



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

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April 16, 2020

SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY:

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

**RE: Docket No. 5013 - Block Island Utility District (BIUD) -
Demand Side Management 2020 Plan**

Dear Ms. Massaro:

Enclosed for filing on behalf of the Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources ["OER"] is a pdf copy of the Office of Energy Resources ("OER") comments in support of Block Island Utility District's (BIUD) 2020 Demand Side Management Plan (2020 DSM Plan) that was filed with the Public Utilities Commission (Commission) on February 10, 2020.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Daniel W. Majcher

DWM/njr

Enclosure

c. Docket 5013 Service List



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

**OFFICE OF
ENERGY RESOURCES**

April 15, 2020

Chairperson Margaret E. Curran
Commissioner Marion Gold
Commissioner Abigail Anthony
Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission
89 Jefferson Boulevard
Warwick, Rhode Island 02888

Re: PUC Docket #5013 – Block Island Utility District 2020 Demand Side Management Plan

Dear Commissioners:

The Office of Energy Resources (OER) respectfully submits these comments in support of Block Island Utility District's (BIUD) 2020 Demand Side Management Plan (2020 DSM Plan) that was filed with the Public Utilities Commission (Commission) on February 10, 2020 under Docket #5013. OER encourages the Commission to approve the 2020 DSM Plan as filed.

BIUD's proposed 2020 DSM Plan is the utility's first formal, island-wide energy efficiency program that builds on the success of the *Block Island Saves* pilot administered by OER from 2015-2017.¹ OER applauds BIUD for developing an efficiency program that will provide energy assessments, weatherization, HVAC, and lighting incentives to residential and business customers. These incentives are expected to facilitate customer investments in cost-effective energy efficiency projects that help reduce local customer energy costs and foster a cleaner, more affordable, and reliable energy system consistent with state energy policy goals.

OER has collaborated with BIUD to develop a DSM plan that would address consumer energy needs and reduce their energy costs; align with the utility's mission; and integrate lessons learned from the *Block Island Saves* pilot program. To support the utility's efforts, OER allocated \$180,000 in Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) auction proceeds (2015 and 2018-B RGGI Allocation Plans)² to be leveraged with utility dollars in the delivery of program offerings. This funding will be disbursed over three years (through 2022) to promote thoughtful, sustainable program development while allowing for the scaling of resources and continued customer education.

¹ Block Island Saves final report: <http://www.energy.ri.gov/documents/archived-reports/Block%20Island%20Saves%20Pilot%20-%20Full%20Report%20-%20April%202018.pdf>

² 2015 RGGI Allocation Plan: <http://www.energy.ri.gov/documents/rggi/2015%20Plan%20Items/2015%20RGGI%20Allocation%20Plan.pdf>
2018-B RGGI Allocation Plan: <http://www.energy.ri.gov/documents/rggi/2018%20Plan%20Items/2018-B%20Final%20RGGI%20Allocation%20Plan%208-30-2018.pdf>



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

OFFICE OF ENERGY RESOURCES

The 2020 DSM Plan demonstrates BIUD's commitment to delivering high quality, effective energy efficiency measures and provides for robust tracking and reporting on programmatic efforts. BIUD proposes to hire an efficiency consultant and leverage their technical expertise on program development and program impact tracking. The reporting and data collection facilitated by the consultant will give BIUD insights into program performance and customer preferences that will meaningfully enhance future DSM plans. Additionally, by having a consultant support the development of a strong, robust reporting structure, BIUD will create a data-based foundation for their new DSM program that will support future success. Going forward, OER is committed to working collaboratively with BIUD staff and their consultant in program development and monitoring processes.

Another notable feature of BIUD's 2020 DSM Plan is their inclusion of incentives for heat pump water heaters as well as heat pump systems for both heating and cooling. OER applauds the District's decision to provide customers with incentives for these innovative technologies and the District's recognition of the energy and environmental benefits of strategic electrification, particularly for customers who have historically had very high total energy costs.

OER is excited by its energy efficiency collaboration with BIUD and the utility's commitment to develop and sustain a strong DSM program for their customers. We are confident that Block Island residents and businesses will realize substantial economic, energy, and environmental benefits as a result of the programs and initiatives proposed in the 2020 DSM Plan. For this reason, we urge the Commission to approve BIUD's 2020 DSM Plan.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Nicholas S. Ucci
Acting Commissioner