



New England Ratepayers Association

New England Ratepayers Association Files Petition of Declaratory Order Asking the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to Assert its Jurisdiction over Net Metering

*Statement by the New England Ratepayers Association on Its Filing
at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 14, 2020

CONTACT: (603) 369-4301

CONCORD, NH -- The New England Ratepayers Association (NERA) continued its efforts to lower electricity costs for families and businesses in New England and nationwide by filing a Petition for Declaratory Order at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) in Washington, DC. The Petition asks FERC to exercise its jurisdiction over net metering transactions which are “sales for resale”, fall under FERC’s jurisdiction pursuant to the Federal Power Act, and should be transacted at avoided cost across the country.

The Petition seeks a declaration that any state which sets net metering tariffs above a utility’s avoided cost is preempted by the Federal Power Act and is in violation of the Public Utilities Regulatory Power Act (PURPA), which stipulates that qualifying facilities like rooftop solar are to be compensated at the utility’s avoided cost. Currently, ratepayers nationwide are overpaying for intermittent solar power to the tune of hundreds of millions, and possibly billions of dollars every year. If FERC Commissioners find in favor of NERA’s petition, ratepayers will be relieved of these politically driven subsidies.

“NERA has consistently argued that full net metering policies are socially regressive and overcompensate distributed generators at the expense of all other electricity consumers”, said Marc Brown, President of NERA. “Owners of rooftop solar panels have incomes 150% higher than average, leading to a ‘Reverse Robin Hood’ effect which has a disproportionately deleterious impact on the low-income and elderly communities and other citizens on fixed incomes.”

“Full-price net metering perverts electricity markets by grossly incentivizing the most-expensive and least efficient carbon-free generating resource – rooftop solar,” continued Brown. “Any legislator or regulator who purports to care about low-income consumers should be supportive of our petition. We feel that if FERC rules in our favor, investment capital will flow to far less expensive and more efficient forms of renewable energy generation. It will also reduce or eliminate the regressive cost-shifting inherent in full-price net metering compensation schemes--saving ratepayers in New England and nationwide hundreds of millions of dollars.”

For more information, contact marc@neratepayers.org or visit www.neratepayers.org.

#

About NERA: The New England Ratepayers Association (NERA) is a non-profit organization focused on promoting sound public policy that protects utility customers, both families and businesses, and lowers the cost of regulated services. Lower cost energy, water, and telecommunications services in New England will be an important driver for keeping the region's economy competitive and retaining and returning manufacturing and high-tech jobs for the 21st century.