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14th March 2016

Ms. Debra Howland  
Exec Director, NH PUC  
21 S Fruit Street #10  
Concord, NH 03301  
Reference docket DG 15-289

Dear Ms. Debra Howland,

Because the PUC has jurisdiction over public utilities issues, it is important that indirect matters connected to the subjects of consumer cost, quality of service, and safety be taken into account. I understand ruling on these issues is no small task. As the board seeks to review docket DG 15-289, I would like to make sure it especially considers issues of safety and cost -both to consumers and the environment.

First the issue of safety. Natural gas leaks are not comprehensively regulated by the federal government. This is a serious concern, both when extracting and transporting the fuel to consumers. Risks include explosion hazards, airborne chemical exposures, and climate change. Although not directly in the sights of the PUC, all the above topics are indirectly related to the safety of New Hampshire consumers and should be seriously considered.

Cost is another important issue, both in the short-term and long-term. True, natural gas costs are currently at historic lows, but they will not remain at those levels. Fossil fuel markets are notoriously volatile, while renewable energy sources are much more stable. Why should the PUC continue to subject customers to the consistent roller-coaster of price hikes and drops as supply and demand wanes for fossil fuels? Natural gas is not in the interest of the public good, period. It is renewable energy sources that create stability and should be made a priority in the state.

Sure the idea of natural gas sounds great, lower CO2 emissions, and lower costs at first, but it is still a fossil fuel. Once the new fossil fuel energy infrastructure is created, we are merely locking ourselves into more

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environmental degradation, climate change, safety concerns and price fluctuations. I challenge the PUC to evaluate the situation in a broader context and ask that they not tie consumers to an outdated fuel.

Sincerely,

Michael Mezzacapo -