

8/25/16

Dear Director Howland:

I ask the Commission to deny the motions to stay proceedings in Dockets DG 15-155 and DG 15-289. The motions would grant Liberty Utilities and Valley Green more time to come up with a joint agreement to bring new gas infrastructure to Lebanon and Hanover. The process so far has included testimony from PUC staff and the Office of Consumer Advocate, as well as comments from citizen intervenors, two state representatives and many members of the public. Allowing the two companies, who originally were competitors for the franchise, time to bring forth new evidence in the form of a deal struck in secret after the close of hearings would be fundamentally unjust. It would effectively combine the two dockets into a single proceeding, which the Commission has previously said it would not allow. An agreement between the two companies would not be able to address the recommendations from both staff and OCA that both petitions should be denied.

Communities don't passively wait for new fossil fuels deal to be made; they operate in the interest of both customers and climate, and are coming up with alternatives. One such alternative is a new deal launched by the communities of Hanover and Lebanon to get to 100% renewable electricity by 2030 and full renewable portfolios by 2050. We have no time to spare, so I urge the PUC to accelerate its decision, especially because more time won't make two weak, unpopular proposals better.

Please turn down the motions to stay from both companies and act quickly to reject both Liberty Utilities and Valley Green's proposals for a gas franchise. Thank you.

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