

Idaho Public Utilities Commission

January 8, 2020

Re CASE NO IPC-E-18-15, ORDER NO. 34509

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IDAHO PUBLIC  
UTILITIES COMMISSION

Dear members of the Idaho Public Utilities Commission,

We would like to **thank you** for your recent actions in regards to home solar power producers (net metering program).

Firstly, for Grandfathering existing solar power producing (net metering) customers in under the rules already in place. Our anxieties are greatly relieved in regards to that as we have made a substantial investment into solar energy we did not want to basically loose it.

Secondly, we thank you for rejecting the proposed settlement agreement as written. We were not pleased with it and made several comments to this effect at the hearing in Boise.

Thirdly, we support your order to Idaho Power that they must prepare and file a credible and fair study on the costs and benefits of distributed on-site generation to the company's system, and to prepare this study in a format that customers can read and understand. This is very important since the power companies have the data. Based on their hourly metering program and current technology related to algorithms they can no doubt tell when we are taking a shower, out of town on vacation, and any number of things. They should be able to credibly support their requests with data and logical rational.

This is the second time that we have traveled some distance to speak in person (directly) to the Idaho Public Utilities Commission at a hearing about an unreasonable, ie, not backed up by studies or data request by Idaho Power to hugely increase our costs as home solar power producers. First, they wanted to drastically increase our monthly service charges in 2018 so we went to Pocatello and testified that we did not think their proposed service charges were reasonable or justified. When that did not work for them, they came back around more recently with this latest push. This time to greatly reduce the pay back in terms of credits on the power we produce so we came up to Boise and testified this past December against their plans once more. It really does seem like Idaho Power is just trying to get away with pulling numbers out of a hat or perhaps thin air.

This is just our feelings as we do not have the data or access to internal company emails but our feelings are that this is not an attempt to make the playing field more level between different groups of customers as the utility claims but what looks to us like a blatant attempt to destroy home solar power production program (net metering) by making it a real money loser for the customers involved.

Sincerely:

Michael McBride and Melody Asher

*Michael McBride & Melody Asher*

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IDAHO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
11331 W. Chinden Blvd., Bldg. 8, Suite 201-A  
Boise, ID 83714

Re: 2019 Idaho Power proposal submitted to IPUC dealing with  
proposed changes to compensation structure for on-site generation

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am aware of your recent decision regarding the above-noted subject, as released to the public through news media. However, in follow-up, I want to submit this letter in objection to Idaho Power's proposal. It may be used as you desire and filed with your records in opposition to Idaho Power's proposals, now or in the future. I hope it will provide balance as you look at the subject at a future time in your continuing mandate to serve Idaho citizens.

My husband and I received an October 23, 2019 letter from Idaho Power explaining that they had submitted a "settlement agreement" to the IPUC with regard to compensation for on-site generation. The letter began with the salutation "Dear Valued Customer." As I read the letter I came to the conclusion that the primary "value" we have as customers was going to be calculated in the form of what we could produce for Idaho Power.

Currently, it seems, energy exported by generators to Idaho Power's system is measured on a monthly net process and compensated at a full retail rate to the generating party. I assume Idaho Power may, in its operating practices, use that power to serve customers or sell on the open market. If I have made any error in my last assumption, I do apologize. That kwh-for-kwh level of compensation seems to be fair for a marketable commodity. What would not be fair, in my opinion, is to pay on-site generators less than the retail rate for a commodity produced by a party who has made considerable capital investment to achieve their generating potential, most of which will be used on site. If Idaho Power were to purchase energy on the open market, I assume they would expect to pay full price at the current market rate. Why then should a small generator expect to be treated differently in a business transaction?

My husband and I had solar panels installed on our home in the falls of 2019, joining the growing ranks of consumers hoping to become energy self-sufficient, increase home value, and be "friendly" to the environment in doing so. It was shortly after our system was installed that we received the 10/23/19 letter from Idaho Power. You can imagine our dismay!

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Quoting from Idaho Power's 10/23/19 letter to us: "Accurate pricing for customer generation will lead to a more equitable and sustainable service offering into the future." (Underlining added for purposes of comment which follows.)

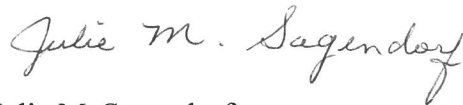
In my opinion, anything less than a kwh-for-kwh level of compensation to on-site generators for a valuable commodity is not equitable to homeowners who have made substantial investment into capital improvements needed to produce the commodity.

I have noted broadcast advertising on Idaho Power's behalf indicating its goal to be "green friendly" and produce environmentally sustainable energy by the year 2050. (That is a paraphrase of advertising as I recall it.) I applaud efforts to accomplish that goal.

In the meantime, "a small but growing segment of our [Idaho Power's] more than 560,000 customers, ... using their own generation," are doing their part to achieve such a goal! (Quoted portion is a phrase from 10/23/19 Idaho Power letter to "Dear Valued Customer.") I believe fairness and equity would be served to acknowledge their contributions which go toward achieving Idaho Power's advertised goal! Acknowledging that contribution should include equitable compensation.

Thank you for consideration of this matter. I do not claim any professional expertise in power generation, distribution, marketing, law, or large business practice. My thoughts are presented as an interested consumer who desires to express my personal opinion from a practical, common sense vantage point.

Very truly yours,



Julie M. Sagendorf

cc: Idaho Power  
P.O. Box 70  
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jms