

SUMMARY OF THE ISSUES.

The Public Utilities Commission hired a vendor to conduct a study to help inform the Commission on the potential for further energy efficiency activities in the state. The final study report “Additional Opportunities for Energy Efficiency in New Hampshire”, is available at: <http://www.puc.state.nh.us/Electric/GDS%20Report/GDS%20Final%20Report.htm>.

The study may play a significant role in energy efficiency and resource planning for the state for the foreseeable future. In the Commission’s recent January 16, 2009 order in DE 07-064 on decoupling, the commission said it will “...use the results of the energy efficiency study to assess the potential for additional energy efficiency investment in New Hampshire” when a company submits a decoupling proposal. Order 24,934, page 22. The value of the study depends to a large extent on its inputs, its assumptions and methodology, its comprehensiveness and its accuracy. What weight should be given to the study in statewide energy planning and policy development? How should the study be used? These are questions that this Board may want to ask and consider. The Board may also wish to offer recommendations to the Public Utilities Commission and to legislators and other policy makers regarding the study and the role that the study should play moving forward. The Commission and GDS Associates, Inc. (“GDS”), who performed the study, invited and received some informal comments from EESE Board members. Given the study’s complexity, and the potential future use of the study in important energy efficiency decisions, should there be more time for the public to review and comment on the study and provide input on its use by the Commission? Should the EESE Board recommend the Commission provide an opportunity for public comment regarding the study?

Additionally, the EESE Board has heard presentations and received information from various sources on energy efficiency, including the collaborative work done by the NH Climate Change Task Force. The EESE Board has also received information from the Core electric energy efficiency docket showing that there is a waiting list of about 16,000 for low-income residential energy efficiency services, and that an estimated 87,000 low-income households statewide have not been reached. Should the EESE Board and the Commission rely exclusively on this study in providing recommendations on energy efficiency policies, or should the Commission consider the study as one of a number of inputs, including with respect to residential and low-income demand?

New Hampshire Legal Assistance (“NHLA”) recommends that the Board begin discussion of these and related issues at its meeting tomorrow. The Board may also wish to give consideration to the three draft Motions that follow this Summary. These draft Motions may help to focus and inform the Board in its discussions of the GDS study and the ramifications of the study in setting energy policy for the state. Note that after a preliminary review of the final study report, it appears as though GDS has incorporated information provided to it on low-income energy efficiency need and demand in the state. As a result, the first of the draft Motions below may not be needed. Other informal comments may have been incorporated. NHLA recommends that a vote on the following draft Motions not take place until the next scheduled Board meeting, after all members of the Board have had an opportunity to review the final study report in light of the draft Motions.

DRAFT MOTIONS.

EESE-2009-01

WHEREAS, the Energy Efficiency and Sustainable Energy Board, as part of its charge under RSA 125-O:5-a,I(a) to review available energy efficiency programs and incentives, and having recently been made aware of data and information concerning the need and demand for energy efficiency in New Hampshire, believes that “Additional Opportunities for Energy Efficiency in New Hampshire” study may have understated the need and demand for energy efficiency by residential customers, including low-income New Hampshire residents.

EESE-2009-02

WHEREAS, as part of its statutory charge to develop a plan to achieve the state’s energy efficiency potential for all fuels under RSA 125-O:5-a,I (b), the Energy Efficiency and Sustainable Energy Board will consider, and respectfully recommends that the public utilities commission consider, the “Additional Opportunities for Energy Efficiency in New Hampshire” study as one of a number of relevant inputs, including, but not limited to, the reports on energy efficiency potential from New Hampshire’s Climate Change Task Force, the recommendations of the public and Board members, and other evaluations and studies on energy efficiency and sustainable energy.

EESE-2009-03

WHEREAS, as part of its charge at RSA 125-O:5-a,I (d) to provide recommendations to the public utilities commission and to coordinate and promote energy efficiency and sustainable energy programs in the state, the Energy Efficiency and Sustainable Energy Board recommends the Commission provide interested parties and members of the public with the opportunity for public comment on the final “Additional Opportunities for Energy Efficiency in New Hampshire” study, including input on the use of the study by the Commission.