Christmas early,
5 unpleasant surprise called an NEM rate increase.
6 Lots of confusion and misinformation was surrounding
7 that, and I disagree with the way that whole thing
8 went down. But here's what happened. The reporting
9 on that in the news and the media caused an all-out
10 effect and all-out assault, in my mind, upon solar.
11 People rushed to get their NEM agreements in by the
12 9th. Some got them in January. I watch solar
13 implementation weekly. I know exactly how many are
14 installed. Solar, since February to the end of
15 July, has gone down 30-plus percent in the state of
16 Utah. When we go to different customers, and we go
17 to lots of different events and fairs and recently
18 just a lot of summer events, we talk to people and
19 we say would you consider solar? Here's their
20 response: I thought solar was dead. I thought
21 solar was going away. Just that NEM portion and
22 that misinformation has caused the Utah market to
23 think that solar is dead and going away. I want to
24 preserve this business and preserve these jobs and
25 preserve the millions of dollars that it brings into

1 the Utah economy. I'd love to keep our business
2 here, but I have interest in a lot of other states.

3 I didn't come here to just complain.

4 I'm going to propose some solutions. Number one is
5 give rooftop solar homeowners one-to-one on what
6 they produce and what you take away at the end of
7 March. It is absolutely unfair, wrong, it's morally
8 wrong to take that away and not give them credit for
9 that. So show them credit, give them credit for
10 that solar they produce. Ensure that never, never,
11 never will you ever tax or put a fee on solar that
12 is produced behind the meter that I use or these
13 people that have come here today, and all the
14 homeowners in Utah are using. Never. Can't happen.

15 Lastly is allow solar customers to
16 produce an offset at 110 to 120 percent. Let them
17 pay you in nice, clean, renewable energy. Let them
18 give you back enough clean, renewable energy to pay
19 for any fee that you are proposing, and you will
20 keep solar alive. I, by my estimates, would say
21 that if you implement and go forward with this rate
22 increase, that solar will go down by 80, 85 percent
23 and will be all but dead in the state of Utah. For
24 me, I can't run a business at that level, and I'll
25 need to look at other states. I love this state, I

1 love all that it means to me and all that it stands
2 for. Please reject the current proposal --

3 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Do you need more
4 time? We can bring you back at the end.

5 MR. CREER: -- eight seconds -- and
6 take the extra time with this decision and consider
7 all reasonable alternatives and solutions, and save
8 solar in Utah and save solar jobs in Utah. Thank
9 you.

10 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.
11 Mr. Eric Martino, who's number 88, Marie Green, and
12 Hillary Jacobs.

13 MR. MARTINO: Gentlemen, my name is
14 Eric Martino. I represent me and anybody else that
15 believes in capitalism. At the young age of 35, I
16 was a vice president of (inaudible) development for
17 U.S. West and TelePacific. I have an MS and an MBA.

18 I find it interesting that today the
19 utilities are doing the same that the monopoly
20 telephony world did with voice over IP, and I fear
21 that by litigating instead of innovating, they're
22 going to create their own doom. But that's not what
23 I came to talk about today. I returned to Utah in
24 February of 2015. I left four feet of snow in
25 Maryland for one foot of snow here, and what I

1 thought was interesting was that I hadn't coughed at
2 all in Maryland, and I got here and started coughing
3 uncontrollably. So after four months of doctor's
4 visits, I found out that I was having allergic
5 reactions to the worst air in the nation. I now
6 take five drugs a day to reduce the coughing. This
7 one here (indicating) Advair, costs \$165 a month. I
8 was amazed to hear earlier, distinguished
9 engineers -- one from BYU, Mr. Stewart and others --
10 talk about delivering energy and talking about
11 transparency, and it's true cost. I concur. I will
12 love to see 100 percent transparency. What I don't
13 understand is why men with such lofty educations
14 can, with straight faces, talk about transparency
15 and true costs without adding all the quantifiable
16 costs associated with generating centralized power
17 using coal.

18 Currently, my total electric bill,
19 according to my Rocky Mountain bill, is about 13.4
20 cents. Gentlemen, I'd like to bring your attention
21 to a report by Dr. Paul Epstein and his colleagues
22 from the Harvard Center of Health entitled: Mining
23 Coal, Mounting Costs, and the Lifecycle Consequences
24 of Coal. In there, they found that quantifiable
25 costs for the United States are an extra 74 billion

1 in healthcare, 187 billion for air pollution. And,
2 I know, the coughing sucked and the drugs I take
3 suck, but what really hurt was that I coughed so
4 hard I passed out, once. Can you imagine waking up
5 in your hallway with your wife and daughter's faces
6 looking at you like, oh, crap, Dad's dead. I've
7 actually coughed so hard that my insides went to the
8 outside, and I had to go get a hernia operation.
9 Because I served in the military, the VA paid for
10 that, so thank you all of you here in this room for
11 paying for my surgery. But -- and I can show you
12 the scar if you want to see it, but I can't leave it
13 as an exhibit.

14 Someone earlier said that cars are
15 the real problem for our air here. Great. I
16 believe that most homes here in Utah, from what I
17 have seen, have enough roof space to have enough
18 solar on there to pay for their electricity in cars,
19 and then we could get rid of that. But, continuing
20 with what Dr. Epstein found, he said mercury
21 poisoning costs us another 29 billion, and climate
22 impact is between 61 and 250 billion. If I take the
23 smaller of those two numbers, that total comes to
24 345 billion, adding another 17.8 cents to the cost
25 of our electricity. So if you add that to the 13.4

1 I'm already spending, that's 31.2 cents per kilowatt
2 hour that would need to pay. It doesn't end there.

3 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Mr. Martino, if
4 you need more time, we can bring you back at the
5 end. Do you want us to do that?

6 MR. MARTINO: Can I add --

7 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: You can take a
8 few more seconds.

9 MR. MARTINO: So according to the
10 U.S. Energy Information Administration, they said
11 that -- they point out under the subtitle of
12 subsidies, we are spending 577 billion a year to
13 subsidize the fuel industry, whereas the renewables
14 got 43 billion, so that's another 27 cents. So the
15 true cost of electricity in the state should be
16 about 59 cents.

17 So I want to go on record as saying
18 that I think that Rocky Mountain should get anything
19 they're asking for, as long as, and if and only if
20 they're also willing to pay the healthcare costs,
21 and they're willing to ask the IRS to get rid of the
22 Asset Depletion Subsidy that makes them profitable.

23 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.

24 Marie Green is next, then Hillary Jacobs, then Doug
25 Goodall.

1 MS. GREEN: Hello. I am Dr. Marie
2 Green with Rocky Mountain Renewable Energy. I had
3 the Ways to Clean Energy Program. I think we can
4 all agree that recycling is the right thing to do.
5 Policies currently do not promote recycling. They
6 give discounts for bulk trash. We can make energy
7 out of food waste, which currently goes to the
8 landfill and attracts animals and releases methane
9 into the air. Population is increasing, making it
10 more pertinent to shift policies in favor of clean
11 air.

12 People need to be encouraged to do
13 the right thing for the greater good, and to be
14 rewarded for sustainable and responsible behavior.
15 Rocky Mountain Power is proposing an agreement that,
16 I believe, rewards people for unsustainable
17 behavior. I worry about how quickly we fill our
18 landfills, visuals of which are painful. The power
19 plants are purposely built where we do not see them,
20 because people are disgusted by how much pollution
21 they produce.

22 Whether it's recycling or the net
23 metering agreement, we want to promote a healthy and
24 sustainable environment. The current Rocky Mountain
25 Power proposal discourages positive behavior. With

1 firsthand experience living in, at times, what is
2 the worst air in the U.S., it baffles me that there
3 is any resistance.

4 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Next
5 is Hillary Jacobs, and then Doug Goodall, and Brian
6 Adams.

7 MS. JACOBS: Hi. My name is Hillary
8 Jacobs, and I appreciate you guys being here for all
9 these hours. I'm here just to talk on a much more
10 personal, small number thing. I obviously agree
11 which much of what other people have said.

12 Mr. Larsen's talk explained very clearly where I'm
13 coming from, but I just want to give some numbers.

14 We have solar panels on our house,
15 and we have a relatively small array of 12 panels,
16 but it produces an amazing amount of energy. From
17 July 1st to 31st of this year, my panels generated
18 502 kilowatt hours, which was a carbon offset for
19 the month of July of 765 pounds of carbon. That's
20 an equivalent of burning nine huge trees, and so
21 that is definitely a very significant amount of
22 carbon that we don't have in our air to breathe
23 right now because my panels generated that. In the
24 month of June, they generated 535 kilowatt hours, so
25 they really do make a huge difference for our

1 environment.

2 Rocky Mountain Power would like you
3 to believe that we don't pay our part of the cost
4 for the grid, but, in fact, any of the extra power
5 that I generate -- and we generate way more power
6 than we actually use, I always have excess. And my
7 panels generate every month of the year so there
8 isn't a period of the winter where I don't generate.
9 My panels are providing all of our power needs for
10 the entire year. But anything that I don't use
11 immediately goes to my neighbors, and my neighbors
12 are paying Rocky Mountain Power for power that I
13 have generated. So they are not paying to generate
14 the power, and is they're not paying to transport
15 that power. It goes directly from my house to my
16 neighbor. They're paying full price, I'm generating
17 it all.

18 So in addition, I think its
19 disingenuous to say I'm a burden on the Company,
20 when they're making profits off my power, my panels.
21 In addition, every month I have to pay \$2 a month
22 for a minimum charge of electricity on my bill that
23 I don't use. I'm not complaining about that, but
24 it's disingenuous to say I'm not paying for it when
25 I don't use that power, but every month I pay \$2 for

1 that power.

2 In addition to that, on March 30th of
3 every year, I have credit of power that I have
4 generated, and they always wipe it completely clean.
5 So they like to say that they pay for it, but that's
6 not true at all. They simply negate any extra power
7 I have, and I have to start over again at zero. For
8 instance, on my March 27 bill, I had an excess of
9 258 kilowatt hours, and they took it completely down
10 to zero. Fortunately, with my panels, I ended up
11 with an excess of 88 kilowatt hours, but year to
12 date, my panels have generated 2.56 megawatt hours.
13 They are selling that electricity.

14 So just in summary, Rocky Mountain
15 Power benefits from my solar panels, and they charge
16 me every month that \$2, they sell my power without
17 having it be any cost to my neighbors, and they zero
18 out any of the excess power for me. So I think we
19 need to keep these facts and figures straight, and
20 support people who are actually supporting their
21 neighbors freely, and support our environment.
22 Thanks so much for being here.

23 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: I think we'll
24 take two more, and then we'll take a short break.
25 Next is Doug Goodall, and Brian Adams. Is

1 Mr. Goodall here? Is Brian Adams here? And then
2 we'll do one more after him, Jay Knight.

3 MR. ADAMS: I appreciate your time.
4 Brian Adams, Rocky Mountain Renewable Energy, and
5 I've got a master's in Renewable Energy out of
6 Germany.

7 I've heard some of the arguments from
8 some of the Rocky Mountain Power employees talking
9 about demands charges, and so I'd like to address
10 that. When I was in Germany at the Berlin, Germany
11 Energy Storage Conference, they actually talked
12 about a program where electric vehicles plus solar
13 can actually be tied into a home, and demand
14 charges -- instantaneous peaks can actually be used
15 with an electric vehicle to dampen those
16 instantaneous peaks that Rocky Mountain Power has
17 been complaining about, and some of their employees
18 have complained about earlier. So solar plus
19 electric vehicles actually is a solution to those
20 demand peaks that are happening. In fact, in the
21 study they quoted in Germany while I was there, they
22 actually said that the utility in Germany should
23 actually be paid about a thousand dollars per year
24 for the utility company to actually use an electric
25 vehicle for those instantaneous peak capabilities,

1 as well as fill up the car to a full tank through
2 that study. So that's really not an argument in my
3 perspective. I think that the power company should
4 actually be paying the solar companies with those
5 electric vehicles for that service.

6 They also are not accounting for
7 other information like power factor. Power factor
8 is kind of like foam in a beer mug, if you will.
9 The foam is just wasted energy, and the rest of the
10 beer, you know, in the glass, is actual energy
11 consumption that's actually useful. They're not
12 charging for that and so we actually could be using
13 other ways to correct power factor and provide
14 incentives to do so. So I want you to know also
15 that we're working on waste- clean energy, turning
16 trash into clean, renewable energy, which is not a
17 variable source, it's actually a baseload resource
18 that we can use to general clean energy from food
19 waste. And that program that we're doing right now
20 is actually subsidized through solar investments
21 that we have through projects. And you'll be
22 killing that recycling program with the approval of
23 the net metering program that Rocky Mountain Power
24 is proposing.

25 So there's lots of things that Rocky

1 Mountain Power can do to improve their bottom line.
2 You know, our solar customers have had to call in
3 numerous times to Rocky Mountain Power and say, hey,
4 where are we at? Sometimes, it would take two
5 months to actually get stuff in. I understand being
6 on vacation and those types of things, but there's
7 no way for customers to know when that's happened,
8 so they would to call in to Rocky Mountain Power and
9 say, what's happening with my net metering
10 agreement? Rocky Mountain Power would -- they would
11 not call back, but they actually have complained
12 about solar customers calling into Rocky Mountain
13 Power and using their service while not providing
14 the solar customers with a portal where they can see
15 the progress of where they're at in the process,
16 which has increased cost by their own poor
17 management of that system.

18 So I would urge you guys to talk to
19 Rocky Mountain Power, and tell them that they need
20 to improve their efficiencies and to not approve
21 that system. Thank you.

22 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Jay Knight. Is
23 Jay Knight here? We'll take about a ten-minute
24 break at this point. We're up to number 94. The
25 next three or four names are Jay Vestal, Shane

1 Benson, Travis Jennings, and Christopher R. Jones.

2 So we'll be in recess for about 10 minutes.

3 (Break)

4 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: We'll go back on
 5 the record. This is Public Service Commission
 6 Docket 14-035-114, the net metering docket. We're
 7 back in for the public witness hearing today. This
 8 is an opportunity for anyone from the public to
 9 comment to us on this. Since we have got new people
 10 that continue to arrive, I'll give a couple of
 11 reminders. We have a long list of people who are
 12 signing up. I think we're up to about a 160 or so.
 13 We're through about 93, so we want to be able to
 14 give everyone a reasonable opportunity to speak
 15 without having to wait an unreasonable amount of
 16 time, so we're going to ask everyone on their
 17 initial comments to keep their comments to three
 18 minutes. If anyone needs more time than that, we're
 19 happy to bring you back after everyone who has shown
 20 up has had an opportunity to speak, but for the
 21 initial comments, we will be asking you to keep it
 22 to that.

23 We appreciate everyone who has taken
 24 time out of their busy schedules to come and speak
 25 to us on this issue, and we appreciate your

1 testimony. With that, our next witness is Jay
2 Vestal, then Shane Benson, Travis Jennings and Alan
3 Nauman.

4 MR. VESTAL: Thank you. I appreciate the
5 opportunity to have my moment in the sun. I'm Jay
6 Vestal, a 35-year resident of Holladay. I'm here to
7 ask you to deny Rocky Mountain Power's request for a
8 rate increase for solar homeowners outside of a
9 general rate increase that will allow both
10 utility-side and customer-side solutions. Makes
11 more sense.

12 A bit of background. I'm retired now, but
13 I spent 40 years as a professional fundraiser for
14 children's hospitals, national parks, zoos, and
15 aquariums, and that's kind of the basis of my story.
16 In 2009, I was approached by members of my church
17 inviting me to lead a fundraising campaign to match
18 a potential Blue Sky grant that would install 20-kW
19 solar on our church building. I was happy to lead
20 the campaign, having been a contributor to the Blue
21 Say Program for many years. We raised more than
22 \$60,000 to match a grant, and the solar panels were
23 installed.

24 Rocky Mountain Power executives attended
25 the church's solar dedication ceremony, and while

1 they were speaking about the Blue Sky Program, I
2 noticed that they failed to emphasize that the
3 source of Blue Sky grants is the voluntary
4 contributions of thousands of RMP customers like
5 myself. We, of course, appreciated the Company's
6 grant, but it felt a little disingenuous that Rocky
7 Mountain Power was taking credit for the
8 contributions of their customers. Oh, well. At the
9 dedication, Rocky Mountain Power executives extolled
10 the importance of renewable wind and solar energy
11 and encouraged those of us in attendance to join the
12 Blue Sky Program to help expand renewable energy
13 choices. I took that to mean that they were
14 encouraging individuals to do more personally.

15 So a few years later, I installed some
16 solar panels on my home. I knew that I couldn't
17 afford enough panels to generate all my electric
18 needs, but I calculated half is better than none.
19 I'm a typical Rocky Mountain Power net meter
20 customer who wants to support renewables, but I can
21 only generate a portion of my electricity. It's
22 people like me who would be hurt if the RMP proposal
23 is approved. My utility bill was about \$110 a month
24 before solar, now it runs about \$50 a month. Under
25 the proposal to double my service charge, adding a

1 rate for electricity used and a peak demand charge
2 on top of it all, my average monthly bill would jump
3 back to \$75, \$85, or more. Rocky Mountain Power
4 would essentially claw back my investment, the cost
5 recovery period I calculated would stretch out many
6 more years. Rocky Mountain Power offered to
7 grandfather me into a group that wouldn't have to
8 pay these rate increases immediately; it appears
9 they would prefer me not to speak out on behalf of
10 all those others that would like to add solar going
11 forward. I think that's disingenuous, again.

12 Each of us who have invested in solar
13 wants to address, in our own small way, the issues
14 of climate change and air quality. Many people have
15 spoken articulately about that this afternoon. We
16 have attempted to do our part as Rocky Mountain
17 Power encouraged us through the Blue Sky Program.
18 Now, however, it appears that Blue Sky was just a PR
19 cover for the utilities real agenda to suppress
20 distributed renewable energy in Utah. That's
21 disingenuous, indeed. Thank you.

22 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.
23 Mr. Shane Benson, then Travis Jennings. Is Shane
24 Benson here? (No response). Travis Jennings?
25 After Mr. Jennings will be Alan Naumann. And

1 Christopher R. Jones.

2 MR. JENNINGS: Good evening and much
3 gratitude for the chance to -- my name is Travis
4 Jennings, and, like I said, lots of gratitude for
5 taking the time to be here and let us voice our
6 opinions about this important issue.

7 I grew up in what I call the "golden
8 age" of air quality in Sandy. It was kind of the
9 1980 to 1997 period where we kind of had that dip in
10 inversions where they weren't nearly as common as
11 they are today. And I would just quickly like to
12 make a rebuttal of sorts on some of the comments
13 that have been made prior this evening with the
14 relation between solar energy and air quality.
15 While the impact that solar energy has on the
16 immediate scene of air quality, I believe that as we
17 go into the future, it is important to lay this kind
18 of cultural foundation where we can reach this
19 tipping point where renewables and more clean energy
20 solutions become a part of our lifestyles, because
21 the relation between people owning electric cars,
22 which is becoming a very growing trend nowadays,
23 it's helping take us to a tipping point where people
24 would be like, I have an electric car. I should get
25 solar panels to power this electric car and

1 subsequently, our air quality will improve as we
2 step into the future.

3 Lastly and most importantly, I want
4 to reiterate that the research and study that was
5 performed and provided by Rocky Mountain Power is
6 inaccurate and inadequate. It seems that the study
7 falls into the same category as the shady in-house
8 studies performed by cigarette companies on health
9 effects, and Exxon Mobile researching the existence
10 of climate change and subsequently covering up
11 damning material in the late '70s. A more thorough
12 study must be conducted to uphold the integrity of
13 this process to find a more fair and legit solution.

14 I urge you to reject the current
15 proposal, contract a third party to perform a more
16 accurate study. If you guys want some help funding,
17 I'm sure we could start a kickstarter campaign or
18 something. I'm sure people would be interested in
19 that. And we should find an unbiased, more accurate
20 set of information to base such important decisions
21 upon. So other than, kind of, finding that further
22 information, more creative rate proposals, and that
23 information will help us reach a better compromise.
24 Thank you for your time.

25 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you,

1 Mr. Jennings. Next is Alan Naumann.

2 MR. NAUMANN: Thank you very much for
3 your time. My name is Alan Naumann, and I work for
4 a solar company, Rocky Mountain Renewable Energy. I
5 don't speak for the company, just myself.

6 And I do want to reiterate that the
7 study seems completely inadequate to me, 32
8 residents in the study out of 16,000 in the state, a
9 one-year window. You cannot do anything in your
10 planning, anything in one year. It's disingenuous
11 to say the least. What we're looking at is 20-to-30
12 to 40-to-50 year plans, and so I'm suggesting we
13 take all this hard work and stick it into a general
14 rate case, that we look at the big picture. I
15 believe it's one big picture, and it's not isolated
16 events all over. If you study one thing at a time,
17 you're going to miss the picture.

18 Utah cannot stumble and look stupid
19 to the rest of the nation when solar jobs are being
20 created 15 times the national rate. Utah has
21 been -- as somebody said, the solar industry has
22 fallen this year, not because customers don't want
23 to do solar, not because we are not able to provide
24 solar, because they're scared you're going to change
25 the rules of the game. Rocky Mountain Power coming

1 out with this insane idea, in my opinion -- it's
2 just an opinion -- it seems unreasonable to me. But
3 to scare the marketplace and reduce jobs in the
4 state of Utah is foolish, and that is why the
5 governor is involved. Thank the Lord they're having
6 negotiations outside of this particular case,
7 because something reasonable needs to happen because
8 we want to create jobs, consumers want clean energy,
9 and clean energy has value. Okay? We got to agree
10 on something.

11 If Rocky Mountain Power says it has
12 no value on one part and then charges 14 cents
13 because in Blue Sky it's a premium, you know, you
14 can get your regular rate or you can pay more for
15 solar. There's a reason for that, ladies and
16 gentlemen, and I beg you to look at the facts in
17 this case. Science. This professor right here
18 tonight, she said this study would not get into her
19 classroom at the U of U. That's quite an
20 indictment. I think we've got to take a look at
21 that.

22 And so just finally, solar is the way
23 of the future with batteries and electric cars. You
24 want to solve pollution and climate change, we have
25 to solve this issue, and so we cannot go to sleep

1 because we're used to the Rocky Mountain Power
2 getting their way and buying more lawyers. How many
3 hundreds of thousands of dollars have these
4 advocates spent in this two-year process? I'm
5 saying \$50,000 a year, maybe more. Studies from
6 great analysts, and it's just a tragedy because they
7 could have bought solar panels with all of those
8 hundreds of thousands of dollars, bring more tax
9 credits to Utah, and it's a tax credit issue also.
10 Tax credits are good because the government says if
11 you do this behavior, we will help you because it's
12 a good idea. The state of Utah is falling back --

13 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: If you need more
14 time we can come back to you.

15 MR. NAUMANN: I am completely
16 finished. Thank you so much. My point is we can do
17 better than this, and if we don't, Utah will look
18 foolish on the national stage, and, good Lord, not
19 even the Governor wants that. Thank you.

20 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. The
21 next speakers -- we're currently on number 99 --
22 Christopher R. Jones, Bonnie Christianson, Jennifer
23 Bodine. Is Christopher R. Jones here?
24 (No response). Bonnie Christianson? Thank you.
25 And after her will be Jennifer Bodine and Shannon

1 Miller. Thank you.

2 MS. CHRISTIANSON: Hi. My name is
3 Bonnie Christianson, and I live in Ogden and work in
4 Ogden, too. I have been a Rocky Mountain Power Utah
5 power customer for 48 years, and I'm glad that I
6 have been able to be to a part of that. They have
7 been there for me as I've grown up and raised my
8 family, and I'm just happy that they're a part of my
9 life, it's important.

10 In 2002, they came out with the Blue
11 Sky Program and I was so excited about it, I ran out
12 and signed up immediately and I was like, that's not
13 enough. If we're going to do the right thing here,
14 I've got to get my community here to work with me on
15 this as well, so I signed up literally dozens of
16 businesses and hundreds of people for the Blue Sky
17 Program. During this time, I learned a lot about
18 power and power generation and a little, tiny bit
19 about rate-making cases. I'm sure that there are
20 other people that know a lot more than I do.

21 But what I have learned from that was
22 that according to Rocky Mountain Power, all
23 residential customers have a subsidized rate. And
24 so when we talk about solar customers versus other
25 customers, it seems to me that there's a

1 disingenuous appeal to try to make one customer pit
2 against the other in these conversations. In 2014,
3 I was able to finally install solar on my home. I'm
4 not one of these high-income people that everybody
5 wants to talk about as if that's the only people
6 that try to install solar. I put enough on my house
7 that -- I was able to put enough that I was able to
8 offset about 75 percent of usage, and, through that,
9 I was able to reduce my power bills by about
10 55 percent.

11 So I ran the numbers -- because I
12 thought it might be a good idea to run the
13 numbers -- and before I had installed the solar, the
14 previous two years I would spend about \$470 a year
15 for my power. I'm a very low energy user and I
16 believe in being thrifty. After I installed solar,
17 I was paying about \$215 per year. When I ran the
18 cost calculations of what I would be paying after,
19 what I found is that with the \$9.02 kW charge and
20 the -- I guess it's now \$13, but I thought it was a
21 \$15 charge that they were looking at the base
22 rate -- and then the couple of \$8, \$9 that I would
23 be paying for energy on average, I'd be paying \$660
24 a year. It seems really unfair. I must not be one
25 of those 62 customer that they looked at.

1 It seems to me that when this was an
2 issue, that was just for people that were in
3 high-income brackets could take advantage of solar,
4 that there was not an issue. When it comes down to
5 people that are giving what we can to put this
6 together and it comes to the point where I can
7 afford solar and other people like me can afford
8 solar, it's now become an issue. And that Rocky
9 Mountain Power is making this a conversation about
10 the haves and have nots, I don't think that they're
11 doing this casually. It's a way to pit neighbors
12 against neighbors, and I don't appreciate it.

13 I do think they do a great job of
14 delivering energy, but I'd like you to take a look
15 at my costs and see if the costs that they ran are
16 actually accurate. I think this should also be
17 looked at as a general rate case-making issue, not
18 taking a single issue and carving out the people
19 that are just barely able to come on board with
20 this.

21 I appreciate your time, I really do.
22 I'm really glad that you're here as a Public Service
23 Commission; I think we need you. I will be out
24 lobbied and out lawyered every single day of the
25 week if I tried to do this myself, so I appreciate

1 your time. Thank you.

2 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.

3 Jennifer Bodine, Shannon Miller, and John Whittaker.

4 MS. BODINE: Thank you so much for
5 your time. My name is Jennifer Bodine, and like the
6 previous speaker, I decided to run some individual
7 numbers. I have a 3.5 kW solar rate on my home in
8 Ogden, and, annually, I use about 7,670 kw hours per
9 year, and this includes an electric car that I
10 frequently charge at my home, and over the past
11 year, my solar rate produced about 4,184 kw hours.
12 Without my solar rate, I would pay about \$856
13 annually for my electricity and of the existing rate
14 structure, and, yes, I included summer and winter
15 rates and all the block rates to ensure that this
16 was accurate. With my solar rate, I would end up
17 paying about \$665 annually for my electricity under
18 Rocky Mountain Power's new proposed rate schedule.

19 This analysis assumes that my peak
20 demand is about 3.5 kW on average even with solar,
21 and this is a very conservative estimate. This peak
22 demand also assumes that I'm charging my car in
23 off-peak times, after 8:00. So if I make any
24 mistakes, it's going to be much more than that if I
25 accidentally plug in my car and run my dishwasher

1 and decide to cook dinner for my kids. It will be
2 substantially more than that per month. So that was
3 being very conservative and assuming I would be
4 smart about my use. So without solar, my blended
5 rate would be 11.1 cents per kilowatt hour, but with
6 solar under the proposed solar rate schedule, I
7 would pay a blended rate of about 19.1 cents per
8 kilowatt hour. That means that I would pay about
9 42 percent more than the non-solar customer, and,
10 also, my electricity rates would be some of the
11 highest in the country.

12 I have heard Rocky Mountain Power say
13 over and over that this proposed rate change is
14 about fairness, and my question is, does a solar
15 customer truly cost Rocky Mountain Power 42 percent
16 more than the typical customer? I find that very
17 hard to believe. Therefore, even before you add in
18 all the positive externalities associated with solar
19 into the equation, this proposal increase is unfair,
20 unsustainable, and would result in the demise -- as
21 we've heard from many folks -- of the residential
22 solar industry. Because, frankly, at the end of the
23 day, what homeowner is going to choose to put solar
24 on their roof if this rate increase is approved?

25 I examined my personal payback, and

1 under current rates, my payback on my solar rate is
2 about seven years. Under this new proposal, my
3 payback would jump to 22 years, and I don't know
4 many homeowners who would choose to make that
5 investment unless they're doing it for all the other
6 reasons.

7 So, with that, please decline this
8 proposed rate increase for solar customers. If
9 we're looking for a fair rate structure, this is
10 certainly not it. Plus, for the good of our public
11 health, it is in our best interest that renewable
12 energy remain affordable. Thank you for your time.

13 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.
14 Shannon Miller is next, then either John or Joan
15 Whittaker. Is Shannon Miller here? John Whittaker
16 or Joan Whittaker? I'm not sure. Not here? Okay.
17 Tom Mills. Then after Mr. Mills, David Southam,
18 Larry Bond, and Mark Jackson. Mr. Mills is number
19 104 for those of you keeping track of that.

20 MR. MILLS: Good evening. My name is
21 Tom Mills. I'm a concerned citizen, and I'm here to
22 support choice and free markets, and that's why
23 we're all here today.

24 For the first time in the history of
25 Rocky Mountain Power, Utah's monopoly power company

1 is being challenged by an economical and viable
2 alternative energy source. We have all heard claims
3 by Rocky Mountain Power regarding the value of solar
4 and how solar residents are not paying their fair
5 share to the grid. By Rocky Mountain Power's own
6 numbers -- which is the basis for one consumer
7 subsidizing another -- any low-energy user, whether
8 it be a coal kilowatt-hour consumer or otherwise, is
9 being subsidized by another customer. There are
10 approximately 17,000 homes currently with rooftop
11 solar, and they pay roughly \$114 per year in
12 connection fees. That translates to a little over
13 \$1.94 million annually that they still pay towards
14 the grid. Again, \$1.94 million annually.

15 This is just one slice of what a
16 solar consumer contributes to the grid. Other
17 contributions include reductions in transmission
18 costs as solar is on-site energy production,
19 localized energy production, which is a reduction in
20 voltage loss making it a more efficient kilowatt
21 hour. It's also a kilowatt hour production cost
22 that is locked in for the next 25 years based on
23 today's production warranties. It is also an
24 emission-free energy source with no moving parts.
25 Solar also provides energy independence and national

1 security as rooftop solar will lead to microgrids,
2 which will be less vulnerable to disruption from
3 natural disasters and those who wish to harm or hack
4 our economy.

5 There are other obvious cost benefits
6 of solar that must be mentioned and are being
7 ignored, such as environmental and public health
8 benefits, not to mention the \$400-plus million
9 dollars in revenue that is being infused into Utah's
10 economy. It is for these reasons that I formally
11 request the following from the Utah Public Service
12 Commission: Deny any rate increase for rooftop
13 solar proposed by Rocky Mountain Power; throw out
14 the one-year snapshot of solar from Rocky Mountain
15 Power as the monopoly power company whose profits
16 are directly impacted by rooftop solar cannot be the
17 source of such a study, and I can't emphasize this
18 enough. This is a clear conflict of interest.

19 This study must also be thrown out
20 for the fact that it doesn't represent true,
21 long-term value of a solar kilowatt hour, which, as
22 I mentioned earlier, is locked in for a 25-year
23 period based on today's production warranties. I
24 also request that solar net metering remain intact
25 until an independent third-party study can be

1 conducted to evaluate the true cost of grid
2 maintenance and the true value of a kilowatt hour
3 produced by solar energy.

4 We are staring at our next energy
5 revolution in the face. The demand for solar is
6 there, and it is real. Take a look around the
7 country and the world, and you will see that the
8 value of solar is being recognized and embraced with
9 our closest neighbor, being Nevada. Please don't
10 let Rocky Mountain Power take us backwards.
11 Therefore, I implore the Utah Public Service
12 Commission to continue to move us forward. Thank
13 you for your time, and I hope for the sake of all
14 Utahns you do the right thing.

15 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.
16 David Southam. Is he here? Larry Bond? Mark
17 Jackson? Terry Xanthos? Okay. He is number 108,
18 and the next two after him will be Russell Moser and
19 Michael Bell.

20 MR. XANTHOS: Hello. So my name is
21 Terry Xanthos, and I'm a district sales manager for
22 Vivint Solar. I'm not speaking on behalf of Vivint
23 Solar, nor am I authorized to do so. I'm speaking
24 to you as a solar customer.

25 I have solar panels at my house. I'm

1 not the typical pro solar person that you've seen in
2 this room. I'm very conservative, very religious, I
3 live in Alpine, Utah, the most conservative city in
4 the most conservative state in the country. And I
5 have six kids, I'm also a grandpa -- I'm only 49 --
6 and two years ago, I chose to change my career path.
7 I chose to work for Vivint Solar.

8 Unfortunately, because Rocky Mountain
9 Power gives so little -- they don't pay for excess
10 power and things like that -- I had to work
11 elsewhere, so I commuted for six months and worked
12 in New Jersey. It was a very difficult thing, I
13 even missed the birth of my grandchild. Every three
14 or four weeks, I would come and visit my family for
15 a couple of days for baptisms, things like that, and
16 birthdays.

17 And, so, as you probably know, most
18 states that work with solar are providing what they
19 call (inaudible) so they pay for excess energy and
20 things like that. Rocky Mountain Power provides a
21 one-to-one credit, and, regardless, you still have
22 to pay the regular fee. So my approach is a little
23 different. At Vivint Solar, all salespeople sell,
24 you don't just manage. So I actually have over a
25 hundred customers in Utah in 45-plus cities, even in

1 a place called Hooper. And I have customers in all
2 these little towns, and, in fact, I would say
3 75 percent of my customers are highly conservative,
4 probably Republican. Not your typical solar
5 customer.

6 The reason they're getting solar is
7 because they want to be self-reliant. They are
8 taught that they want to have food storage and they
9 want to be able to have the ability to produce their
10 own power someday. Even though, as we know, solar
11 is dependent on electricity, one day they hope to
12 get a battery. And so when I sell solar to
13 customers, I don't convince them to try to get a
14 system that's going to take care of all their needs;
15 in fact, I discourage it. My home in Alpine is a
16 50 percent offset system -- only 50 percent of my
17 kilowatt hours are covered -- so I never get into
18 tier 3. So my average used to be 13.8 cents per
19 kilowatt hour, and now my average is about ten, and
20 it has significantly reduced my power. I wouldn't
21 be able to afford my home in Alpine if I didn't have
22 that power reduction. And most people that I meet
23 with are the same way. They just want a break.
24 They're about to retire, and they just want to have
25 a fixed cost. They're not trying to get off the

1 grid, and, in fact, I'm encouraging them to stay on
2 the grid and to just keep going, just cover your
3 power, and maybe one day you'll get a battery when
4 the technology improves. But for now, you know,
5 that's what they're doing.

6 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Do you need more
7 time at the end?

8 MR. XANTHOS: I just need 15 seconds.
9 So I just wanted to let you know that I believe that
10 if this thing passes, that I will lose my job and so
11 will at least 500 people that I know that work for
12 my company alone. We'll be forced to work in other
13 states, and I know that the smaller companies will
14 not survive, there's no possible way. And I hope
15 that you do the right thing.

16 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.
17 Russell Moser, then Michael Bell, and Chris Magerl.

18 MR. MOSER: Thanks for hearing me
19 out. My name is Russell Moser. I've worked in
20 solar for about three years now, and I can say that
21 it is the only industry that I love working in
22 because the product is beneficial for all parties
23 involved. The customer saves money, the clean
24 energy helps the environment, and the industry
25 creates thousands of jobs in our state and boosts

1 the economy.

2 I'm worried that if this proposal is
3 approved, it will penalize customers for choosing to
4 do something that benefits the community and the
5 environment. I'm most concerned about the proposed
6 payment plan. It is unfair for Rocky Mountain Power
7 to pay customers a flat rate of 9.79 cents per
8 kilowatt hour while the customer is still on a
9 tiered rate system, where they could pay up to 14.5
10 cents per kilowatt hour from the utility.

11 In the interest of continuing to
12 encourage the growth of renewable energy in Utah, I
13 implore you to reject this proposal or, at the very
14 least, set up a system where Rocky Mountain Power
15 must pay homeowners for their energy at the same
16 rate that they charge. Thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Is
18 Michael Bell here? The next is Chris Magerl. Is he
19 here? Okay. The next would be -- the last name is
20 St. Clair, first name is Aeon, A-e-o-n. Aeon St.
21 Clair. And then after her will be Taten Knapp and
22 Renee Ching.

23 MS. ST. CLAIR: Hi. My name is Aeon
24 St. Clair, and, I too, have been working in the
25 solar industry for about three years.

1 When they first introduced the Rocky
2 Mountain Power Solar NEM, the new proposal, we were
3 all very concerned, and this new one doesn't seem
4 any better. The customers invest in solar systems
5 using their own time and money. This proposal
6 allows Rocky Mountain Power to purchase additional
7 produced kilowatts less than they are selling them
8 back to other customers, effectively making a profit
9 on something they had no part of. This is not only
10 unfair to customers, but also to the solar companies
11 like the one I work for who are striving to help
12 people save money and for a greener environment.
13 It's economically and environmentally irresponsible
14 to discourage the solar industry and growth of
15 renewable energy. Thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.
17 Taten Knapp.

18 MR. KNAPP: Good evening, members of
19 the Utah Public Service Commission. My name is
20 Taten Knapp, I'm 18 years old, and my concern with
21 the new Rocky Mountain Power net metering agreement
22 is -- well, one of the issues I have is the
23 15-minute true-up policy. I've been working in the
24 solar industry for just about a year now. I have
25 learned quite a lot about the pros and cons of going

1 solar, and in the last few days, I have been trying
2 to learn more about the new 15-minute true-up policy
3 and the rest of the net metering agreement proposal.

4 I'm no genius when it comes to the
5 solar industry, but I think I know my stuff. I have
6 worked hard during my time in the solar industry to
7 become as knowledgeable as I can on the product I'm
8 dealing with. But as I've been studying this new
9 proposal and the true-up policy in particular, I
10 have had an extremely difficult time grasping the
11 concept. Before most customers go solar, they're
12 usually pretty good at doing their research and
13 figuring out how much they can actually save and
14 decide if solar is a reasonable choice for them.
15 But if this new 15-minute true-up policy comes into
16 play, most customers would be confused when trying
17 to research and learn more about going solar.

18 And to keep this brief, solar is
19 great for the environment and has large benefits,
20 not only for the customer, but for the economy as
21 well -- as many people have talked about tonight --
22 creating jobs and opportunities for many people. So
23 I say we keep the true-up policy what it is now, a
24 once-a-month occurrence that is easy to understand
25 and beneficial to Utah homeowners. Switching to the

1 15-minute true-up policy would be irresponsible,
2 only making it more of a challenge for Utah
3 homeowners to go solar and start saving money.
4 Thank you.

5 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Next
6 is Renee Ching, she's number 114 on the list for
7 those who are following that, Sarah Whiting, and
8 Paul Roberts.

9 MS. CHING: Hello. Good evening,
10 everybody. I'm going to keep this pretty short. I
11 just want to say with an investment such as solar,
12 the consumer deserves the most accurate information
13 and proposal that can be provided to them.

14 As a proposal generator at Solcius, I
15 know that we work really hard to take into account
16 specific and individual information and data in
17 creating a proposal for our customers. This creates
18 a unique and personal proposal for them. However, I
19 do feel that with the proposed changes to the --
20 specifically the 15-minute true-up -- would force us
21 to rely on non-specific average consumer usage
22 behavior, which would result in justifiable consumer
23 concern and a delayed return on investment. I do
24 believe that it is simply unethical. Thank you.

25 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.

1 Sarah Whiting is next. After her will be Paul
2 Roberts and Dale Draper.

3 MS. WHITING: Hello. My name is
4 Sarah Whiting, and I work for a solar company here
5 in Utah. And I believe that in addition to
6 benefiting the environment, solar panels are
7 actually helping utility by decreasing the traffic
8 flow of energy on transformers in neighborhoods and
9 increasing the amount of clean energy produced,
10 which Rocky Mountain Power can buy back at a
11 fraction of the cost. Because of this, solar users
12 shouldn't be punished with unnecessary costs that
13 are being proposed with this change. Instead, I
14 believe that people who use solar should be charged
15 fairly without a fixed import or export rate which,
16 over time, is unnecessarily increasing. Thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Paul
18 Roberts? (No response). Dale Draper? After Mr.
19 Draper will be Paul Zuckerman and John Norton.

20 MR. DRAPER: Thank you for being here
21 tonight, and it's Draper, like the city. I had to
22 move my car, so I left my notes in the car because
23 it was over the 2-hour limit, but much of what I was
24 going to say was said already, but I did want to
25 make a point. The way that Rocky Mountain Power

1 is -- and I don't know who else is involved, the
2 Utah Public Service Commission -- where you're
3 pitting regular ratepayers against solar ratepayers
4 is a pretty nasty thing to do. I have a fear that
5 when I return home I'm going to have the
6 neighborhood ripping off my solar panels.

7 I think Rocky Mountain Power and
8 their owners might want to take a different take on
9 this, take a different view. Instead of going
10 against the solar panel industry, they ought to
11 embrace it. I have solar panels on my roof, like,
12 seven and a half kilowatts, but basically to make it
13 simple -- and it gets complicated up here, too, this
14 15-minute stuff and all that -- but real simply, I
15 put the panels on the roof and no ratepayers were
16 sacrificed and I made -- I produced more power than
17 I used last year, and so the excess power at the end
18 of March was turned over to Rocky Mountain Power,
19 which I've been okay doing. But I think what Rocky
20 Mountain Power ought to do is -- the excess -- let
21 them offer to pay for half of that. Pay half the
22 rate for that excess power to encourage me putting
23 more panels on my roof to produce more power, so
24 Rocky Mountain Power could have their infrastructure
25 on our roofs instead. So we take the risk, we take

1 the capital cost of putting that stuff on our roofs
2 and generating power. They don't have to and they
3 can benefit from that. To me, it could be a win-win
4 if they approached it in the right way. Thank you.

5 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Paul
6 Zuckerman? (No response). John Norton? (No
7 response). McKayla Murphy? Okay. After Ms. Murphy
8 will be Alexi Meredith and Jim Webster.

9 MS. MURPHY: So I'm just going to
10 read -- I have written up something that I feel
11 pretty strongly about. So as a person who is
12 currently living in Utah, I would like to say that I
13 would like a reasonable option and opportunity to
14 choose for myself the power resource that will be
15 supplying my home.

16 For too long, we have lived in a
17 monopoly of power companies that can raise their
18 prices, and the consumer can do nothing about it.
19 Now that solar is ever growing on the market, I feel
20 like they feel threatened and want to take away the
21 choice and benefits that solar can provide. The
22 current proposal that has been created is not only
23 confusing but expensive and does not favor the
24 consumer who it will be affecting at all, making a
25 negative impact on getting solar and having little

1 to no benefits of having a solar system.

2 Not only do they want to take away
3 the option or benefits of going with solar, the
4 current proposal will have a negative impact on jobs
5 that solar provides. In 2016, the solar industry
6 provided more than three million in economic
7 benefits to the state. If the said proposal goes
8 through, consumers will be faced with a 15-minute
9 true-up. It seems very unfair to only pay a
10 consumer a fixed amount for the power that they're
11 producing in that 15 minutes, and then charge them
12 more when they aren't producing as much -- that just
13 doesn't make sense to me -- and having the rate not
14 be fixed.

15 This proposal seems to favor the
16 power company and does not seem to have any benefit
17 to the solar companies and customers who have solar
18 on their homes. As a state, would we not want to
19 have the option for our citizens to provide clean,
20 efficient power and have as many jobs for our
21 citizens as possible? Agreeing to this proposal
22 would be absurd. It would take away an affordable
23 way to make clean power, customer choice, jobs, and
24 money that would flow back into the economy.

25 Please revise this proposal and

1 consider the consumer and solar companies this will
2 be affecting, and provide something that will favor
3 everybody, not just the power company. Thank you.

4 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.

5 Alexi Meredith, then after her will be Jim Webster
6 and Carson Hoch.

7 MS. MEREDITH: Hi. I'm Alexi
8 Meredith, and I want to keep this brief, but I just
9 wanted to share my position. I believe that the
10 currently proposed changes are very unfair to Rocky
11 Mountain Power customers, and this is because while
12 the import charges will continue to increase at
13 whatever Rocky Mountain Power wants to set those at,
14 the export charges will remain at a much lower,
15 fixed cost. And I think that customers should
16 receive equal payback for the energy they produce,
17 and they should not be taken advantage of by the
18 utility company because they choose to go solar.

19 I propose that at the very least, the
20 export charges should increase proportionately to
21 the import charges so that the customers are treated
22 fairly. Thank you.

23 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Jim
24 Webster? It doesn't look like he's here. Carson
25 Hoch. H-o-c-h. Is he here? Kevin Adams? David

1 Winn? Mark LeBaron? And then for the next two
2 names, I will need -- Ms. Murray, if you have
3 another list --

4 MR. LEBARON: Hi. I appreciate you
5 guys sticking around.

6 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Sure. Let me
7 just say who will go after you so they can get
8 ready. Dan Potts and Charles Sisson will go next.

9 MR. LEBARON: Well, I'm going to read
10 this as well and try to keep it brief. So Rocky
11 Mountain Power is proposing to do exactly the
12 opposite of what it should be doing. As an
13 allegedly public utility, you should be encouraging
14 the installation of solar panels on every roof that
15 can economically generate power.

16 Now, I heard the arguments, a lot of
17 them here tonight, that solar panel owners aren't
18 paying their fair share of costs -- and, by the way,
19 this cough is pollution created -- and even
20 insinuations that solar panels "are making the price
21 of electricity go up." So are you kidding me?
22 We're going to have this glut of electricity on our
23 roofs, right? We've got all these panels going up
24 and they're going to create a glut of electricity.
25 Supply and demand don't work the way Rocky Mountain

1 Power is saying. If there's a glut of electricity,
2 the price of electricity is going to go down.

3 So, basically, let me get back on
4 track here. Y'all are saying that the giant glut of
5 electricity solar panels are going to create are
6 going to make electricity more expensive for our
7 neighbors; that's not how supply and demand works,
8 my friends. Let me offer a different perspective.
9 As you've heard here today, many solar panel owners
10 are essentially providing public infrastructure at,
11 at least, some level, and Rocky Mountain Power and
12 our neighbors are benefiting from it even now.
13 Solar equipment and installation that's not that
14 cheap from my perspective -- so solar panel owners
15 are already paying enough.

16 On top of the infrastructure costs,
17 we also have a minimum charge we already pay every
18 month to be connected to the grid. And where I
19 live, I've been told I can't disconnect from the
20 grid, even if I have a giant battery pack in my
21 basement or my garage, so I have to pay for that no
22 matter what. Solar panel owners are already paying
23 enough. We essentially sell the excess electricity
24 to the grid at what amounts to a wholesale price
25 while purchasing power from the grid at retail

1 prices -- effectively, retail prices. We have been
2 and are already paying enough. In fact, from my
3 perspective, Rocky Mountain Power should be
4 crediting solar power panel owners the full retail
5 price for the electricity the solar panels are
6 generating. Furthermore, we provide a public
7 service by cutting air pollution on the Wasatch
8 Front and other places in Utah where less fossil
9 fuel is now required to generate power for our
10 state. Many solar power owners do so in order to
11 cleanly power their electric or hybrid cars, further
12 reducing pollution along the Wasatch Front and other
13 places in the state. So on behalf of all the solar
14 power generators here in Utah, you're all welcome
15 for that. You're welcome.

16 We won't stand for the imposition of
17 a regressive policy that dissuades people from doing
18 something that is so obviously good for the greater
19 Utah community. If Rocky Mountain Power keeps up
20 its regressive, oppressive tactics, we, the citizens
21 of Utah, will go to our legislature, and we'll get
22 the law changed that currently allows Rocky Mountain
23 Power to effectively steal that remaining energy in
24 March. They're effectively stealing that from us,
25 and they're allowed to do that because of the law.

1 But we can go get that law changed, and we will if
2 they keep playing hardball. So, Commission, please
3 reject every aspect of that proposal. No way, no
4 how. Thank you.

5 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Dan
6 Potts, then after him will be Charles Sisson, Ryan
7 Garrett, and Hannah Whitney.

8 MR. POTTS: My name is Dan Potts.
9 I'm a Utahn through and through. I was born here
10 and went to West High School, the oldest school in
11 the state at this point. I live on the west side
12 and I've always lived on the west side, other than
13 the time that I went back east to get a master's
14 degree in ecology. So I'm kind of into the
15 environment thing, and so I relate to many of the
16 things that have been said.

17 But because I retired at age 25 and
18 my wife supports me, I volunteer about 500-plus
19 hours a year to society, and some people here know
20 that I do that and that I've done that. So it took
21 a long time for my wife and I to save up enough
22 money -- you may recall last year when I came up and
23 spoke -- it took us a long time, 30-some odd years,
24 to save enough money to put six panels on our house.
25 And we don't use a lot of electricity, but we want

1 to get six more panels so, you know, this proposal
2 is not really encouraging my wife -- who is the
3 moneymaker in our situation -- to make that
4 investment because it's pricy. Even with the tax
5 break, it's pricy, so it's been difficult. Because
6 we made that decision to purchase a house on the
7 west side, the poor west side -- it was condemned,
8 we paid about \$20 plus, maybe \$30,000 for this
9 house, you know, it's a hundred-plus-year-old house.
10 That was a long time ago, so we would have thought
11 that Rocky Mountain Power would have figured out by
12 now -- since the main constraints are the supply and
13 demand issues of power, in other words, what's
14 produced where and how it gets moved around the
15 grid -- so we thought they would have anticipated
16 better than we did 30 years ago to take care of
17 those kinds of infrastructure, and so, now, we feel
18 like now we're being penalized for their lack of
19 foresight, and that's just -- we just don't see that
20 that's right. So I think that's sending the wrong
21 message. And, also, it's dividing the culture and
22 the haves versus the have nots, because, you know,
23 who's going to fall off? It's going to be us on the
24 west side or those out in Magna, you know, those
25 places where people don't have as much money. Those

1 are the people that are not going to install solar
2 panels, not the haves, they can afford that stuff.
3 They're just going to continue to do that,
4 regardless of all these other incentives and
5 whatnot.

6 So I assume that you have children,
7 so your decisions are going to be almost legacy
8 oriented, you know. I think we all, as humans, we
9 want to leave a legacy on this planet and so, you
10 know, your children's children will be looking back.

11 And I think you guys have a really
12 tough job, and we appreciate your efforts in the
13 past to do the right thing, so thank you.

14 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.
15 Charles Sisson, and then Ryan Garrett and Hannah
16 Whitney. Mr. Sisson is number 128.

17 MR. SISSON: Thank you very much. I
18 appreciate your time that you're taking to listen to
19 us and would ask that you consider what we have to
20 say.

21 I have three elements that I'd like
22 to share with you tonight. The first one, we have
23 had solar panels on our house for several years.
24 Utahns deserve transparency and certainty in the
25 regulation process. I have invested my own money

1 and entered into binding contracts with the
2 expectation that policymakers and regulations will
3 not change the rules unilaterally. I would urge the
4 state of Utah, those who created the net metering
5 program, to uphold its commitment to those that are
6 the solar pioneers and not change things
7 retroactively.

8 Secondly, I embrace technology. I
9 work in the computer field and know very well that
10 things change on a daily, weekly, monthly basis. I
11 was an early adopter of solar panels. I did that
12 for several reasons. One was to mitigate the
13 impacts that the environment in Utah has upon my
14 family.

15 Third, I would like to share with you
16 a challenge that I have had personally. A year ago,
17 my daughter had premature twins. After they got to
18 bring them home, they were looking at \$180,000 worth
19 of bills from hospital. I looked at ways to perhaps
20 help mitigate some of those bills and realized that
21 there was a feature in net metering called meter
22 aggregation. What that allows is that allows you to
23 apply excess capacity from a meter and apply it to a
24 second meter, and there are four criteria that are
25 listed in the rules and regulations. I felt that I

1 met all four of those. I sent that documentation to
2 Rocky Mountain Power. An individual there came back
3 and said, "No, you do not meet our definition of
4 adjacent." I shared with them other dictionary
5 definitions of adjacent, but they were not willing
6 to make the change. So I have gone and done leases
7 with my neighbors to go to my daughters's house so
8 that I can "meet Rocky Mountain's definition of
9 adjacent" so that we can aggregate her meter and
10 save her some money as she is dealing with the
11 premature birth of my two grandsons.

12 In closing, I would like to say we
13 are in the 21st century. Let's look to apply 21st
14 century ideas and concepts and know that competition
15 is the opportunity of invention. And I would
16 encourage you not to apply 20th century solutions to
17 our challenges. Thank you so much.

18 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Ryan
19 Garrett is number 129. After him is Hannah Whitney
20 and Cindy King.

21 MR. GARRETT: Thank you. I've got an
22 energy efficiency company. We don't do solar, but
23 I'm concerned with this industry and the impacts
24 it's going to have on Utahns. I'm going to try to
25 keep this to three minutes, because a lot of this

1 you've already heard. By the way, I don't envy you,
2 but I really do appreciate you and your fortitude
3 here.

4 So according to Rocky Mountain
5 Power's website, they employ about 5,600 people in
6 three states, and Utah is probably the largest. So
7 I don't know, maybe 2,000 to 2,500 -- I couldn't get
8 the exact number of what they employ in Utah -- but
9 according to Ryan Evans, the president of Utah Solar
10 Energy Association, solar employs about 4,400 people
11 in the state of Utah, and solar is about 1 percent
12 of energy production. And so, if Utah is really
13 concerned about jobs, they should be supporting this
14 solar industry. That's a major employment impact on
15 the state.

16 I got a bid for my home for solar --
17 I've got about \$150 a month power bill -- and my
18 system would be about \$17,000 after incentives. And
19 if by some miracle rates didn't change -- that's not
20 going to happen, but if they didn't -- over the next
21 ten years, I'd pay Rocky Mountain Power about
22 \$18,000 in energy costs. So I would have already
23 paid off my solar system by that time. My solar
24 system equipment is warrantied for 25 years, so from
25 year ten to 25, I've got 15 more years of power I'm

1 getting from solar after my break-even points. So,
2 financially, for me, I like this. I like owning my
3 energy for the same reason I like owning my home.
4 For me, that makes a lot of sense.

5 The other issue is, as people have
6 mentioned, the impact on the environment. Coal
7 emissions are responsible for lung disease,
8 respiratory disease, neurological disorders and
9 developmental disorders, as well as greenhouse
10 gases. And I recognize their efforts to try to
11 clean things up, you know, clean coal. Anyway, I
12 recognize those efforts and appreciate them, but
13 these emissions are still there. It's kind of like
14 I tell my children with their media choices that if
15 I put a little manure in their brownies would they
16 still want the brownies. No is the answer. And we
17 don't want this crap in our air either, even if it's
18 a little bit. We don't want it. If you drive to
19 St. George, when you hit Delta all of a sudden,
20 there's smog, and it's not because of all the
21 automobile traffic; it's because of that coal-fired
22 power plant there.

23 And the biggest issue to me is this
24 one that's -- it's the financial issue. Rocky
25 Mountain Power keeps complaining about their

1 financial hardships and getting the actual numbers
2 from them, I think, has been really tough. I can't
3 really find them, so I looked up the SEC filings --
4 quarterly filings from PacifiCorp -- and that's the
5 best that I can get. Otherwise, it's like trying to
6 get Donald Trump to stop tweeting. You just can't
7 get this information out and it's impossible. So
8 Berkshire Hathaway Energy, in the first half of
9 2017, netted \$1.15 billion, and they have \$88
10 billion in assets. Unbelievable. And PacifiCorp,
11 their total operating income -- here it is, their
12 SEC filing -- is \$2.02 billion in the first half of
13 2017. Now they say they've got all this hardship
14 because of solar. Well, it says in their filing
15 that retail customer volumes increased 2.4 percent
16 due to higher commercial and industry usage and an
17 increase in the average number of residential and
18 commercial customers primarily in Utah. Operating
19 revenue increased \$41 million --

20 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Do you need some
21 more time at the end?

22 MR. GARRETT: A few more seconds, if
23 that's okay. Well, maybe 20. At any rate, their
24 operating income is increasing due to decreased,
25 lower operating and maintenance expenses. So they

1 want to talk about all these increases in their
2 maintenance expenses, it's not. So what's the real
3 reason? Our three choices are cleaner environment,
4 lower costs, better jobs economy through solar. And
5 I'm just confused on why you would support Rocky
6 Mountain Power outside of their really powerful
7 lobby, which I hope this isn't the case. Thank you.

8 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Is Hannah
9 Whitney here? Then after her will be Cindy King,
10 and Frances Bernards.

11 MS. WHITNEY: Thanks very much. As
12 you said, my name is Hannah Whitney. Thank you for
13 allowing me some time to speak. I am a resident of
14 the Liberty Wells neighborhood here in Salt Lake
15 City, and I'm here today to ask you to reject Rocky
16 Mountain Power's rooftop solar fees for many more
17 reasons than I have time to share.

18 As one of many who appreciate the
19 wonderful things Utah offers to its residents -- and
20 I hope for the chance to build my future and my
21 family here -- but there are definitely things that
22 challenge my ability and my eagerness to do so. One
23 of them is depending upon a monopoly utility which
24 seems insistent upon valuing its bottom line over
25 the health of our community, as we've heard from a

1 lot of folks today. And I don't want you to get me
2 wrong or anyone else here wrong by thinking that I
3 have just a one-sided view of this topic, because I
4 understand these issues being discussed are
5 complicated and that I probably don't understand a
6 lot of them.

7 But, with regard to such an impactful
8 renewable resource as rooftop solar, you, as the
9 Public Service Commission, and Rocky Mountain Power
10 really have an incredible opportunity to be on the
11 right side of history in this case. The side that
12 takes into consideration present and future
13 generations and residents of our state, the side
14 which recognizes the incredible benefits of rooftop
15 solar. I really want to emphasize those benefits,
16 even those that are harder to quantify. Please also
17 consider all of those who couldn't be here today but
18 deeply care about the issues, all the folks who put
19 their name on the list but didn't get a chance to
20 speak, because we care deeply about these issues and
21 the ability to one day invest in rooftop solar. I
22 don't have it yet, so I hope to have it someday. So
23 I hope that you can keep rooftop solar affordable
24 for people like me, for other people who face even
25 more financial challenges than I do but still

1 recognize the importance of investing in renewable
2 energy, for people who can't rush out this year or
3 couldn't get it in last December or whatnot, to get
4 those solar panels, but really hope, desperately
5 hope that we get the chance to do so in the future.

6 So, again, I ask you reject these
7 unnecessary fees, maybe consider that full-rate
8 case, and urge our utility to do better for every
9 single one of us, including those who even might
10 support these fees. I know that they have the
11 ability to do more, to do better, and to be part of
12 the solution instead of the problem. Thank you so
13 much. Thank you.

14 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. And
15 just for the sake of everyone in the room, I think
16 we're going to do two more, and then we'll take one
17 additional short break and we have about 30 more
18 speakers after that. So we'll go with Cindy King
19 and Frances Bernards.

20 MS. KING: Thank you for this
21 opportunity. Rocky Mountain's proposal is
22 misleading on the face. If Rocky Mountain really
23 did their job right, they would address the cost of
24 their carbon footprint; they would compare solar use
25 to their current energy, which is coal and natural

1 gas; they would include the health effects, which
2 are known as benefits of solar to that of coal and
3 natural gas, which also affect how consumers use
4 energy. This is also known as part of the Public
5 Trust Doctrine that has been part of the U.S. public
6 law since the country became. We need to remember
7 that the public has paid for the grid through tax
8 incentives for the original grid, and currently do
9 so through monthly costs of a \$6.00 line fee that is
10 currently on everybody's bill. Therefore, I would
11 like to suggest that the Commission decline Rocky
12 Mountain Power's proposal. Thank you.

13 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.
14 Ms. Bernards.

15 MS. BERNARDS: Hi. I'm Frances
16 Bernards, and I have been a resident of Salt Lake
17 City for close to 30 years.

18 Residential rooftop solar helps meet
19 Utah's growing energy needs with local, clean
20 power, but Rocky Mountain Power's proposed rate
21 increase will make rooftop solar unaffordable to
22 many Utahns. It will also negatively affect job and
23 economic growth and be a step in the wrong direction
24 for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving
25 air quality. As rooftop solar owners, my husband

1 and I are already paying a base rate each month. If
2 that needs to increase, we're quite willing to do
3 that if it's reasonable, just like other Rocky
4 Mountain Power customers -- residential customers.
5 So we really question Rocky Mountain Power's
6 statement that each net metering customer is
7 receiving a \$400 yearly subsidy from non-rooftop
8 solar customers. How did Rocky Mountain Power come
9 up with this figure?

10 We also question Rocky Mountain
11 Power's proposed monthly demand charge. Rooftop
12 solar customers provide energy to Rocky Mountain
13 Power during high-demand periods, such as in the
14 summer months. So why should rooftop solar
15 customers be assessed demand charges? Other
16 residential customers at Rocky Mountain Power aren't
17 assessed demand charges. Rocky Mountain Power's web
18 page states that the company doesn't envision
19 building another major thermal power plant until
20 2028. Residential rooftop solar could eliminate or
21 drastically reduce the need to invest in such
22 expensive power plants by providing an efficient
23 source of energy right where the electricity is
24 being consumed.

25 What's more efficient than rooftop

1 solar? Whether the panels are on homes, commercial
2 buildings, or maybe even schools. Given that,
3 rooftop solar helps utilities by supplying energy to
4 the grid, then why shouldn't Rocky Mountain Power
5 continue paying at least 15 cents per kilowatt hour
6 or 10 cents per kilowatt hour or whatever is
7 reasonable for that clean energy? Treat us as power
8 generators. Utah's economy is definitely benefiting
9 from the solar industry. It's pumped close to
10 \$300 million into Utah's economy -- I believe it was
11 in 2016 -- and it has also created close to 4,500
12 jobs.

13 Lastly, solar power is one of the
14 most efficient ways to reduce our greenhouse gas
15 emissions. The environmental and public health
16 benefits that come with burning less fossil fuels
17 are well-documented. So let's just take a giant
18 leap forward, not a giant leap backward, by keeping
19 clean, solar energy affordable in Utah. I really
20 respectfully ask that you deny Rocky Mountain
21 Power's proposed rate increase and ask them to do a
22 little better homework. Thank you.

23 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.
24 We'll take a recess for about ten minutes. When we
25 return, the next one is number 133, Caroline

1 Erickson, Alex Jahp, Vincente Martinez, and Nikki
2 Wyman.

3 (Break)

4 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: We're back on
5 the record in Public Service Commission Docket
6 14-035-114, the net metering docket. This is the
7 public witness hearing where anyone from the public
8 can give us their views on the filing by Rocky
9 Mountain Power. As I have said before, in order to
10 enable everyone who wants to speak to us to have a
11 reasonable opportunity, we're limiting comments to
12 three minutes. If anyone needs more time than that,
13 we're happy to bring you back at the end once
14 everyone has had an initial opportunity to speak to
15 us. So our next few people who signed up are
16 Carolyn Erickson, Alex Jahp, and Vincente Martinez.
17 Is Carolyn Erickson here? No. Is Alex Jahp,
18 J-a-h-p, here? Okay. So after him will be Vincente
19 Martinez and Nikki Wyman.

20 MR. JAHP: Thanks for having me here
21 and letting me share my thoughts. My name is Alex
22 Jahp, and I live here in Salt Lake City. I moved to
23 this state a dozen years ago out of a desire to lead
24 a healthy life and enjoy the outdoors. I worked as
25 a guide for much of that time showing people from

1 all over the world our incredible backyard. But
2 there came a time when I realized that many of these
3 places that I loved were under threat from the
4 pollution and a changing climate. The flows of our
5 rivers -- the veins of this state -- have been
6 falling off, the summers are far hotter, and the
7 haze has increased in areas far from civilization.

8 I chose to go back to school to take
9 classes in solar system design and construction to
10 work in an industry that is building a better world.
11 And I'm not alone in my passion for renewable
12 energy. We have an incredible solar resource that
13 the people of this state -- who have a long-standing
14 tradition of self-reliance and pragmatism -- have
15 been choosing to utilize in droves by putting solar
16 panels on their roofs. Over 16,000 homeowners have
17 made one of the largest purchases of their lives
18 with the belief they're making the right choice for
19 themselves and their community.

20 On that basis, we have built a
21 thriving industry employing over 4,000 people. And
22 we are people with mortgages and families, not just
23 numbers in an economic calculation. Rocky Mountain
24 Power, an out-of-state monopoly, is asking you to
25 ensure their profitability at the expense of these

1 homeowners and these workers. Their argument is
2 incredibly flawed and is an insufficient
3 justification for the harm that their rate change
4 would cause.

5 Rocky Mountain Power has remained
6 deeply invested in polluting, outdated, generating
7 plants that are a threat to our health, our
8 environment, and our children. Solar power is
9 eroding their business model as their very customers
10 are demanding it, yet, they refuse to adopt or
11 compete in a changing world. Instead, they're
12 offering a narrative in which the changing world is
13 creating the problem, not their choices over many
14 decades. And I sit here and I wonder why we should
15 suffer and why we should pay for their bad decisions
16 while they profit. In their own study, over 60
17 percent of the costs that they cite as being
18 incurred from rooftop solar are merely from lost
19 revenue. And this is from a study that is flawed
20 and doesn't include long-term benefits to the grid,
21 environmental benefits, or deferred investments in
22 additional generation.

23 So I ask you to please choose the
24 people of this state over profit. I ask you to deny
25 Rocky Mountain Power's request for rate increases

1 outside of a general rate case. Thank you for your
2 time.

3 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Next
4 is Vincente Martinez. Is he here? Okay. After him
5 we'll hear Nikki Wyman, Joel Ban, and Matt Duke.
6 Mr. Martinez is 135.

7 MR. MARTINEZ: Hi there. First off,
8 I would like to thank Rocky Mountain Power for
9 keeping my power on. But, in other words, I would
10 like to address something that is more relevant and
11 I think something that is more relevant is that it's
12 not about climate change, it's not about price or
13 anything like that, it's actually about our
14 obstruction of resources in the world as we see it
15 today.

16 If we don't start utilizing our
17 system right now to downsize it to a solar grid
18 amongst the people, we could be seeing worse things
19 in the future, especially for lower-income families
20 on the west end of Salt Lake City. My idea on it is
21 if you guys begin to cut off -- if you guys begin to
22 make it more expensive for the middle class here to
23 produce solar energy, you guys will drive out an
24 industry that will one day help -- an industry that
25 will sooner or later innovate itself to make it

1 cheaper and more efficient to market it down to the
2 lower class of our own society to people that are
3 making \$10,000 or \$20,000. And you can look at it
4 right now, you know, our educational system isn't
5 doing the best right now to the point that my
6 generation -- I'm 19-years old -- my generation will
7 see a big decline in educated people in the future
8 because of the simple fact that our market is only
9 favoring people with a certain income to pay. If
10 the universities are paying about \$10,000, you know,
11 families can't pay for that, and with our
12 educational system going down we're not going to
13 have this middle class. I think that's the perfect
14 fertilizer right now to start our solar industry.
15 And whether or not you guys want to really start the
16 solar industry to market it down to the lower class
17 because you guys are fearful of the west end
18 becoming more industrialized because -- let's be
19 honest, I mean, you guys produce most of your power
20 on the west end, and when the power comes down from
21 the west end, it comes down to the city. So either
22 you guys are not trying to utilize it more to the
23 west end, and that's why you guys kind of see the
24 obstruction right now.

25 But, in other words, just to sum this

1 up, I really am in favor and in support of my
2 generation becoming the next generation to lead a
3 better generation for generations to come. Thank
4 you.

5 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.
6 Nikki Wyman, and after her will be Joel Ban, Matt
7 Duke, and Ray Klukeske.

8 MS. WYMAN: Good evening. Thanks so
9 much for your role in this discussion. My name is
10 Nikki Wyman. I'm a homeowner in Sandy, a lifelong
11 resident of the Salt Lake City valley, and I'm also
12 a teacher -- specifically a science teacher -- which
13 is important for a few reasons. I represent
14 households with somewhat paltry incomes, I
15 understand that Rocky Mountain Power's case study is
16 severely flawed, and I also represent the interests
17 and futures of my students.

18 My relatively low salary forces me to
19 prioritize my spending. I'm willing and planning to
20 forfeit significant personal spending so I can
21 afford a solar system for my home. Rocky Mountain
22 Power' proposed rate hike would make this decision
23 unwise and irresponsible as increased fees mean I
24 would have even less cash available for living
25 expenses and emergencies. I'll probably do it

1 anyway, because I'm a tree hugger. I think this is
2 a shame.

3 Solar energy has a myriad of
4 benefits. It's clean, it's renewable, not to
5 mention it's free and abundant in Utah. Everyone,
6 regardless of income, should have access to this
7 obviously awesome resource. Rocky Mountain Power's
8 rate hike would deincentivize average Utahns from
9 switching to solar. This in turn would have major,
10 negative repercussions for air quality and climate.

11 Rocky Mountain Power's case study
12 from which the proposed rate hikes were generated is
13 considerably flawed. However, I will concede that
14 if you are a seventh grader, it would definitely be
15 A-quality work, but we're talking about professional
16 institutions. And it violates major axioms of the
17 scientific method. The sample size is way too low,
18 the time frame is way too small, and it doesn't
19 consider the benefits of solar, not to mention it
20 was conducted by Rocky Mountain Power itself, which
21 suggests bias in favor of the company. The study
22 should be redone with a larger sample size over a
23 long time, conducted by a third party.

24 And then, lastly, I have my students
25 and their futures at the forefront of my concerns.

1 I don't plan on having children, so my students are
2 my passion. It saddens me when red air quality days
3 zap their outdoor time or to think that they enjoy,
4 sometimes, the worst air quality in the nation, and
5 that they may see the end of the Wasatch Front's
6 reliable snow pack. They're saddened, too, and even
7 frustrated. On more than one occasion, students
8 express frustration with policy-making adults who
9 could consider their collective future and future
10 generations, but don't. They see transitioning to
11 renewable energy as a no-brainer and, obviously, so
12 do I.

13 On behalf of my students and future
14 generations, I'd like to ask you to deny Rocky
15 Mountain Power's request for a rate increase outside
16 of a general rate case. Thank you very much.

17 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Joel
18 Ban? (No response). Then Matt Duke, Ray Klukeske,
19 and Charles Clark.

20 MR. DUKE: My name is Matt Duke. I
21 represent dozens of employees from the engineering
22 department for a leading solar company that does
23 business in multiple states and significant business
24 in Utah.

25 Many tonight have requested a

1 rejection of Rocky Mountain Power's proposed net
2 metering changes; I second those objections. I'd
3 like to focus my comments on the current proposal
4 found in the docket dated July 25. While this
5 proposal is much better than the original proposal
6 by Rocky Mountain Power, it would have significant
7 negative impacts on the solar industry and solar
8 consumers. I recognize the need to find a common
9 compromise. I would just like to provide some
10 details on two specific aspects of the current
11 proposal that is concerning: the proposed 15-minute
12 true-up and the proposal to have fixed export rates.

13 In explanation to these details we
14 are dedicated in our department and our company to
15 provide accurate financial estimations for our
16 customers going solar. As such, we utilize an
17 industry-leading software provider that models
18 thousands of utility rate structures and is
19 dedicated to modeling accurate solar financial
20 predictions. They tell us they have rarely seen a
21 true-up as frequent as 15-minute intervals.
22 True-ups like that are difficult to model
23 accurately, and data to support such models on a
24 per-customer basis is typically not available. It
25 is reckless to expect that the financial estimations

1 of going solar regarding true-ups with tight
2 intervals will be consistently accurate on a
3 per-customer basis, and this type of rate plan is a
4 disservice to the consumer.

5 It is unfair to expect the homeowner
6 to understand the implications of this type of
7 true-up, such as how their solar production offset,
8 coupled with changes in their consumption behavior
9 will affect their electricity costs. Consequently,
10 I strongly urge for a true-up of the one-month
11 interval.

12 Additionally, moving to a distributed
13 generation model allows for import and export rates
14 per kilowatt hour to have different stipulations.
15 The proposal to have an export rate lower than the
16 import rate insults the value of solar, but since
17 the proposed rates are relatively close, many within
18 the solar industry could learn to compromise and
19 accept this. What is unacceptable is the proposal
20 to have the export price fixed, meaning the consumer
21 is at the mercy of rising electricity rates while
22 the value of solar-produced electricity diminishes.
23 Why would we consider it acceptable for annual rate
24 increases to be allowed for grid power but not
25 equally applied for buy-back solar power? This is a

1 subtle way to disenchant consumers from going solar
2 and cripple the solar industry in Utah.

3 On behalf of those consumers, I
4 respectfully request that the proposal be updated to
5 reflect the export and import rates be in proportion
6 to each other such that if the grid power costs go
7 up by 3 percent, the solar power buy-back rates also
8 go up by 3 percent. Thank you.

9 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Ray
10 Klukeske, and then next will be Charles Clark,
11 Jessica Henderson, and Michael Hori.

12 MR. KLUKESKE: Hello. I'd like to
13 thank you guys for giving us the opportunity to have
14 a public voice in all of this. Appreciate your
15 time. It's getting late tonight.

16 My name is Ray Klukeske. I've lived
17 in the Salt Lake City valley for 20 years. I have
18 had solar panels on my house for about three years
19 now. I'm here to voice my opinion. I'm opposed to
20 the proposed rate change by Rocky Mountain Power.
21 It's based on a demand charge rate, which is
22 something that's typically only used on commercial
23 and industrial power users. Those type of places
24 that do have a demand charge rate structure will --
25 it's an industrial place that has a manager, you

1 know, managing all the time their power use. It's
2 not something that's an appropriate rate structure
3 for residential customers.

4 Currently, the system that it is --
5 that we have now with our net meters is already
6 favoring Rocky Mountain Power. They're already
7 profiting off of the solar power that solar
8 customers create in several ways. There's a minimum
9 monthly charge that we get, you know, the base rate
10 that we get charged and the minimum monthly charge
11 we get charged every month, even months that we
12 overproduce, so we're already paying extra there.
13 Non-solar customers that are paying a time-of-day
14 rate option, obviously, they're paying more for the
15 electricity that they're buying at the time that
16 we're producing it, so Rocky Mountain Power is
17 taking advantage there. And, then, of course, the
18 Blue Sky Program that Rocky Mountain Power touts as
19 a way for customers to voluntarily pay extra for
20 clean energy that we're producing. You know, we're
21 not voluntarily getting paid anything extra for
22 that.

23 In the end, I just, you know, we've
24 been here, we've had these meetings before, and I
25 would urge the Commission to deny the proposed rate

1 change, and, in the future, continue to make changes
2 that benefit all of Utah citizens, not Rocky
3 Mountain Power's profit margin. Thank you.

4 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Is
5 Charles Clark here? Okay. Then after him will be
6 Jessica Henderson, Michael Hori, and Paul Dahle.

7 MR. CLARK: My name is Charlie Clark.
8 I'm a 37-year-old husband and father of four in
9 South Jordan. I do work in the solar industry, not
10 because I have to, but because I choose to.

11 Energy independence, innovation,
12 sustainability, jobs, scalability, security, clean
13 air, and a host of other similar words and phrases
14 are often used to describe an ideal future for Utah.
15 Distributed power generation -- or the "smart grid"
16 as we call it -- through solar and other renewable
17 technologies has arrived and it addresses in
18 substantial and fundamental ways virtually all of
19 these shared ideals for our future. That said,
20 identifying the most optimal and manageable and
21 affordable approach is often challenging. That's
22 why we're here, right?

23 Several years ago, a man I deeply
24 respect for his passion for energy-efficient systems
25 shared with me his analogy for the challenges faced

1 when discussing and debating the best solution. He
2 said if you go to a car dealer and ask for the
3 fastest way to get across the country, they will
4 show you their top-of-the-line sports car. They
5 will excitedly tell you about the features and
6 performance capabilities, explaining just why it's
7 the best choice. However, what they won't mention
8 is an airplane. Intentional or not, the car
9 dealer's recommendation is usually -- it's limited
10 to the scope and the goals of their business, not
11 the actual best solution for the customer.

12 People understand this is a changing
13 grid, they recognize the need for utilities to
14 provide supplemental power, system balancing, and
15 other top-level services. They recognize that
16 transitioning to the energy abundance of a
17 renewable-based grid requires fair, fact-based
18 balancing of various interests. Considering the
19 challenges for Utah in the coming years such as air
20 quality and population growth and the PSC's
21 responsibility for safe, reliable, adequate, and
22 reasonably priced utility service, I urge you to
23 reject the current utility proposal as it's
24 implementation and expected effect on the solar
25 industry represents closing the door to the actual

1 best solution to our energy needs now and in the
2 future. Thank you for your time.

3 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.

4 Jessica Henderson, then after her will be Michael
5 Hori, Paul Dahle, and Ron McKee. Jessica Henderson
6 is number 141 for those of you who need to know
7 that.

8 MS. HENDERSON: Thank you so much for
9 your physical and your mental energy that you're
10 devoting to hear all of us. As you can tell from
11 what you've heard, this is a very important issue on
12 a personal level, and I realize that it's very late
13 and we appreciate you -- all of you.

14 I just wanted to say I grew up in
15 Utah, I moved away, and I have lived in several
16 different states and also in different countries. I
17 never expected to come back to Utah -- that was not
18 my plan -- but now I'm here because I've fallen in
19 love with it, most markedly because of our beautiful
20 and unmatched outdoors and also because of our
21 entrepreneurial spirit in both our government and
22 our private endeavors. I would like to say I am
23 currently 30-years old. My most immediate life
24 challenge right now is trying to decide where to
25 live, if I should rent or if I should invest in my

1 own property. I would like to say from my
2 perspective Rocky Mountain Power is a very reliable
3 company, and they already experience a distinct
4 market advantage. Everywhere that I look is already
5 suited to use and rely on Rocky Mountain Power, most
6 especially, rental properties do not offer the
7 option to select solar power. And if I would like
8 to purchase a home and purchase my own solar panels,
9 that already represents a very significant private
10 investment in this technology, which I would not be
11 considering if I stuck to Rocky Mountain Power.

12 I would like to say that it is -- as
13 much as I love this state and as much as I love
14 being here, one of the most horrific realities for
15 me to face is that in the future, I may not be able
16 to remain living here, not because I cannot find a
17 job, not because I cannot fit into the culture, but
18 because I have seen a distinct and measurable
19 decline in my health during the months when we
20 experience the inversion. It is to the point
21 where -- I consider myself a very athletic
22 individual, but after days when I spend a lot of
23 time outside in the air quality when it is bad, I
24 experience a recovery time of weeks of bad breathing
25 and coughing. This is a terrifying reality for me

1 that I believe belongs more appropriately in the
2 1800s rather than in the world that we're currently
3 living in, especially in a state like this where we
4 value so much our beautiful nature.

5 I would like to say I believe that
6 appropriate research will prove that solar energy is
7 a blanket benefit for our state, both economically
8 and ecologically, however, even in the case of it --
9 if it required government investment to make it
10 viable, I intend to be here, I intend to be paying
11 taxes for many, many years, and even if I can never
12 afford the solar panels that I would like to have
13 for myself, I would happily invest my taxes in
14 everybody else's solar power because it very
15 significantly improves the quality of my life as
16 well. So thank you so much.

17 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.
18 Michael Hori and then after him Paul Dahle, Ron
19 McKee, and Vee Kelsey McKee.

20 MR. HORI: As you stated, my name is
21 Michael Hori. I'm a Salt Lake City resident and
22 concerned citizen. I've been a resident here since
23 2011, and I moved here to pursue a career in science
24 background.

25 So, for the sake of time, I'll just

1 say that I second those arguments posted by those
2 people who have taken issue with the limitations of
3 Rocky Mountain Power's study. Additionally, the
4 proposal would make acquiring solar panels by
5 persons of lower income like myself, completely
6 untenable, so I would also like my voice to be heard
7 in argument against their proposal. Thank you.

8 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Paul
9 Dahle and then after him Ron McKee, Vee Kelsey
10 McKee, and James Catano.

11 MR. DAHLE: Thank you. I appreciate
12 the time you have allowed me to speak here and voice
13 my opinion.

14 I'm a current solar owner with the
15 intention of generating at least 15 to 20 percent
16 more than I use for many of the reasons that have
17 already been laid out, and I also have no problem
18 with paying my fair share for the use of grid.
19 However, the current proposal by Rocky Mountain
20 Power is designed solely to kill and thwart private
21 ownership of our solar. It will put out of business
22 all of these solar companies, it will penalize and
23 pit our customers against each other. There is
24 nothing in this that is fair. The peak demand of
25 this 15-minute true-up and the way it is

1 jerry-rigged to penalize solar users make it almost
2 impossible to prepare a proposal. It's just
3 ridiculous. The rates that they're also willing to
4 pay us -- even not giving us credit at the end of
5 the year, I'm fine with that -- but when you start
6 telling me that I'm only going to get a bottom low
7 rate for absolutely the cleanest energy that one can
8 generate, I am putting this extra into the system,
9 and there is nothing in this proposal that isn't
10 driven toward putting solar owners out of business
11 and the companies that provide it.

12 I have been a long-time supporter of
13 the Rocky Mountain Power Blue Sky. I even still
14 donate to it today -- even though I'm generating
15 more power from my solar system -- because I think
16 it is the way to go. Now, why this company -- other
17 than greed and trying to force out the solar
18 installers -- would not embrace solar and make that
19 a part of their ongoing ability to generate power is
20 beyond me. It just does not make sense. I urge you
21 to stop this assault on private solar and challenge
22 Rocky Mountain Power to come up with a fair solution
23 that doesn't penalize solar users and encourages all
24 users to go to solar, if possible, and to continue
25 to clean up our air and give an alternative to this

1 monopoly that's been abused by the ownership of our
2 out-of-state colleagues. Thank you very much.
3 Appreciate it.

4 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Ron
5 McKee and then Vee Kelsey McKee, James Catano, and
6 Natalie Little. Mr. McKee is number 144.

7 MR. MCKEE: Thank you for being here
8 tonight. I believe that everyone who came here
9 tonight to voice their opinion basically represents
10 10,000 other citizens of this state. That's a lot
11 of people, that's 1.6 million people that I think we
12 represent here. We believe in competition, fair
13 competition, and in a free-enterprise system,
14 competition will drive down costs, and costs are
15 important to the people who live here. It's obvious
16 that we do this.

17 I'm not an employee of a solar
18 company, I'm an engineer. I do not own solar
19 equipment other than a little storage battery for,
20 you know, in case of the revolution coming. The
21 issues that effect me are the environment, the air
22 quality, significantly, jobs -- there are 30,000
23 jobs in the coal industry, miners in this country --
24 there's 300,000 solar installers in this country.
25 And we are overlooking that in this state because

1 we're not encouraging solar energy features.

2 Choice -- we all want choice, and I
3 want the choice of having my own reliable resource
4 along with the partnership of Rocky Mountain Power.
5 And the disruptive technologies that are coming to
6 be in this current day and age are going to put
7 Rocky Mountain Power out of business, and if they
8 don't embrace us helping them sustain their
9 infrastructure and their business, we will build the
10 many grids that are now being proposed, and we will
11 probably leave them behind at some point. It won't
12 happen tomorrow, it won't happen next year, but in
13 the future I believe this will happen. Solar energy
14 costs are coming way down, and this will be from the
15 grassroots, and it will move the solar industry
16 forward; it won't go backwards. This state may not
17 participate like many of the others do. Texas
18 already supplies clean energy, 30 percent of their
19 power needs. England just celebrated one full day
20 of energy that was not consumed from fossil fuels.
21 It was all done with wind and solar energy. That
22 was the entire country, and they're looking forward
23 to many more of those. They embrace this concept
24 and the future of this.

25 As a society, we need to encourage

1 this, just as those other countries -- Germany,
2 Sweden, England -- and many other places do. We
3 don't seem to be doing that. And, in Utah, we seem
4 to live with this idea of bad pollution and not
5 doing things that we know will fix it. The increase
6 in net metering cost is anti-clean air, anti-jobs,
7 and anti-people and their health. It is simple that
8 Rocky Mountain Power is not anti-solar, they just
9 want to own it all, they just don't want anybody to
10 compete with them, and the monopoly --

11 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Do you need more
12 time at the end?

13 MR. MCKEE: No, just one thing.
14 Would you please reject the request, and, in many
15 ways, you are the conscience of these public
16 companies that are monopolies. Their conscience is
17 for their investors, but you represent the
18 conscience of the people. And do the right thing,
19 please. Reject this proposal. Thank you.

20 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Vee
21 Kelsey McKee and then James Catano, Natalie Little,
22 and Robert Armstrong.

23 MS. MCKEE: Commissioners and staff,
24 thank you so much for hanging in with us during this
25 marathon session. Wow. I'm Vee Kelsey McKee. I'm

1 a native Utahn, I'm a 30-year resident of Salt Lake
2 City, and I'm one who is increasingly distressed by
3 our deteriorating air quality, so I'm here to speak
4 in support of affordable solar energy in Utah, which
5 means rejecting Rocky Mountain Power's current
6 proposal for all of the reasons that you heard. I
7 don't need to go over any of those.

8 But I am the president of the
9 homeowner's association of a small 23-unit
10 condominium building. The residents of my building
11 would love to use rooftop solar to power our
12 building's lighting, heating, and cooling in our
13 common areas. Rocky Mountain Power's proposals
14 would make this difficult, if not impossible, for us
15 as a condominium community. We would like to be
16 more responsible citizens, we would like to
17 contribute to cleaner air and better public health.
18 So I'm here to ask you to please give us that
19 opportunity.

20 I'm also here to ask you to please
21 support small business. I'm a small business owner
22 myself, although not in the solar industry. The
23 Utah solar industry employs more than -- as you have
24 already heard -- 4,400 Utahns and provides
25 \$350 million of economic impact to the state every

1 year. Utah needs to support jobs, technology, and
2 innovation, and not penalize people who want to be
3 innovative and self-reliant.

4 Rocky Mountain Power is a public
5 utility, and I emphasize the word public. Their
6 mission is not just to create profits for their
7 shareholders, although that is indeed part of their
8 mission. But their mission is also to serve the
9 public good and the public interest. We trusted
10 them in giving them this more or less monopolistic
11 position that they will serve the public good.
12 Encouraging solar energy is good for the public and
13 the planetary health, it's less wear and tear on
14 their infrastructure. If they embrace solar as they
15 should, they will not need to build as much new
16 infrastructure, and particularly that that burns
17 fossil fuels. So they need to embrace and encourage
18 solar energy because it is the future. Thank you so
19 much.

20 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: James Catano?
21 (No response). Natalie Little? (No response).
22 Robert Armstrong? Okay. After Mr. Armstrong will
23 be Claudia Norton, Nick Norton, then Matthew Larsen
24 and George Odell. Mr. Armstrong is number 148.

25 MR. ARMSTRONG: I just echo what a

1 lot of other people have said from this pulpit.
2 It's kind of confusing to me, baffling how, I guess,
3 you know, we couldn't have spent more investing in
4 this, you know, emerging technology to -- and I feel
5 like we wouldn't really be in this situation with
6 this complex problem to solve if that initial
7 investment had been made. But, I mean, since we are
8 here, I think that this problem belongs to all of
9 us. Being a complex problem, I just don't feel
10 like, you know, we should just apply one simple
11 solution that might have unintended consequences,
12 which I feel have been amply expressed by people
13 more articulate than I am.

14 So, I guess, I would like to just
15 second what everybody else seems to be saying here,
16 which is, I urge you to reject this proposal and
17 encourage Rocky Mountain Power to maybe come up with
18 a solution that is a little more collaborative. I'm
19 sure that if a lot of us in this room sat down and
20 had a face-to-face with, you know, the people that
21 make decisions at Rocky Mountain Power, we might
22 feel a little differently, you know, and less
23 hostility than we do right now. But, you know, the
24 other way is also true. I think maybe Rocky
25 Mountain Power should spend a little bit of time,

1 you know, understanding our needs. So that's all I
2 got. Thanks.

3 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.

4 Claudia Norton. Is Claudia Norton here? (No
5 response). Nick Norton? (No response). Matthew
6 Larsen? (No response). George Odell?
7 (No response). Brandon Bills? After Mr. Bills --
8 he's number 153 -- the next few names are Kyle
9 Mercer, Trevor Jones, and Robert Goodman. Mr.
10 Bills.

11 MR. BILLS: Thank you for your time,
12 and thank you for being here. My name is Brandon
13 Bills. I am an engineer, I have multiple
14 engineering degrees, and I have been in the solar
15 industry for 11 years. But, personally, I heard
16 about the rate changes in December like everyone
17 else, unfortunately, in the news instead of through
18 the appropriate channels, and as a surprise for
19 everyone, and immediately submitted my building
20 permits and net metering contracts to get solar put
21 on my home. Unfortunately, my homeowner's
22 association delayed in deliberating whether or not
23 we could have been it until this morning and,
24 luckily, they have agreed to let me put solar on my
25 house. So in a very personal way, your decision

1 does impact me, because I am one of those thousands
2 of other solar customers who are in limbo right now
3 not knowing whether or not these rate increase are
4 going to affect them, not knowing whether or not any
5 changes are going to impact them, or their worst
6 fear is that you would go back and retroactively
7 make changes in the future. So I urge you, no
8 matter what decision you make, to please be fair, to
9 set a future date in which any changes would be in
10 effect so that you don't make confusion, and you
11 don't make heartache and you don't make bad guys out
12 of people that really are wanting to make a
13 difference.

14 One thing that I urge you to
15 consider -- I've been in your place, in a sense,
16 I've been on city councils and on boards of
17 directors many times -- please do what you believe
18 is right for the people and the people that you
19 represent, and also consider the facts. Look at the
20 many hundreds of people that showed up to voice
21 their opinions on the inadequacies of the study that
22 was done, the bias, the confirmation bias that's
23 just inherent by having the power company perform
24 their own study and come up with their own
25 conclusions. And please take a second look at this

1 and make something that can be sustainable and
2 something that we can be proud of in the future.

3 I urge you to reject all the elements
4 of this proposed rate change and net metering
5 change, and, please, hopefully, look at it as a
6 broader issue. I do think that our grid, as a
7 whole, is undergoing changes and will continue to
8 undergo changes. More and more renewables are
9 inevitable. Whether or not we have to store that
10 energy in our home or whether or not we can work
11 together with Rocky Mountain Power, let's find a way
12 to make their business successful, as well as
13 continue to allow the solar industry to thrive. I
14 urge you to consider a general rate change. If they
15 really are having infrastructure problems or capital
16 problems, or they're having problems with their
17 bottom line, let's look at it as a whole. Let's
18 change the rate. Maybe charge everyone a general
19 \$15 connection fee to pay for infrastructure
20 upgrades to be able to do this. Why single out
21 solar users? That doesn't make sense to me. And I
22 will leave it at that. Thank you.

23 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. Kyle
24 Mercer, and after Mr. Mercer we have Trevor Jones,
25 Sara Cutler, Travis Johnson, Robert Goodman.

1 MR. MERCER: My name is Kyle Mercer.
2 I'm a certified public accountant, I'm a resident of
3 Salt Lake City, and I'm currently employed by a
4 Utah-based solar company.

5 In 1997, Harvard Business School
6 Professor Clayton M. Christensen, coined the phrase
7 "disruptive technology." By their very nature,
8 disruptive technologies represent innovations that
9 provide some substantial benefit to users or
10 consumers, yet, at the same time, challenge or
11 disrupt the existing system or structures.
12 Residential solar energy production is the
13 quintessential disruptive technology. Benefits to
14 consumers in terms of economic advantages and
15 environmental impact have made solar energy very
16 popular with Utahns. In most cases, the forces of a
17 free market will dictate how societies and
18 communities can best weather the disruption of old
19 systems and how new systems and structures will
20 evolve in effective and efficient ways. But when
21 dealing with a public utility, market forces are not
22 allowed to determine the course of events to flow to
23 their logical and inevitable conclusions. Proposals
24 such as the 15-minute true-up period or freezing the
25 export fees while allowing import fees to fluctuate

1 represent barriers to consumers adopting popular,
2 desirable, and beneficial technology.

3 The Division of Public Utilities
4 should not adopt net energy metering policies that
5 impede the adoption of economical,
6 environmentally-friendly technology in favor of
7 preserving the soon to be out-of-date status quo.
8 Thank you.

9 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.
10 Trevor Jones. Is Trevor Jones here? Okay. Then
11 after Mr. Jones, Sara Cutler, Travis Johnson, Robert
12 Goodman, and Kaven Leavitt.

13 MR. JONES: Commissioners LeVar,
14 Clark, and White, thank you for your time this
15 evening. My name is Trevor Jones. I recently
16 graduated from BYU, and I'm now working at Vector
17 Structural Engineering. We, at Vector, provide
18 solar installers with structural certification
19 letters both here in Utah and nationwide. So
20 basically whenever an installer needs to ensure or
21 certify that installing their solar panels doesn't
22 adversely affect the structure of the existing
23 building, they'll come to us.

24 We do business both here in Utah and
25 nationwide, although many of our best solar

1 customers do hail from Utah, but since we do
2 business nationally, I feel like we have a unique
3 perspective -- something of a birds-eye view -- on
4 the solar industry nationwide. We have seen from
5 our experience that states which incentivize solar
6 through tax breaks and low fees almost universally
7 see an across-the-board increase in solar
8 installations, which, in turn, leads to more great
9 jobs, more clean energy, you know, clean air,
10 everyone has been talking about it tonight and
11 they've expressed it very eloquently.

12 So what is actually kind of
13 surprising to us is that some of the best states by
14 solar adoption are not the sunbelt states you'd
15 expect to see, like Texas or Florida. We're seeing
16 a lot from New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts,
17 these states that incentivize this financially. On
18 the other hand, the ones that increase their fees,
19 you almost inevitably see an immediate and dramatic
20 decrease in solar installation. And the most
21 dramatic of that is Nevada, who recently passed a
22 rate increase similar to what Rocky Mountain Power
23 is proposing and saw new installs decline by over
24 90 percent, and we saw that firsthand at Vector.
25 And, in fact, Nevada has just repealed their rate

1 increase because they saw how terrible it was, but
2 it's coming back very slowly in Nevada.

3 So, in my view, this evening, you
4 really have the future of this fledgling solar
5 industry in the state in your hands. And as we
6 heard from statistics this evening, the solar
7 industry is something like ten times more efficient
8 at generating jobs and economic growth than through
9 traditional methods. And so you can either help
10 incubate this industry and help it live and grow and
11 flourish, or you can pass this rate increase and let
12 it die. This is how I see it, and I sincerely hope
13 that you will let it live and reject the proposed
14 rate increase this evening. Thank you very much for
15 your time.

16 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Sara Cutler.
17 (No response). Okay. Travis Johnston? (No
18 response). Robert Goodman? Okay. After Mr.
19 Goodman, we'll have Kaven Leavitt, Will Rogers,
20 Sally Patrick, and Jeremy King.

21 MR. GOODMAN: My name is Robert
22 Goodman. I work in accounting at the University of
23 Utah, and I'm a homeowner in Salt Lake City. I'm
24 against costly fees on solar because rooftop solar
25 is the fastest growing industry in the state.

1 Furthermore, I do not believe Rocky Mountain Power
2 has proven that rooftop solar customers burden other
3 ratepayers or the system with significant costs.

4 There are many problems with the
5 utility's claims, including: Rocky Mountain Power's
6 cost-of-service study dramatically overestimates the
7 cost of servicing rooftop solar customers while
8 underestimating the benefits solar provides to the
9 grid and other ratepayers. Almost 60 percent of the
10 costs in Rocky Mountain Power's study are actually
11 lost revenue for the utility rather than actual
12 engineering maintenance costs. It is not
13 appropriate that the utility seeks to force solar
14 customers to fill its shareholders' pockets.

15 Lastly, the utility has failed to
16 fully account many of the grid benefits which
17 rooftop solar provides, such as transmission
18 upgrades, deferred capital costs, and voided
19 environmental compliance costs. I hope the
20 Governor's Office and the Commission take a hard
21 look at the many detailed and thorough testimonies
22 which the solar industry and clean energy advocates
23 have filed.

24 Rooftop solar is not a cost for the
25 grid but a valuable resource and should be treated

1 as such. These studies will prove it. Thank you
2 for your time.

3 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.
4 Kaven Leavitt then after him Will Rogers, Sally
5 Patrick, and Jeremy King.

6 MR. LEAVITT: I'd like to thank you
7 guys for being here and, like I say, I agree with
8 everything everyone's saying. I've been reading
9 articles in the newspaper, and they don't give very
10 much detail about what's going on there, they just
11 kind of skip through stuff and it's kind of
12 confusing there. But, coming here, I have learned a
13 lot, that the report they're using to push this
14 thing through is basically flawed, really bad.

15 I've had solar at my house since
16 January, and it hasn't really been working there
17 because I have been having a problem with the
18 company about a modem thing, but they finally got it
19 fixed on the 26th of July, and it's been working
20 properly for the last two weeks. And I've used
21 probably three to five kilowatts in the evening when
22 the sun's gone, but when the sun is out, I produce
23 anywhere from 20 to 45 kilowatts that I put on to
24 the system. And I think that I should be paid for
25 these things instead of this credit, because some

1 other guy was saying they take the credits and they
2 wipe it clean every month. I'm producing
3 electricity for my neighbors and they're using it,
4 and Utah Power and Light is benefiting from that
5 power, not having to transmit it from some power
6 plant that's using coal, and it just doesn't seem
7 fair to me.

8 I agree with everything that everyone
9 says. I don't think they should get their rate
10 hike. I think that everything they're telling is
11 basically half-truths, and I'm just frustrated with
12 the whole system, the way they're treating us
13 because of the solar. When they come to my house to
14 see if I wanted to put it on, it was a no-brainer.
15 I mean, free electricity. So a lot of stuff that's
16 coming up now doesn't apply to me, because I'm on
17 the grandfather clause. But I agree with everyone
18 here tonight that basically said that they shouldn't
19 allow any of this to go. I think Utah Power and
20 Light ought to think the whole system over again and
21 come up with a better one that's fair for everyone,
22 not just fair for Utah Power and Light and their
23 greed. Thank you.

24 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Will Rogers, and
25 after Mr. Rogers, we'll have Sally Patrick and

1 Jeremy King.

2 MR. ROGERS: Gentlemen, thank you.

3 I'm Will Rogers. I want to start off with a little
4 background and biases. I've got a double major
5 engineering degree from mechanical engineering and
6 electrical and electronics engineering from Oregon
7 State University with an emphasis in power systems.
8 Biases recently moved to the state of Utah. We
9 closed on our house December 10, one day after the
10 possible sign-up date. We did end up putting a
11 solar system in anyway. We signed our agreement in
12 January and the system went live in May.

13 I'm not going to beat the dead horse
14 of the negative externalities that we've already
15 discussed, but I believe that's something that the
16 Commission should consider in further studies on the
17 subject. Negative externalities, of course, being
18 whether it's a cost to the producer and the user is
19 a perk. There is no cost to the producers or the
20 users, but everybody in general ends up paying.
21 It's something very hard to quantify, but it is
22 capable of being measured.

23 Others have also touched on the
24 efficiency of using a distributed grid when you are,
25 for example, if my house is producing power, it

1 takes a lot less overall energy due to losses in
2 transmission lines to go from my house to my
3 neighbor's house to power their air conditioning
4 during the peak summer months. So we'll leave those
5 as what everybody else has said.

6 One thing I haven't really heard
7 tonight is -- I would like to see more emphasis on
8 smart-grid technology. We have the ability now --
9 many houses have Nests and other smart thermostats.
10 One of the technical challenges that comes with
11 solar power is that we don't have any effective
12 storage technology for it. Batteries, fuel cells,
13 they're all very expensive at the time. For a
14 minimum of software cost, it would be possible to
15 integrate smart thermostats in with the internet,
16 and we could see there's a spike of power over here,
17 we need to deal with it. Turn on those
18 air-conditioning units. Let's burn off some of that
19 power. It's going to cool it down, it's going to
20 prevent peak usage later on because the house will
21 already be cool when somebody gets home.

22 We don't want to have all of our eggs
23 in one basket, though. Right now we don't have the
24 technological capability of storage, so we couldn't
25 have 100 percent solar energy. My house still gets

1 power from coal at night, and that's the reality
2 we're living in right now.

3 So what I would recommend is -- the
4 complex solution I recommend is that the Public
5 Service Commission set a goal for power generation
6 in the state, we'll say 20 percent, for example.
7 When they start to approach that goal, like,
8 19 percent, they'll say okay, we're going to start a
9 new net metering agreement. I'm guessing that
10 that's going to be a couple of years from now. With
11 that being the case, we can say if anybody also adds
12 energy storage to their system of a significant
13 size, they can stay on the old net metering
14 agreement. So that gives a certain amount of
15 incentive to new technology development and the
16 planned scales as more people come online.

17 The simple solution, if that's just
18 too complex to implement, is start to phase it out
19 with the tax credits as they happen. So the state
20 tax credit for Utah ends completely in 2021, the
21 federal tax credit ends in 2022. You can just
22 reevaluate where we are as a state with our solar
23 generation goals at that time and see if this is a
24 policy that needs to be modified. Thank you for
25 your time.

1 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.

2 Sally Patrick. Is Sally Patrick here? (No
3 response). Is Jeremy King here? Mr. King.

4 MR. KING: Good evening,
5 Commissioners. My name is Jeremy King. I'm an
6 architect, I live in Salt Lake City, and I'm a
7 prospective rooftop solar owner.

8 I'd like to register my strong
9 opposition to the attempt by Rocky Mountain Power to
10 apply punitive fees on customers with solar panels.
11 The Public Service Commission should not approve
12 this as it unfairly penalizes rooftop solar
13 customers. I have always disliked using or
14 consuming dirty coal-generated electricity, and for
15 many years, I've been a participant in the Blue Sky
16 Renewable Program and now am finally able to
17 potentially generate clean energy from a rooftop
18 system. I feel this is an action that should not be
19 penalized.

20 The argument Rocky Mountain Power
21 uses to try to justify their request is false. In
22 fact, if anything, more rooftop solar means less
23 investment needed in power plant infrastructure.
24 The other benefits, of course, Rocky Mountain Power
25 gains from net metering partnership with solar

1 rooftop customers is that transmission upgrades
2 become less necessary. The other thing is there are
3 environmental compliance costs that potentially
4 affect the company in the future, or right now and
5 in the future, and they start to avoid those as
6 well, so those are benefits to them.

7 It's difficult not to see this as a
8 blatant attempt to purposely destroy the solar
9 industry in Utah. Attempts to suppress innovation
10 go against the need to keep Utah's economy growing.
11 It must be remembered that Rocky Mountain Power is a
12 monopoly utility and should not be allowed to
13 unilaterally get away with tactics designed
14 specifically to squash potential opposition. I find
15 this to be un-American by nature.

16 Rocky Mountain Power has a
17 responsibility to be receptive to new, innovative
18 technology as we move towards a clean energy future.
19 In stark contrast to burning coal, solar generated
20 electricity is clean power. Rooftop solar is not a
21 cost for the grid, but a valuable resource, and
22 should be treated as such. The proposal to reduce
23 the value of solar energy exported to the grid by a
24 staggering 64 percent is also ludicrous as Rocky
25 Mountain Power would just resell that solar

1 generated electricity at their own rates. Why can't
2 we see a rate structure that more fairly takes into
3 account the long-term benefits of clean power
4 generation rather than trying to vilify it? Is
5 Rocky Mountain Power ultimately going to accept the
6 concept of paying compensation to people who are
7 adversely affected by coal-generated air pollution?
8 That would only be fair, right? I hope to be a
9 proud owner of a solar system for clean energy
10 generation and not a frustrated customer to be
11 penalized over and over again for doing the right
12 thing.

13 Please say no to this rate increase
14 for solar customers. Thank you for this
15 opportunity.

16 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you.
17 Looks to me like we have concluded our business
18 tonight. I just want to say thank you to everyone
19 who participated in this hearing and who
20 participated in this process. I also want to say
21 thanks to the personnel from the Public Service
22 Commission who have enabled us to keep this hearing
23 going and for the parties who have stuck with us.
24 There's not as many people at the table as there
25 were at the beginning. Do we have one more

1 individual? What's your name?

2 MS. LITTLE: Natalie Little. I was
3 number 147. Thank you very much for your time. My
4 name is Natalie Little. I'm in Ogden, Utah. My
5 background is in civil engineering, and I now work
6 in climate policy and program development. And I
7 just think time is of the essence now for this, and
8 I would request that you're as proactive as you can
9 be in policy development and rate structuring for
10 faster implementation of clean tech energy such as
11 solar.

12 I want to state that in 1994, I
13 started my engineering degree at Arizona State
14 University, and for the first semester as first-year
15 engineering students, we studied renewable energy.
16 We designed solar and wind technology projects way
17 back then, 33 years ago. In 1992, when I was kind
18 of getting into starting my career, there was a
19 senior manager I worked for, and that lady, she
20 installed solar on her house. It cost \$30,000. I
21 didn't understand it at the time, but she said it's
22 just something I want to do. In 2014, we finally
23 got around to installing solar on our house. It was
24 \$18,000.

25 And, if you think about cell phone

1 technology, in the late '90s, I had access to a cell
2 phone. It was this big box phone, and now we all
3 have these smartphones we carry around in our
4 pockets. So technology develops so rapidly, yet, we
5 have solar and we're still treating it like some new
6 technology, and we just have not let it explode like
7 cell phone technology. So I would just really
8 encourage you to develop win-win situations, to
9 encourage individuals and businesses to work
10 together, to really be proactive to protect our
11 environment for our well-being. Thank you for
12 squeezing me in.

13 COMMISSIONER LEVAR: Thank you. I
14 think that does conclude our business, so we are
15 adjourned. Thank you.

16 (The proceedings concluded at 8:45 p.m.)
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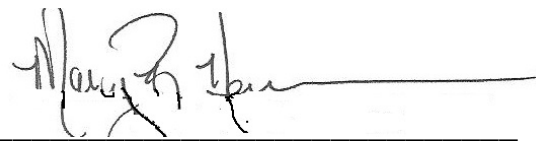
REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

STATE OF UTAH)
COUNTY OF SUMMIT)

I, Mary R. Honigman, a Registered
Professional Reporter, hereby certify:

THAT the foregoing proceedings were taken
before me at the time and place set forth in the caption
hereof; that the witness was placed under oath to tell the
truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; that the
proceedings were taken down by me in shorthand and
thereafter my notes were transcribed through computer-aided
transcription; and the foregoing transcript constitutes a
full, true, and accurate record of such testimony adduced
and oral proceedings had, and of the whole thereof.

I have subscribed my name on this 19th day of
August, 2017.



Mary R. Honigman
Registered Professional Reporter

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