

Diane Holt

From: bevandmike@q.com
Sent: Wednesday, August 16, 2017 8:13 PM
To: Beverly Barker; Diane Holt; Matthew Evans
Subject: Case Comment Form: Mike Sheeley

Name: Mike Sheeley
Case Number: IPC-E-17-13
Email: bevandmike@q.com
Telephone: 2083426890
Address: 4119 W. Quail Ridge Drive
Boise Idaho, 83703

Name of Utility Company: Idaho Power
Comment: Commissioners of the IPUC,

I recently became aware of the petition filed by Idaho Power regarding on-site generators. I am writing this because the changes requested by Idaho Power are 1) unnecessary 2) punitive to alternative energy generators, and 3) create a chilling effect on future alternative energy production. Accordingly, I respectfully request that the IPUC deny Idaho Power's request.

A little background might provide some perspective on our position.

My wife and I had a solar project installed at our home in Boise and began net metering in June of 2014. We purchased our system from a local installer. Our system consisted of thirty (30) 250 watt panels for a total of 7.5 kilowatts. To date, our system has produced 35.8 megawatts of electricity and, in so doing, has offset 24.7 tons of carbon emissions. We purchased our system in contemplation of participating in Idaho Power's net metering program and, of equal importance, to do what we could to mitigate further contributing to the climate change crisis (we also own an electric vehicle).

In spite of its "green" posturing, Idaho Power has a marked antipathy against alternative energy (why would Idaho Power go to this trouble and expense regarding such a small group of customers whose numbers and energy production are so statistically insignificant). Idaho Power's business model is built upon traditional forms of energy generation and spinning the customer's meter forward. What Idaho Power is currently attempting to do follows a well documented course of conduct that has been played out by public utilities in other states. Hiroko Tabuchi writing in the New York Times On July 9, 2017 ("After Rapid Growth, Rooftop Solar Programs Dim Under Pressure From Utility Lobbyists") succinctly described the utility companies' fear of falling into a "utility death spiral . . . as more consumers switched to rooftop solar and bought less electricity from the grid ... the costs of running conventional coal, oil, gas or nuclear power plants would be shared among an ever-smaller customer base. That could cause rates to spike, chasing even more customers away." Idaho Power, like other utilities before it, are fighting back with anti-solar campaigns that portray solar homeowners as mooching free riders who avoid paying their fair share for the grid and thereby raise electricity prices for everyone else (see the guest opinion of Adam Richins, an Idaho Power VP, in a recent Idaho Statesman).

This demonizing of alternative energy producers represents not only a classic case of "smoke and mirrors" but is also patently false. Please consider the following:

- Neither Idaho Power nor its customers paid a cent of the cost of our solar panels. If Idaho Power were required to purchase energy generation equipment, the ratepayers would absorb its cost.

- Less energy is lost in transmission from a home solar system because the power is used where it is generated.
- Solar energy production uses no fuel and provides a hedge for Idaho Power against future fuel price increases.
- = Home solar could allow Idaho Power to meet renewable energy and greenhouse gas emission goals without paying for utility-scale projects.
- A recent study conducted in Arizona found that for every dollar of solar cost to the utility (primarily from net metering), the state's solar homeowners provided \$1.54 in long-term benefits (a solar subsidy to other ratepayers of \$34 million a year ("Throwing Shade," Edward Humes, Sierra Magazine, May/June 2014).

As you, the Commissioners of the IPUC, consider this matter I sincerely hope you remain cognizant of the fact that Idaho Power's coal fired plants are spewing huge quantities of carbon dioxide and other lethal chemicals into the air. As reported in the Idaho Statesman on February 5, 2017, the financial advisory firm, Lazard, recently determined that the average lifetime cost for utility-scale wind and solar generation is now cheaper in the U.S. and comparable to natural gas when costs were compared without including federal tax subsidies. Idaho Power needs to discontinue its petty attempts to curtail alternative energy production and think globally in terms of doing everything it can to combat global warming and its effects (many of which are being felt in Idaho).

Respectively submitted.

Mike Sheeley

Unique Identifier: 75.174.118.131