

December 9, 2015

BY HAND DELIVERY AND ELECTRONIC MAIL

Luly E. Massaro, Commission Clerk Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission 89 Jefferson Boulevard Warwick, RI 02888

RE: Docket 4580 – The Narragansett Electric Company, d/b/a National Grid 2016 Energy Efficiency Program Plan Response to TEC-RI Comments

Dear Ms. Massaro:

On behalf of National Grid, I am submitting this letter in response to public comments made by Mr. Douglas Gablinske on behalf of TEC-RI at the hearing in the above-referenced matter on December 2, 2015 (Hearing). This letter addresses both the oral and written comments TEC-RI submitted during public comment.

National Grid recognizes that TEC-RI was not a party in this proceeding and that public comments are not treated as evidence in PUC proceedings. However, given the nature of TEC-RI's comments and questions the Company received regarding these comments, the Company would like to address a few of the significant inaccurate statements in TEC-RI's public comments, though there may be others in the material presented by Mr. Gablinske.

The Company will continue to work with TEC-RI and all settling parties through the Collaborative in order to create value for Rhode Island customers through energy efficiency.

1. Energy Efficiency Program Charge

- On page 1 and 5 of the letter TEC-RI submitted as public comment (*see* Attachment 1), they state that it is deceptive for the annual charge to be higher than the 2015-2017 Energy Efficiency and System Reliability Procurement Plan (3 Year Plan) and recommend holding the energy efficiency (EE) program charge to the 3 Year Plan illustration for 2016. This approach is contrary to the intent of the 3 Year Plan, which was approved by the PUC. Specifically:
 - o In Docket 4522, National Grid stated that the 3 Year Plan serves as guidance for development of annual plans. Specifically, the Company states in the cover letter of the 3 Year Plan filing, "PUC approval of this Plan will provide essential guidance for development of the Company's annual EE Program Plans and SRP Reports. These annual filings will be based on the latest information about

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equipment performance, funding sources, and market conditions available at the time of the filing. Therefore, it is possible that there will be variations from the Plan submitted in this instant filing." *See* Cover Letter to 2015-2017 Energy Efficiency and System Reliability Procurement Plan, Docket 4522 at p. 2.

- o In Order No. 21781, the PUC noted that "the annual Energy Efficiency Program Plan, filed on November 1, may contain budgets and EEP charges that vary from those contained in the 3-year plan." *See* Order PUC Order No. 21781 at p. 2.
- On page 7 of the slides TEC-RI submitted at the hearing (*see* Attachment 2), TEC-RI notes that the "EE charge is now the largest segment of distribution cost (28% of total distribution charge." However, the EE charge is not part of the distribution charge. Rather, it is listed separately as the "Energy Efficiency Program Charge" on customer bills for all rate groups. Characterizing the EE charge as the largest part of the distribution charge presents misleading information on the magnitude of the EE charge relative to the entire cost of electricity.
- On page 5 of the slides (Attachment 2) and Figure 3 of TEC-RI's written letter (Attachment 1), the graph inaccurately portrays the energy efficiency program charge. Specifically:
 - o The EE Price, which the Company assumes means the EE Program Charge for 2016 in this context, is not slightly over \$0.10, as this graph shows. Instead, the proposed 2016 EE Program Charge is \$0.01077.

2. Misstatements about the Collaborative Group and process

- During its public comments, TEC-RI suggested that it did not have a voice in the collaborative process. That is a mischaracterization. Specifically:
 - Two representatives from TEC-RI attended most of the Collaborative meetings in 2015.
 - Collaborative members listened at meetings and received written comments from TEC-RI's representatives during the development of the 2016 EE Plan. National Grid responded to comments in writing from TEC-RI and other parties.
 - In an effort to collaborate, the Company responded to TEC-RI's concerns about costs by creating an EE plan that decreased costs by relying on lower cost measures. This resulted in fewer lifetime savings than could otherwise be achieved.
 - TEC-RI did not produce alternative proposals that settlement parties could agree to.

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- During public comments, TEC-RI stated it is not mentioned in the Plan. That is incorrect. Specifically:
 - Footnote 1, page 1, of the 2016 Plan identifies TEC-RI's participation in the Collaborative even though it did not participate in the Settlement.

3. Cost Drivers

- Slide 4 of the TEC-RI presentation says "B/C ratio is going downward causing high EE charge." This is incorrect.
 - o There is no relationship between the benefit cost ratio and the energy efficiency charge. At the hearing, the Company explained the reasons for the decrease in benefits as well as the reasons for the increase in the electric efficiency charge, and they are not related. Additionally, the gas energy efficiency charge proposed for 2016 will be 24% lower for commercial customers, again indicating that there is no relationship between the B/C ratio and increases in energy efficiency charge.

4. Utility regulation

- TEC-RI noted that it "knew of no other business" that operated with the ability to reconcile under recovery of costs.
 - o National Grid is a regulated business and, with that, comes the ability to reconcile over or under collections of costs. In fact, in slide 6 (Column titled, "Increase by Decoupling (\$/Year) (Attachment 2), TEC-RI acknowledges that National Grid operates under decoupling provisions for distribution revenue. Notably, several other utilities across the country operate under decoupling provisions.

As noted above, the Company will continue to work with TEC-RI and all settling parties through the Collaborative in order to create value for Rhode Island customers through energy efficiency. Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please contact me at 781-907-2121.

Very truly yours,

Raquel J. Webster

Enclosures

cc: Docket 4580 Service List Karen Lyons, Esq. Jon Hagopian, Esq. Steve Scialabba, Division



December 2, 2015 RI Public Utilities Commission

RE: Docket 4580

PUC Commissioners;

TEC-RI would like to take this opportunity to officially voice its opposition to the 2016 Energy Efficiency Plan as submitted by National Grid(NG), Docket 4580. This objection is specifically related to the increase in the energy efficiency charge (EE charge \$/kWh). TEC-RI also brings to the Commissions attention that the increased charge is not in compliance with the 2015-2017 overall plan. We strongly urge the Commission to reject the proposed plan an order adherence to the original EE charge in three year plan.

Table 1. 2015-17 Three Year Plan Summary

Electric Programs		2015		2016		2017
Savings and Benefits						
Annual MWh Savings		193,603	197,475		201.34	
Lifetime MWh Savings		1,956,845		2,064,074		2,164,927
Savings as a Percent of 2012 sales		2.50%		2.55%		2.60%
Annual Peak kW Savings		31.447	32,209		2,209 32	
Winter Peak kW Savings		33.700		34,871		36,121
Total Benefits	\$	282.875.002	\$	303,660,783	\$	316,528,156
Costs						
Total Spending*	S	86,741,232	\$	86,052,775	5	90,867.248
TRC Cents per lifetime kWh	\$	0.055	\$	0.052	\$	0.053
Utility Cost per lifetime kWh	S	0.043	\$	0.041	\$	0.041
EE Program Charge per kWh**	\$	0.00966	S	0.00997	\$	0.00941
Benefit Cost Ratio		2.61		2.82		2.76
Participants		TBD		TBD		TBD

Table 2: Comparison 2016 plan vs 3 year plan

	2016 3 year plan	2016 Plan
Benefit Cost Ratio	2.82	1.77
TRC perkWh	\$0.052	\$0.061
EE Program Charge per kWh	\$0.00997	\$0.01077

Decreasing benefit cost ratio (B/C ratio) and increasing cost is creating an indefinite price spiral increase of the energy efficiency charge to the ratepayers year after year, which is now becoming extremely burdensome to the large user (Figure 1,2,3). It is time to consider capping this charge. The 2016 plan can cause an increase in the energy efficiency charge of up to 22% compared to 2015 price because of the increase of energy efficiency charge and compounded by the effect of "decoupling" as shown in Table 3.

Figure 1 EE Price (\$/kWh) vs. Saved MWh

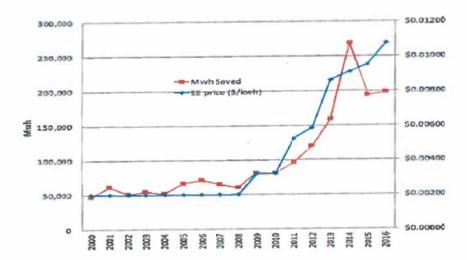
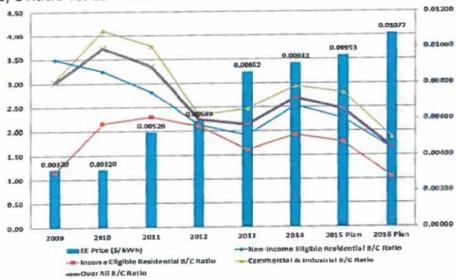


Figure 2 B/C Ratio vs. EE Price



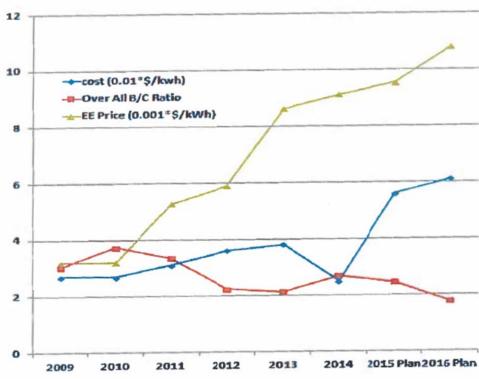


Figure 3: EE Price, Cost, B/C Ratio Trend

Table 3: Price impact including "Decoupling" affect

Current EE charge (\$/year)	New EE Charge (\$/year)	Plan(\$/year)	Increase by Decoupling (\$/Year)	Total Estimated Increase (\$/year)
95,300	107,700	12,400	8,750	21,150
	161,550	18,600	13,125	31,725
190,600	215,400	24,800	17,500	42,300
	(\$/year) 95,300 142,950	(\$/year) (\$/year) 95,300 107,700 142,950 161,550	(\$/year) (\$/year) Plan(\$/year) 95,300 107,700 12,400 142,950 161,550 18,600	(\$/year) (\$/year) Plan(\$/year) Decoupling (\$/Year) 95,300 107,700 12,400 8,750 142,950 161,550 18,600 13,125

This EE charge has now become biggest element in the total distribution charge which was shown in table 4. This table is showing typical calculation for 2.5MW customer with a G-32 rate. The energy efficiency charge is now higher than the "distribution energy charge" and also higher than the "transmission charge". With this proposed increase the EE charge will be 28% of the total distribution charge.

And this biggest element was discussed and decided at EERMC which is totally separate process than PUC approval of transmission and distribution charge.

We are also concerned that we will not keep original 2017 price in three year plan which was supposed to be lower than 2016 price if this trend of cost increases continues.

Table 4: Sample calculation for G32 customer

G-32			2,500	kW
			19,710,000	kWh/y
Customer Charge	825.00	\$/Month	9,900	\$/Year
Distribution Charge				
Demand in excess 200kw	4.10	\$/kW	113,160	\$/Year
Distribution Energy Charge	0.759	c/kWh	149,599	\$/Year
Renewable Energy Distribution Charge	0.232	c/kWh	45,727	\$/Year
RE Growth Charge	17.78	\$/Month	213	\$/Year
Transmossion Charge				\$/Year
Demand	3.40	\$/kW	102,000	\$/Year
Transmission Energy Charge	0.93	c/kWh	183,303	\$/Year
Transition Charge (Credit)	-0.201	c/kWh	(39,617)	\$/Year
LIHEAP Charge	0.73	\$/Month	8.76	\$/Year
Energy Efficiency Program	1.107	c/kWh	218,190	\$/Year
(include renewable charge)		,	(28%)	
Total			782,484	\$/Year

The plan, which is developed by National Grid, with input from a group of stakeholders, worked collaboratively to reach proposed objectives, plans and goals for energy efficiency. In reality, with the exception of the DPU it is largely made up of a select group, who are basically interested in goals that are compatible with their own organizations, with little regard for the ratepayers interests.

TEC-RI has typically participated in this collaborative process. Our goal is to share with the other collaborative members, the perspective of large industrial, institutional and business concerns regarding the goals, objectives and the

The Narragansett Electric Company d/b/a National Grid RIPUC Docket No. 4580 Attachment 1 Page 5 of 8

repercussions of those decisions on the interests of our ratepayers and really, all ratepayers. TEC-RI feels that a more balanced group with someone representing business and institutional ratepayers, would provide more balance.

We ask the PUC to weigh in on the make-up of the collaborative, in an effort to require National Grid to ensure that all sectors are represented. There is no question that there are very good contributors on the collaborative, but the ratepayers interest are far outweighed by the special interests at the table.

During the past 7 years, the electrical energy efficiency charge has gone up significantly using the convenient justification of law to back up saved kWh. These increases are becoming unsustainable and while the increases have slowed in the past two years, it continues to creep upward.

The 2015-2017 plan called for set increase, yet the NG Collaborative and EERMC endorsement approved a higher amount. Why have a plan if it doesn't matter what it costs, actual charges will be higher, which is a deceptive practice. National Grid's explanation blamed this increase purely on the creation of the newly created Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank (RIIB) and to "reconcile for lower than expected electricity sales".

Both of these defenses are misguided. First off, there is "always unexpected costs" in personal, government and business budgets. The answer is not to "just increase the budget", but to make other cuts in the budget to balance expenses. The Energy Efficiency account was "raided" in the amount of \$ 2million to seed the RIIB, yet the Water Resource Board, the precursor to the RIIB, had a \$10 million dollar balance in their account. Taking from Peter to pay Paul....most certainly, but in this case, Peter is the ratepayer. The ratepayer who lives in the 3rd floor cold water flat, to the businesses that are trying to make it in RI, against long odds and employ the people who live here.

The second National Grid defense of the EE charge increase is even more disturbing and goes to the heart of our "rate creep" assertion. "To reconcile for

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lower than expected electricity sales", the EE rate was increased. Our members are not made whole when their sales numbers decrease and neither should this fund.

So we guess what that means, is to the degree that the program is successful and to the degree that electricity sales decrease, is a guarantee that the EE charge will continue to increase? Commissioners of the PUC, these rate increases for the EE charge, on top of the commodity increase charge, on top of the distribution charge, on top of the forward capacity increases charge is absolutely unsustainable for the 3rd floor cold water flat ratepayer and for businesses in the State of Rhode Island. Once the Deepwater project comes on line, in conjunction with all these other increases, it could be possible that Rhode Island will go from the 4th highest electricity rate in the lower 48 to #1. This situation certainly won't keep or attract business here in RI or help employ our people. Also, when we talk about highest electricity price, the blame is pointed to the commodity cost, however, we need to be reminded that the distribution fee including the energy efficiency charge is one of the highest in the country.

Rhode Island businesses, as demonstrated by survey after survey and poll after poll, continue to show we are not competitive and consistently rank at the bottom for doing business here in Rhode Island. These continuing cost increases will surely cement us in last place of all polls and surveys. The consequences will far outweigh the benefit.

We fully understand that we are trying to achieve the energy efficiency goals of the three year plan which PUC approved in 2014, however it should not be at all costs!

The ratepayer and taxpayer are tired of the price of electricity going up and taxes going up. The Governor and General Assembly have made great strides over the past few years in limiting tax increases and decreasing budgets....doing more with less. This should become our motto.

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The Governor proposed and the General Assembly passed legislation in the 2015 session, to remove the sales tax on energy costs. Yet, the collaborative stands ready to increase the EE fee just a few months later. It certainly is a mixed message to ratepayers. Or perhaps because the energy bill is so hard for the average ratepayer to understand, the ratepayer does not know what is going on.

The politicians returned dollars back to the people, and that was good, but the bureaucrats are now taking it away...just a few months later?

We fully agree that the promotion of energy efficiency programs is a laudable goal, and that every measure of energy that is saved, saves that same amount year, after year. The programs are important and we support our members' energy efficiency practices and encourage those policies. However, we need to focus on ways to achieve this goal without price increases.

Perhaps we have hit a plateau in ratepayers enacting energy efficiency measures? After all, these efforts have been going on now for almost 40 years. Perhaps the goals are now too lofty and if so, we need to recognize that and adjust accordingly not just keep raising the EE charge....year, after year, after year. The State of Rhode Island has not raised broad based taxes in almost 10 years. Before 2008, there was a cap on the EE charge. We think that time has come again.

Another fact that we need to seriously take into consideration is that we cannot see any effective reduction in actual usage shown in Figure 4. Actual usage increased by 8% since 2000. NG data is saying that there was 22% saving accumulated since 2000. It is hard to believe that there was 30% growth in usage while recent news is saying that RI has 2.2% population increase in past 10 years, which is 2nd worst in the country.

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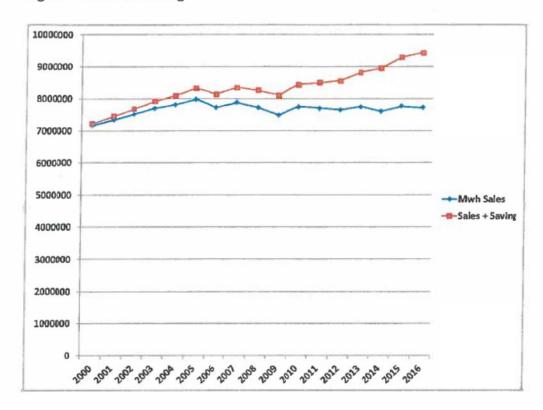


Figure 4 Trend of Saving

Lastly, we know that since the passage of the Least Cost Procurement legislation, decoupling and the Energy Efficiency Resource Management Council were created, the PUC's ability to control rate increases has been limited. However, we strongly urge you to recognize that the EE plan, process and make up is flawed and that you can change that imbalance.

We also urge the PUC to consider and remember that the EERMC recommendations are just that, recommendations. The PUC has statutory power to make decisions contrary to EERMC recommendations and your decisions are binding within the scope of RI laws. We urge you to do so, in the best interest of the ratepayers of Rhode Island. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

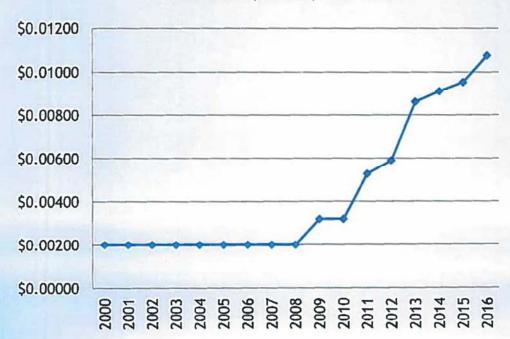
Douglas W. Gablinske Executive Director

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2016 RI Electrical Energy Efficiency Charge... an Unsustainable Upward Trend!

EE Price (\$/kWh) 2000-2016



Docket 4580 National Grid 2016 Energy Efficiency Program Plan



- > Proposed 2016 EE Charge (\$/kWh): \$0.01077
- > 2015-2017 three year plan EE charge is ignored
- ➤ Likely the 2017 EE charge will also be higher than the three year plan

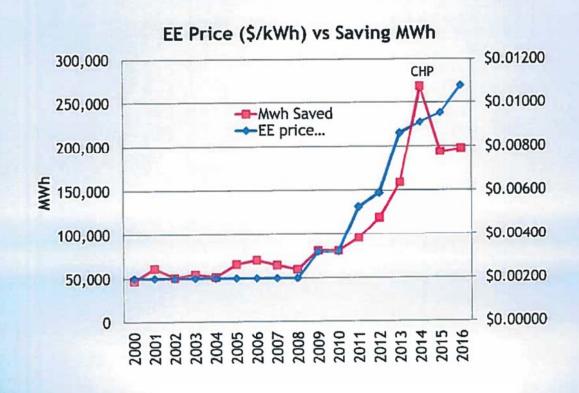
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Total Benefits	\$ 282,875,002	\$ 303,660,783	\$ 316,528,156
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Total Spending*	\$ 86,741,232	\$ 86,052,775	\$ 90,867,248
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Benefit Cost Ratio	2.61	2.82	 2.76
Participants	TBD	TBD	 TBD

	2016 3 year plan	2016 2nd Draft
Benefit Cost Ratio	2.82	1.77
TRC per kWh	\$0.052	\$0.061
EE Program Charge per kWh	\$0.00997	\$0.01077

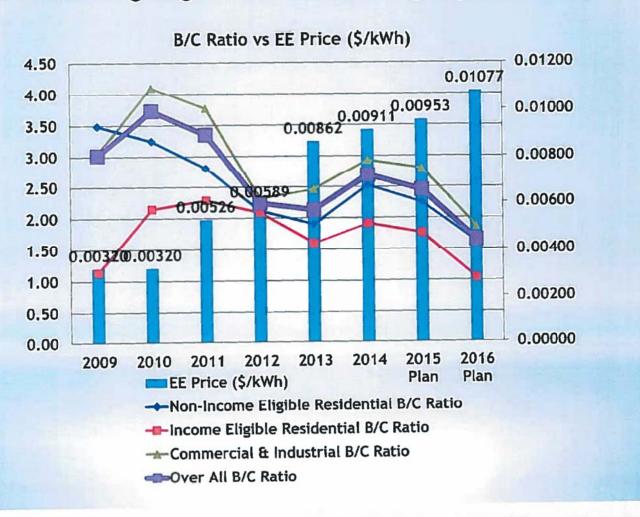
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- > The steep EE charge increase is unsustainable to ratepayers
- Saved MWh is now inverted compared to the EE charge
- Energy efficient measures have now been undertaken for four decades. Have we hit a point of market saturation?



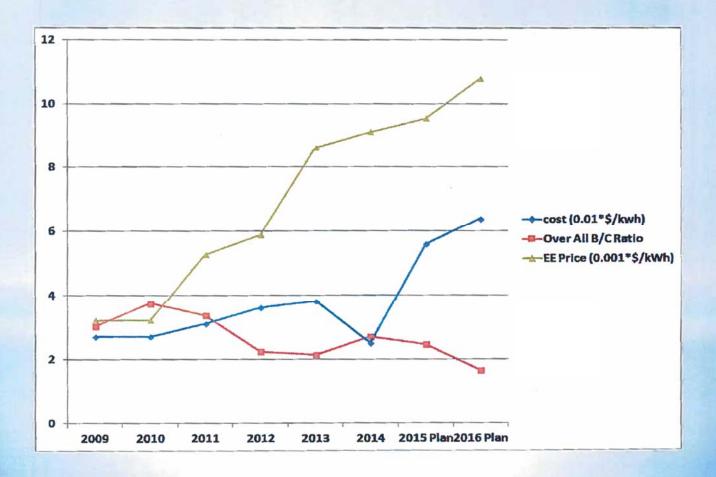
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> B/C ratio is going downward causing high EE charge



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EE Charge is going up (\$/kWh), B/C ratio is going down, Cost to save kWh (\$/kWh) is unsustainably going up



> Price increase including "decoupling" affect is 22%!

Energy Efficient Rate Impact on Middle-Size RI Businesses

Usage (kWh/year)	Current EE charge (\$/year)	New EE Charge (\$/year)	Increase by 2016 Plan(\$/year)	Increase by Decoupling* (\$/Year)	Total Estimated Increase (\$/year)
10,000,000	95,300	107,700	12,400	8,750	21,150
15,000,000	142,950	161,550	18,600	13,125	31,725
20,000,000	190,600	215,400	24,800	17,500	42,300

* 2.5% T&D increase

- > Businesses struggle to absorb these unsustainable increases
- > TEC-RI supports RI's energy efficiency efforts. However, the unsustainable upward trend now needs to be capped.

- > EE Charge is higher than distribution energy charge
- > EE charge is higher than transmission energy charge
- EE charge is now the largest segment of distribution cost (28% of total distribution charge)

Classification Rate G-32 Distribution and Transmission Charge

G-32			2,500	kW
			19,710,000	kWh/y
Customer Charge	825.00	\$/Month	9,900	\$/Year
Distribution Charge				
Demand in excess 200kw	4.10	\$/kW	113,160	\$/Year
Distribution Energy Charge	0.759	c/kWh	149,599	\$/Year
Renewable Energy Distribution Charge	0.232	c/kWh	45,727	\$/Year
RE Growth Charge	17.78	\$/Month	213	\$/Year
Transmossion Charge				\$/Year
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Transition Charge (Credit)	-0.201	c/kWh	(39,617)	\$/Year
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Energy Efficiency Program	1.107	c/kWh	218,190	\$/Year
(include renewable charge)			(28%)	
Total			782,484	\$/Year

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- ➤ TEC-RI has participated in National Grid's Energy Efficiency Collaborative, since the inception of the Collaborative. This year, we were well prepared and well represented to advocate for the Commercial, Industrial, Institutional and business sectors positions.
- Unlike past years, where TEC-RI has voted for the EE goals and associated EE charge, this year we voted against the plan at the collaborative level and a member of the EERMC who represents the large commercial and industrial sector, also voted NO!
- > TEC-RI did not sign on as part of this settlement.

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Conclusion

- The EE Collaborative membership is heavily weighted toward the special interests at the table vs. the ratepayers interests. More balance is required for this group to be truly representative of the stakeholders & ratepayer and the PUC should "encourage" that change.
- ➤ TEC-RI supports the concept and enactment of energy efficiency measures...BUT NOT AT ALL COSTS!
- ➤ We understand and are mindful of the real and perceived limitations of least cost procurement that have been codified by the legislature and PUC's Standards for EE and Conservation Procurement

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Recommendations

- Hold EE charge to the agreed upon 3 year plan
- PUC should encourage more balance in collaborative
- PUC should encourage a cap on the EE charge for the next 5 years
- Least Cost Procurement concept should be changed in State Law to Least Cost Affordable Procurement, recognizing the unsustainability of the EE program and the financial toll it is taking on the ratepayer.

Certificate of Service

I hereby certify that a copy of the cover letter and any materials accompanying this certificate was electronically transmitted to the individuals listed below.

Paper copies of this filing are being hand delivered to the Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission and to the Rhode Island Division of Public Utilities and Carriers.

Joanne M. Scanlon

December 9, 2015

Date

Docket No. 4580 - National Grid - 2016 Energy Efficiency Program Plan Service list updated 10/19/15

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