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To: [LARA-MPSC-EDOCKETS](#)
Subject: Statewide Energy Assessment, Case No. U-20464.
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Gov. Whitmer has called for evaluation by the Michigan Public Service Commission of the power grid. The reason for the evaluation was the failure of the power grid after the polar vortex of 2019 coupled with a failed Natural Gas substation. These events caused the governor to institute emergency measures to stabilize the grid. The Michigan Public Service Commission has asked for the public input to help prevent similar events in the future. This is Statewide Energy Assessment, [Case No. U-20464](#).

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) stated that climate change is real and affecting our weather now. July, 2019 was the hottest month on record. The last 5 years have been the hottest 5 year period on record. Extreme weather events such as Polar Vortex 2019 and extreme heat waves in the summer will become much more common. Only last month a windstorm caused the power outage for over 600,000 people in the DTE service area. Unless climate change is addressed citizens of Michigan will face increased frequency of extreme weather events.

Extreme weather events are not the only problem. The grid is not robust. I drive an electric vehicle. In the summer when air-conditioners are being used in my neighborhood I cannot charge my car. The Level 2 charger will trip the circuit breaker every time. I usually can charge my EV in the morning between the hours of 5 am and 7 am. However, if the future brings more heat waves and electric vehicles, the grid will not hold up. So extreme weather events, high wind events, and adoption of electric vehicles will cause significant power outages for the citizens of Michigan.

I think that this is due to the electrical system built on a model that Thomas Edison developed. This model features large centralized power generation and long distribution lines. This model is maxed out and it's time to move to a more modern grid.

To avoid the worse effects of a changing climate, the IPCC states that we need to be off coal by 2030 and carbon neutral by 2050. Both Consumers Energy and Detroit Edison have submitted Institutional Resource Plans. Neither DTE nor CE plans meet the IPCC goals. For example the Monroe Power Plant will not be closed until 2040. This proposed closure date is too late to hold off climate change.

In addition to the carbon load from burning coal, the Monroe plant is heavily polluting. The Clean Air Task Force 2010 attributes an excess mortality of 280 deaths per year and 4,400 asthma attacks per year to the burning of coal at Monroe. The extra 10 years of the power plant operation yields an extra 2,800 premature deaths and 44,000 asthma attacks. This is a huge negative impact for the citizens of Michigan.

Why would DTE continue to utilize the Monroe Plant? The facility undertook significant upgrades and maintenance in late 2007 and 2008. Therefore, DTE has years of depreciation on this plant. Until DTE can find other ways to recapture this cost they will continue to operate the plant.

DTE Energy is building a large Natural Gas Power Plant in St Mary's. This generator will feed into the current grid model of centralized power production. Gerald M Anderson, the president of DTE Energy said the costs are similar for NG and wind energy, both about 4.5 cents per kilowatt hour. Wind would fit the IPCC goal more than NG. So why would DTE choose to build billion-dollar high-risk natural gas part rather than building out wind or solar energy?

DTE, in partnership with Enbridge own a NG pipeline bringing NG from Pennsylvania to Michigan. So DTE makes more money burning NG than developing Wind. The citizens of Michigan will bear the cost of this plant even if it is not utilized for its full 50 year life expectancy.

Both DTE Energy and Consumer Energy are investor owned power companies. They will work to maximize profits under the current rules and maintain their monopoly in electricity production. That means keeping the current outdated grid model. If the PSC wants to decrease the outages experienced by citizens of Michigan they need to change the rules that DTE and CE work under, such as;

Implement rules so the power companies can monetize and are required to develop energy efficiency programs and demand response.

Implement rules so the power companies can recoup the money tied up with depreciation of coal facilities. These plants can then be closed and the resources invested in Renewable Energy. This may require legislative action but please read 'Colorado Energy Impact Assistance Act' introduced by state representative Chris Hansen.

Implement rules to favor the development of a modular grid which would be more robust than the current central grid model.

Implement rules to encourage development of transmission lines to stabilize intermittent RE.

Implement rules that allow small energy producers or community solar projects to participate in the energy market.

In the United State there are about 150 members of Public Service Commissions. PSC members have incredible power over the energy grid and how people live their lives. I would ask the Michigan PSC to implement rules that focus on bettering the live of citizens in Michigan now and in the future.

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