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December 14, 2021

Mr. Daniel Goldner, Chair  
NH Public Utilities Commission  
21 S. Fruit Street, Suite 10  
Concord, NH 03301-7319

Dear Chair Goldner,

I am writing on behalf of the Town of Durham with respect to the NHSaves energy efficiency programs.

Like many municipalities in New Hampshire, the Town of Durham has relied upon the NHSaves energy efficiency programs offered by our electric and natural gas utilities, Eversource and Unitil, to help us navigate the complexities of purchasing high efficiency lighting and other low energy-consuming devices. This support from NHSaves has come not only in the form of rebates, but in technical know-how from utility staff, referrals to experienced installation contractors, as well as financing options. We know that many of our residents, local businesses, the Oyster River School District, and the University System of New Hampshire have also engaged with the NHSaves programs to help navigate complex energy investments. These programs have allowed us to reduce our energy bills and save taxpayer money that we have reinvested in our community. The keyword is “investment”; any incremental upfront costs pay back to the consumers over time.

Though Durham is one of the more energy conscious communities in the state, having adopted a stretch code, invested in solar generation, and invested in significant efficiency improvements to our Wastewater Treatment Plant and other municipal buildings, we recognize that there is always more to be done to reduce our energy consumption/carbon footprint as new technologies come on line, and as our transportation and buildings systems become ever more inter-connected. We were therefore dismayed to learn that the PUC last month rejected an energy efficiency plan to increase spending and then went a step further, slashing funding for energy efficiency over the next two years to return to 2017 funding levels. Given our experience as a municipality, we respectfully submit that if all users of electricity and natural gas, not to mention other fuels, are concerned about their energy bills, they should take action to reduce energy consumption.

One means of doing so is to work with the NHSaves programs to identify opportunities, and then to take advantage of the available funding in the form of cash rebates or low interest financial loans, to cover the upfront cost of the energy efficiency improvements. The main thing which cannot be overemphasized is that participation in this program is an **investment** which

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will pay for itself over time. Durham's perspective is that the program should be enhanced, not rolled back.

It is commendable that the state's utilities are working proactively to manage energy costs on behalf of all customers by investing *more* in energy efficiency, which is far less expensive to customers than investing in new electricity generation and related upgrades to electrical transmission and distribution systems.

The Durham Energy Committee and the Town of Durham consider climate change reduction and investment in renewable energy resources vitally important to New Hampshire's future. We wholeheartedly support continuing and expanding the NH Saves Plan.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have further questions in regard to this or any other matter.

Very truly yours,



Todd I. Selig  
Administrator

c: Christopher Sununu, NH Governor  
Sherman Packard, NH House Speaker  
Chuck Morse, NH Senate President  
Durham Legislative Delegation  
James Morse, ORCSD Superintendent of Schools  
James Dean, President, University of NH  
Durham Energy Committee  
Durham Town Council  
New Hampshire Municipal Association