



State of Rhode Island
Division of Public
Utilities & Carriers

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January 7, 2019

TO : Luly Massaro, Commission Clerk

FROM : John Bell, Chief Accountant ^{JB.}

SUBJECT: Docket No. 4604, The Office of Energy Resources (OER) - Budget Request to Perform Ceiling Price Services or Studies for the Renewable Energy Growth Program

On November 7, 2018, in accordance with RI General Law § 39-26.6-4(b), the Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources (“OER”) submitted a request to the Public Utilities Commission (“PUC”) for the approval of the funding of two studies. The studies include a ceiling price study for the 2020 Renewable Energy (“RE”) Growth Program year in the amount of \$85,000 and a solar quality assurance study in the amount of \$145,575.

OER’s filing included prefiled written testimony supporting their request. The testimony explains that the funding request for the ceiling price study is \$17,000 higher than last year’s request due to interest in examining possible location-based incentives being factored into ceiling prices. The testimony also provided detailed support for the funding request related to the solar quality assurance study.

On December 21, 2018, OER amended its budget request as a result of a decision not to pursue the location-based incentives through the ceiling price studies. The amended budget request is for \$65,000 which is a decrease of \$20,000 from the original request. The amended request is in line with prior years’ budget requests and PUC approvals.

The budget request for a solar quality assurance study is slightly higher than the 2018 request, due to the addition of 2 new tasks. The new tasks include the development of Minimum Technical Requirements for solar PV projects, and the development of a webinar style training for new participants and self-installers. According to the filing, the solar

quality assurance study assists OER and the DG Board in ensuring solar PV installations are safe and trustworthy.

On December 21, 2018, the OER submitted responses to the PUC data requests regarding the filing. The Division reviewed the OER submissions in this docket, as well as docket information from previous years. Based on our review, we believe the OER's request is reasonable given the size of the RE Growth program. The Division recommends the Commission approved the OER's request.