

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS  
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

**IN RE: THE RHODE ISLAND OFFICE OF ENERGY RESOURCES REQUEST FOR FUNDING TO PERFORM AN ECONOMIC JOBS STUDY** :  
: **DOCKET NO. 4604**  
:

**ORDER**

On June 20, 2016, the Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources (OER) sent a letter to the Public Utilities Commission (Commission or PUC) requesting funding of \$125,000 for the purpose of retaining the services of a consultant pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws §39-26.6-4(b).<sup>1</sup> OER stated that the funding would be used to retain a consultant to evaluate the costs and benefits of the Small Solar and Commercial Renewable Energy Programs within the Renewable Energy Growth annual program.<sup>2</sup> In response to data requests filed by the Commission inquiring as to the parameters of the evaluation, OER provided that the impacts analyzed would include job, environmental, local property tax, price suppression, and distribution and transmission impacts.<sup>3</sup> It noted that the study would also take into account ratepayer and administrative costs, remunerations to National Grid, Renewable Energy Growth Program small and commercial renewable energy systems that are using power on site as well as selling power back to National Grid, price per kWh that is provided to the renewable energy system over a fifteen or twenty-year period, and federal tax credits leveraged.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> OER Letter (June 20, 2016). All filings in this docket are available at the PUC offices located at 89 Jefferson Boulevard, Warwick, Rhode Island or at <http://www.ripuc.org/eventsactions/docket/4604page.html>.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> OER Response to Comm. Data Request 1-1 (July 6, 2016).

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

In determining the appropriate amount to request, OER considered the cost of a 2014 report prepared by The Brattle Group, Inc. addressing the annual jobs, economic impact, and environmental impacts attributable to the distributed generation standard contract program.<sup>5</sup> In addition to the expenses listed above, anticipated expenses include public presentations, staff wages, and associated expenses.<sup>6</sup>

At an Open Meeting held on July 14, 2016, the Commission voted to approve OER's request for \$125,000 to retain a consultant to prepare an economic jobs study report. The Commission found OER's justification of the anticipated cost to be reasonable. In the event that the total cost of preparing the report is less than the \$125,000 authorized, that lower amount is the amount to be recovered from National Grid's ratepayers pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws §39-26.6-4(b) and §39-26.6-25.

Accordingly, it is hereby

(22477) ORDERED:

1. The Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources' request for funding to retain the services of a consultant to perform an Economic Jobs Study Report in an amount not to exceed \$125,000 is approved.
2. The Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources shall provide the Commission with the evaluation scores of the bidders and the identity and amount of the successful bid.

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<sup>5</sup> OER Response to Comm. Data Request 1-2, 1-4.

<sup>6</sup> OER Response to Comm. Data Request 1-1, 1-3.

EFFECTIVE AT WARWICK, RHODE ISLAND ON JULY 14, 2016 PURSUANT TO AN OPEN MEETING DECISION HELD ON JULY 14, 2016. WRITTEN ORDER ISSUED JULY 15, 2016.

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION



*Margaret E. Curran*  
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Margaret E. Curran, Chairperson

*Herbert F. DeSimone, Jr.*  
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Herbert F. DeSimone, Jr., Commissioner

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Marion S. Gold, Commissioner\*

\*Commissioner Gold abstained from the vote.

**NOTICE OF RIGHT OF APPEAL:** Pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws §39-5-1, any person aggrieved by a decision or order of the PUC may, within seven days from the date of the order, petition the Supreme Court for a Writ of Certiorari to review the legality and reasonableness of the decision or order.