

People's Testimony

Telephonic hearing, 4/16/24

Peggy Greenfeld, Montgomery Co.

My name is Peggy Greenfeld, and I'm a PECO ratepayer who resides in Montgomery County, PA.

For many years now, I've been participating in PECO's Customer Choice program, where I've chosen a third-party energy supplier that sources from 100% renewable energy. I do this not to reduce my electric bill, as I frequently pay a higher rate than PECO's Price to Compare. Rather, this is the only way I can have my supplier source renewable energy, because I can't get that with PECO's DSP plan.

My preference is for PECO to offer a DSP that supports the solar and wind markets, as the Customer Choice program, in its current form, is not a good option for me. Here's why:

With my third-party supplier, I often don't know the type of the renewable source or where it's sourced from. When I do know, it's never sourced locally, so it's not helping the environment or the economy in my community. Another problem is that signing up with third party suppliers is confusing and time-consuming. Additionally, maintaining a contract with a third-party supplier requires frequent monitoring to make sure that the fixed-rate term does not expire and leave me paying at an exorbitant rate. Another problem is that when my contract with the third-party supplier ends, I must, once again, go through the confusing and time-consuming process of applying for another third-party supplier. Finally, like I said before, I usually have to pay more than PECO's DSP rate.

As a person who favors transitioning to more wind and solar as sources of energy, and because of these constant challenges in trying to get renewable energy from the Customer Choice marketplace, I don't feel like I'm being offered a satisfactory choice. I believe that a DSP that supports the solar and wind market would make my energy costs go down, help my local community by creating jobs and saving community members money, and would help our environment. And, I would not have to spend numerous hours each year choosing and monitoring my contracts with my electric power suppliers.

Additionally, I agree with the reasons stated by John Braxton as to why leaving it up to individuals to find renewable energy suppliers is the wrong way to go.

Julie Becker, Philadelphia

My name is Dr. Julie Becker, and I am a public health professional. As a PECO customer, I support the maximum amount of affordable, renewable energy for the default service plan. I have a very personal reason why I care about this – my heart. I have had severe congestive heart failure for a decade, often making it difficult to breathe. Since the air quality in Philadelphia has gotten progressively worse due to climate change, my activities have become severely limited. The sources where we get our electricity affect our air quality. Renewables lessen the impact of poor air quality, helping those of us with chronic diseases to a better quality of life.

Renewables are now comparable in cost to fossil fuel, making them affordable. And as Philly gets hotter and wetter, PECO must demonstrate leadership to assure ratepayers a clean, green alternative as the default. Therefore, I support the maximum amount of affordable, renewable energy for the default service plan.

Ann Dixon, Philadelphia

I'm a professional gardener and spend lots of time outside with plants. I am very aware that last May was the driest on record for Philadelphia and that this spring has seen way above average rainfall. We will definitely be experiencing weather related food shortages in the near future. We are already experiencing temperature extremes.

This is where PECO comes in. I am grateful that PECO protects us from heat. Of course, burning fossil fuels is creating our climate crisis. So, we need PECO to make the default service plan renewable energy. The future of our planet shouldn't depend upon how many people have time to sift through all the electricity buying options. This will work for everyone because wind and solar energy is quickly becoming less expensive than fossil fuels. A five- or 10-year contract with renewables will be cost effective. We need renewable and affordable energy!

A few minutes ago (during this hearing), Councilperson O'Rourke was told that PECO will not be buying more solar credits. Considering our climate crisis, that is outrageous! And I want PECO to buy more actual solar energy, not just credits.

Diane Nissen, Haverford

My name is Diane Nissen, my address is 5205 Parkview Dr in Haverford – 19041. I'm a retired computer consultant. I'm a PECO customer.

I am very worried about climate change and the warming of the planet. I've witnessed first hand the changes in temperature at my parent's cottage in the Poconos where 50 years ago we needed heat at night during the summer and now we need air conditioning.

PECO is required to sell us affordable energy. Right now, renewable resources like solar and wind are cheaper than oil and gas. And yet the percentage of our energy coming from renewables is miniscule and it's one of the reasons we pay more on average for our electricity than those living in neighboring states. I'm glad to hear from the PECO representative today that PECO is doubling it's sourcing of electricity from renewables but that still less than 2% of the total? Other states like Texas use more renewables than we do. TEXAS, for G-ds sake!

As I understand it, the Default Service Plan is where changes need to be made. Most customers (75-80%) buy their electricity using the "default service". When buying oil and gas, PECO enters into short term (1-2 year) contracts. These fluctuate wildly with little predictability. Wind and solar energy are often bought with long term contracts because building the facilities requires a long term commitment. BUT once those facilities are built, energy is cheap and consistently cheap. So my main ask is for PECO to change the way they

do business and enter into longer term contracts for renewable energy. It's a better bet financially and better for our planet.

Richard Cole, West Norriton

Good evening, my name is Richard Cole, I live in West Norriton, Montgomery County, I'm retired military. I am speaking on my own behalf.

PA is a major fossil gas producing and exporting state and the industry, including the utilities, wants to keep it that way. Proponents like to talk about jobs, energy security, low energy costs, etc. but the bottom line is, well, the bottom line. But PA has a responsibility to keep its citizens safe, and that includes from a health perspective and to guard against the impacts of a changing climate. In fact, this responsibility is enshrined in the PA constitution under the environmental rights amendment.

Our public utilities commission is tasked with, among other things, approving - or not- PECO's plan for buying the electricity they sell to us. Customarily, PECO has insisted on short term contracts that favors fossil fuels, the PUC granting such despite the fact that costs for renewable energy continue to be on the decline. It is quite apparent by now that reliance on fossil fuels results in pollution that harms the public, and we are all exposed to the risks the unfettered burning of fossil fuels poses for the climate. We have increasingly seen, and many have already experienced, the impacts of hotter temperatures, more frequent and intense storms, extended heat waves and longer droughts.

The damages wrought by climate change have been felt in every sector of the economy and will continue to worsen unless bold actions are taken. One of which being to significantly increase the amount of renewable energy delivered to our homes, businesses and other entities. And so I urge the PUC to require that PECO commit to securing affordable clean energy for the southeastern PA region. Our children and theirs and beyond deserve our best efforts to ensure a liveable planet. Thank you for this opportunity to speak on this important issue."

Randy Libros, Montgomery County

Good evening, my name is Randy Libros. I live in Montgomery County and my wife and I are current PECO customers, and have been for most of the past 45 years.

I retired about a year and a half ago and went on Social Security. While I'm getting by, I find I need to pay closer attention to how much I'm spending each month.

A few weeks ago, a knob on our dryer broke. I went online to find a replacement, and after a little searching around found the right knob for about \$30.

But then I checked a couple more options and found the same knob, same part number, for \$10.

So with a little effort, I saved a bit of money. Not a lot, but it adds up.

Each month I pay my utility bills—water, gas and electric.

And it bothers me to learn that PECO could be charging me less. That by insisting on short-term contracts, PECO has tipped the scales towards natural gas, and away from solar. And that using long term contracts and more solar, PECO could be charging me less for the electricity I use.

Maybe in years past natural gas was cheaper, but solar technology has advanced and is now cheaper than natural gas. And I want the benefit of those cost savings.

Now I understand that cost isn't always the only thing to consider. There's also quality. And sometimes it's worth paying a little more to get a better product.

But I don't believe natural gas is the better product. Burning of natural gas contributes a great deal to climate change. And it's not just the burning of natural gas. Drilling and transporting natural gas has resulted in methane emissions to the atmosphere and contamination of water supplies.

The impacts of climate change are already devastating. I never thought we'd see the Vine Street expressway filled with water. Or that I'd see major tornado damage just a 10 minute drive from my home. And from everything I have read, the impacts of climate change are likely to devastate coastal cities world-wide, disrupt food production, damage the air we breathe due to uncontrolled wild fires and other emissions from the burning of fossil fuels.

I fear for the world my grandchildren will grow up in. They are 19 months and 15 month old and I want them to have a chance of living in a world that isn't devastated by flooding, poor air quality and other climate disruptions.

The Pennsylvania State Constitution guarantees us clean air and clean water. I hope the PUC will enforce that guarantee by rejecting PECO's proposed default service plan that only promises worsening climate change at a higher price.

Emily Petrucci, Media

Thank you for the opportunity to share my testimony today. My name is Emily Petrucci, and I'm a resident of Media, Pennsylvania and a PECO ratepayer. My husband and I very much want PECO to offer customers the maximum amount of affordable, renewable energy in the Default Service Plan (DSP). While PECO focuses on affordability, part of the mission of the Public Utility Commission (PUC) is to protect the public interest. A sustained, long-term investment in

renewable energy sources will begin to address the greatest public interest, safeguarding our planet and working to quickly address the carbon pollution crisis.

My husband and I are raising our two girls here in the Philadelphia area. We are all living through the unfortunate effects of climate change. Here in Pennsylvania, you'll find that "unhealthy ozone" days have become commonplace as part of our weather forecast. Record heat threatens our children's ability to safely attend outdoor camps, play sports, and enjoy the summer season. We're experiencing stronger storms, unusual weather patterns, and record-breaking rain events in the northeast. It's time we stop ignoring the very clear link between our region's poor air quality and the human suffering that comes along with it. Our continued dependence on fossil fuels is harmful to our health and contributes to the ground level ozone and smog that we see in the Philadelphia area. This produces damage to the lungs. Vulnerable populations such as older adults, people with underlying health conditions, pregnant women, children, and communities of color are at increased risk. The PUC and PECO have the moral obligation to offer ratepayers energy from renewable sources. Clean, renewable energy is the responsible way to address affordability. With long-term contracts, solar & wind are cheaper than burning fossil fuels. The more we invest in cleaner sources with long-term commitment, the quicker costs will come down. We need collective solutions from our energy leaders that provide improved investment in renewables. Please offer PECO customers the maximum amount of affordable, renewable energy in the Default Service Plan.

In-person hearing, 4/18/2

Rabbi Avi Winokur, Society Hill Synagogue, Philadelphia

Commissioners, citizens of Philadelphia and beyond. I am Rabbi Avi Winokur, rabbi emeritus at Society Hill Synagogue in Center City, where I served for almost two decades until my retirement. I am here today on behalf of our community. I am also here as a proud member of POWER and one the very early Clergy Sponsoring Committee in the early aughts. It's wonderful to see the room is full to capacity and maybe a little beyond.

The PUC commissioners are trustees or fiduciaries on behalf of the citizens of Philadelphia and all those in PUC's catchment area. These people are PUC's customers. These are the people whose welfare must inform every decision you make. They are the Commission's first priority always, no exception. More than that, as we are talking about energy and the environment the Commission's people include *all future generations of Philadelphians* as well because your decisions today will impact the health and/or degradation of our environment for generations.

As a rabbi I come to you, not to speak about numbers, dollars and cents and technology, but, I'd like to think, of matters at least as important.

Writing in shadow of 9-11 the late Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks noted: All of the world's great faiths embody a sense of respect for nature, and thus constitute an important counterbalance to the indifference bordering on arrogance that has been one of the less lovely legacies of the

Enlightenment. (Jonathan Sacks, *The Dignity of Difference: How to Avoid the Clash of Civilizations*, (2002, revised 2003) pp.171-72)

What I offer from Jewish tradition, I am confident you will find mirrored in the language of faith in traditions throughout the world.

In the ancient Midrash written over a millennium ago, the rabbis wrote: “When God created the first human beings he showed them around the Garden of Eden and said to them, ‘Look at my handiwork, my creation, how beautiful and balanced it is. Be careful not to ruin or destroy my world, for if you do, there will no one to repair it after you.’”

In other words, God has committed the care of this world to us and has no intention of miraculously intervening to save either us or the world, if we are incapable of caring for it.

The midrash echoes and amplifies the language in the second chapter of Genesis: “God placed the human in the Garden of Eden *l’ovdah u’l’shomrah* to serve it/work it and to guard it/protect it.” It is not the other way around. It does not say, “God created the Garden of Eden to serve and to guard/protect humanity.”

In other words the Commission’s decisions, I suggest, must be made in light of their cosmic assignment—an assignment that they may not have willingly signed up for—but according to our tradition and, as I said, religious traditions throughout the world—an assignment that the PUC may not shirk.

Vaclav Havel, the great Czech statesman, poet, and playwright, led the Czech Republic from 1993-2001. In his address to a joint session of Congress in 1990 He issued this challenge: Havel stated: “The salvation of this human world lies nowhere else than in the human heart, in the human power to reflect, in human meekness and in human responsibility. Without a global revolution in the sphere of human consciousness, nothing will change for the better. . . .and the catastrophe toward which this world is headed—be it ecological, social, demographic or a general breakdown of civilization will be unavoidable.”

The Public Utilities Commission is not solely responsible for preventing the breakdown of Western Civilization and ecological catastrophe, but to close with a famous Talmudic statement: *Lo alekha hamlakha ligmor, v’lo atah ben-horin l’hevatel memenu*. You are not obligated to complete the task, but neither are you free to abandon it.

To protect our environment, not just for ourselves, but for future generations is significant part of the Commission’s task, today and every day.

Michael Caine, Philadelphia

I’m the Rev. Michael Caine, pastor of Old First Reformed United Church of Christ at 4th and Race in Old City.

I also serve as the Co-chair of the Board of Directors of POWER Interfaith. As you have heard earlier this afternoon, POWER Interfaith is the largest faith-based organization in the Commonwealth – committed to racial and economic justice on a liveable planet. We are working for living wages, full, fair education funding; and climate justice for all the people in PA, particularly those who feel the pain the most.

But I am here today to testify as an individual, as a PECO customer (I actually have multiple PECO accounts). I am also here before the Public Utility Commission as a person of faith.

When I was 34, in 1995, I was reading about the Kyoto Protocol, the first international agreement of nations to set limits on greenhouse gasses and to plan the transformation of economies to clean energy. As I read the news article, I'm still not sure exactly what exactly hit me, but I realized: "human's misuse of creation is a confessional issue: fighting climate change confronts me with a choice – to be faithful or apostate." Let me explain.

In the 1930's Germany, the Nazis tried to take over the church, to use it as an instrument for party propaganda and politics. Their effort was in large part successful. But there also emerged a confessing church movement – individuals and congregations whose faithfulness depended on resistance. In effect, one couldn't be a Nazi and a Christian.

Ever since then, a number of "confessional issues" have come to be seen as metrics for faithfulness. Churches in South Africa pointed out one couldn't be Christian unless you were willing to fight apartheid. More generally, I'd say, one can't be racist and a Christian. Or be anti-semitic or Islamophobic and faithful. One can't be a Christian unless you are willing to work for a world where everyone has enough to eat. You get the idea.

In the 1980s, I heard the Rev. William Sloane Coffin, my pastor at Riverside Church in NYC, challenge us: "It behoves us North American Christians to learn what some forty years the German churches learned too late. It is not enough to resist with confession; we have to confess with resistance."

Anyway, I realized in 1995, almost 30 years ago, I couldn't go on living as I had been... couldn't keep burning fossil fuels; couldn't continue to contribute more than my share to global warming, if I wanted to be faithful.

That realization began significant changes in my life. It didn't happen overnight. But over about a four year period, I gave up driving. I realized my clothes didn't need a dryer to dry. I stopped using air conditioning. I radically reduced the meat I eat. I try not to fly anytime there's another public transportation option.

I'm hardly a saint. I still take hot showers for way too long. And I haven't yet figured out how to add solar power personally. And, like many who have spoken before, I often despair about the effectiveness of my individual efforts.

But, also like many who have spoken before me today – often with much more policy precision than I can add – like them, I am trying, doing what I can. In my individual life I have made changes, starting almost thirty years ago.

So I don't understand why PECO isn't doing the same? Their proposed Default Service Plan offers no greater commitment to affordable, clean energy than their Default Service four years ago.

Is their loyalty to the fossil fuel industry so great they can't see any need to change? Not just for all the grandchildren and great grandchildren we've heard invoked over and over this afternoon. But for our children and for ourselves. The consequences of climate disaster are already crashing quite close to home.

It's almost 30 years since the Kyoto Protocol. And if PECO isn't willing to make the commitment to packing their Default Service Plan with as much affordable, clean energy as possible, why isn't the Public Utility Commission forcing their hand? Thank you for this hearing.

Steven Greenspan, PhD, Philadelphia

Thank you for this opportunity to speak. As a Philadelphia resident, a grandfather of two young children who live nearby, and a PECO Default Service Plan customer, I am here to express my strong support for Energy Justice Advocates' recommended modifications to PECO's proposed Default Service Program.

Four years ago, I submitted testimony at the 2020 DSP Public Input Hearing, making the same request I make today -- that the Commission insist PECO increase its use of long-term contracts to take advantage of solar power - lowering costs and improving air quality. Regrettably, PECO's latest proposal offers no real progress in this regard.

While PECO appears content with the status quo, the reality for the rest of us has shifted dramatically. In the last four years, the climate crisis has worsened. 100-year storms and droughts have become annual occurrences. For the past year, every day, records have been shattered for ocean temperatures.¹ The consequences are dire - intense flooding and storms along the East Coast, devastating droughts and wildfires in the West. All of this affects our communities here in Pennsylvania. During this same period, the fossil fuel industry has shifted from outright climate denial to a strategy of delay. In this context, PECO's actions and excuses ring hollow.

On the positive side, solar and wind technologies have continued to improve, and with long-term contracts, using solar and wind are now cheaper sources of electric power than burning fossil fuels.² The PUC has a duty to balance the needs of consumers and utilities. But the proposed DSP is not a balanced approach. Reducing rates through long-term renewable contracts would

¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/04/10/climate/ocean-heat-records.html>

² <https://www.iea.org/reports/renewables-2023>.

far better serve the public interest than PECO's current plan. We are in a climate crisis, and the public cannot rely on PECO to act in our best interests.

The PUC must take the lead and push for sustainable, responsible policies from PECO. Energy equity and social justice are priorities for the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners.^{3,4} The Pennsylvania PUC should embrace the direction set by its national organization, actively supporting these priorities, and promoting sustainable procurement, environmental stewardship, and community resilience.

As implied in your mission statement⁵, the PUC has the authority and responsibility to "foster new technologies and competitive markets in an environmentally sound manner." The time has come to exercise that mandate. I urge the Commission to amend the proposed DSP and require a significant increase in long-term solar and wind contracts. The future of our commonwealth depends on moral, decisive action.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/04/10/climate/ocean-heat-records.html>

² <https://www.iea.org/reports/renewables-2023>.

³

<https://www.naruc.org/core-sectors/energy-resources-and-the-environment/energy-equity-and-justice/>

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<https://www.tradogram.com/blog/13-ways-sustainable-sourcing-and-procurement-drive-esg-efforts>

⁵ <https://www.puc.pa.gov/about-the-puc>

Dr. Walter Tsou, former Health Commissioner of Philadelphia

In 2018, Philadelphia's Office of Sustainability published a document called "[Powering Our Future: A Clean Energy Vision for Philadelphia](#)". The document outlined the city's plan on how Philadelphia can achieve a goal of 80% reduction in carbon emissions by 2050.

Some of the incremental steps would be that the city would reduce carbon emissions by 28% by next year! And in line with the Paris agreement, by 2030 all of the municipal operations would come from renewable energy sources. To achieve these goals, we would need to dramatically up our game.

The report estimated that in 2006, Philadelphia alone spewed 16,700,000 tons of carbon into the atmosphere. The report proposes Philadelphia reduce these emissions by 80% by 2050 to a new goal of 3.5 million tons. This essential goal is a team effort. According to the report, PECO's reduction part is to cut 6,500,000 tons in carbon by 2050 or 39% of the goal. PECO's

³ <https://www.naruc.org/core-sectors/energy-resources-and-the-environment/energy-equity-and-justice/>

⁴ <https://www.tradogram.com/blog/13-ways-sustainable-sourcing-and-procurement-drive-esg-efforts>

⁵ <https://www.puc.pa.gov/about-the-puc>

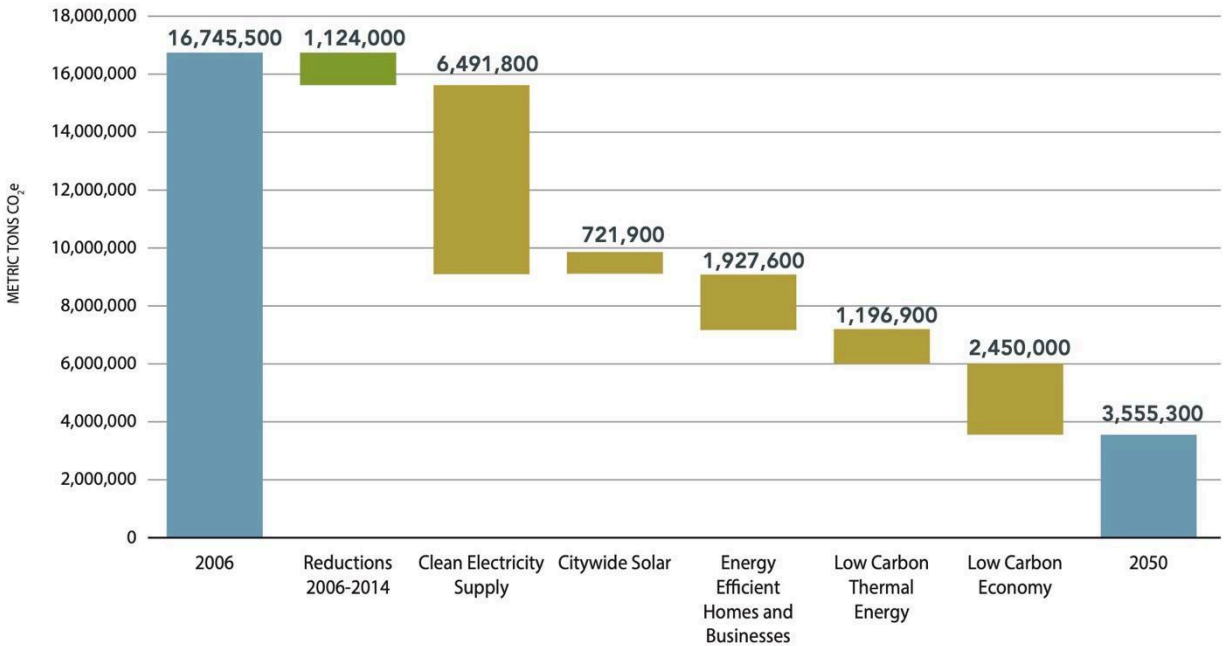
part is the single largest part of Philadelphia's plan and its default service plan mix of energy sources is fundamental to achieving this goal. To understand how important PECO's share of this reduction, having a clean source of energy exceeds the reductions of citywide solar, energy efficient homes and businesses, low carbon thermal energy and a low carbon economy, combined. In short, if PECO does not do its part, Philadelphia cannot achieve a low carbon economy by 2050.

Yes, lawmakers have to create the financial incentives to electrify our buildings, vehicles and upgrade our grid. Fortunately, under the Inflation Reduction Act, the US is belatedly and finally getting on the right track to electrify everything.

The price of fossil fuel energy has been up till now a fictitious number. It is not only the expense of extraction, waste disposal, subsidies given to the industry plus the attributable risk created by each ton of carbon dioxide and methane spewed into the atmosphere causing global warming. Add to this the health costs of pollution, radioactivity and carcinogen exposure, low birth weight babies, and asthma. By all these measures, renewable energy is far cheaper, much more affordable and sustainable. PECO could dramatically increase its solar and battery power sources with net metering policies that encourage home and building investments.

Given what we know about climate change and its devastating impact on our planet, we have no time to dawdle. Pennsylvania is the second leading producer of fossil gas, most of it from fracking which has huge health consequences on Pennsylvania residents. Fracking is bad for nearby residents, creates far fewer jobs than the lawmakers realize, and is disastrous for the planet. We need PECO to accelerate renewable energy in its Default Service Plan.

POTENTIAL TO REDUCE CARBON POLLUTION IN PHILADELPHIA'S BUILT ENVIRONMENT



Wendy Greenspan, Philadelphia

With its proposed Default Service Plan, PECO has an extraordinary opportunity to make meaningful change in the lives of its 1.6 million electric customers. As the largest electric and natural gas utility in Pennsylvania it has amazing expertise and enormous resources. I am here to tell PECO to use its expertise, its resources, and its size to substantially increase the amount of renewable energy it purchases with long term contracts.

As you have heard from others, long term contracts and renewable energy will bring savings to PECO's customers who are burdened with high electric bills, and will help mitigate the effects of fossil fuels on our climate.

In its proposed DSP, PECO plans to source 0.5% of its energy from solar. In other words, for every \$100 PECO spends on energy, it plans to spend 50 cents on solar. 50 cents. That's what PECO did in its last DSP four years ago. That's what it plans to do in this DSP for the next four years.

PECO has stated that this DSP will double the use of long-term contracts to buy solar alternative energy credits. This, however, is not a meaningful change. PECO is simply doubling the use of one method for purchasing the same amount, the same 0.5%, of solar energy credits. It's still just 50 cents out of every \$100.

Instead, we need PECO to make a meaningful change in how it powers our homes. PECO must substantially increase the amount of solar energy that it purchases in this proposed DSP. PECO must go well beyond 0.5%.

With this DSP PECO has an extraordinary opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of its 1.6 million customers. Don't waste this opportunity.

Peter Furcht, Philadelphia

My name is Peter Furcht. I am a PECO rate payer. I live in Philadelphia.

I want to start by stating that I enjoy many of the arts available in Philadelphia. Very often near the top of the donor lists is PECO Energy. I am very grateful for their philanthropy in not only Philadelphia but all around their service area. But, I want PECO to hear from me very clearly: Philanthropy and providing your customers with clean, affordable, renewable energy are not mutually exclusive. You can do both.

I got really angry, and still am, when I heard about this new DSP proposed by PECO. You see, I have always been environmentally responsible and I do my part to reduce my carbon footprint. Last fall, at large expense, I got rid of my gas furnace and installed a heat pump with the anticipation that I would be able to source greener and greener electricity to power it.

Wrong. Not with PECO. And if PECO gets what they want in this DSP, not with PECO until at least mid-2029. I shop the energy market but the energy market only gives me access to companies that buy RECs on my behalf. While that is better than nothing, RECs do nothing to stabilize my energy costs like long term contracts for local solar and wind power would. Of equal importance, RECs do nothing to decrease CO_x, NO_x, methane or other pollutants related to burning fossil fuels in Pennsylvania. They do nothing to encourage growth of solar or wind farms in PA if those RECs are bought from companies in Texas or elsewhere. And if PECO commits to only 0.5% solar for another 4 years, local RECs or not, no company or bank is incentivized to invest in solar or wind generation in PA. The market will remain too small with minimal market growth. PECO's plan is just wrong for today's energy environment.

We live in a turbulent world and that's not going to change. Name one time in history when there weren't wars, coups, changing political alliances, changing policies, economic bubbles followed by recessions, supply chain disruptions, strikes, pandemics, fires, earthquakes, flood, famines, you name it. Now climate change is adding to this volatile mix leading to even greater turmoil and price volatility in everything from food to fuel to housing.

It is well known that this turmoil often has major impacts on fossil fuel costs. Yet it is totally unpredictable as to when and by how much. This turmoil rarely causes a price drop. In fact, this relationship of turmoil to price is exactly why PECO can only sign short term contracts with suppliers. Those suppliers never know when some local or global event outside of their control is going to send the cost of their raw material surging upward and their cost of generating power and ultimately the price I pay for power, upward with it.

If only we had a power source that was immune to this turmoil, that had a predictable and stable cost. We do! What happened to the price of sunshine when Russia invaded Ukraine? What happened to the price of wind following the pandemic when the supply chain was botched up? Nothing. Price volatility isn't a thing with the sun or the wind. Regardless of what tumultuous occurrence befalls society, the price of sunshine, the price of wind, just doesn't change. It's a free raw material. Solar and wind farm power suppliers can predict with great certainty what their cost to generate power will be tomorrow, next month, next year, 5 years from now. Their generation costs are nearly fixed. They can and will sign long term supply contracts with PECO and that will help PECO protect me from price volatility.

Now that solar and wind power costs are on par with or better than that of fossil fuel power, why shouldn't PECO sign long term solar and wind contracts for the benefit of their customers? Why isn't it in PECO's plan to sign as many of these contracts as it can to protect me from price volatility and to provide me with stably priced, affordable power, that happens to be clean? Just who is PECO trying to protect, their customers from high prices and price volatility or their traditional fossil fuel suppliers from decreasing sales?

The lack of responsibility taken by corporations to do their part staggers me. I often feel helpless. But not today. Today I can stand here and demand that the PUC requires PECO to work a lot harder to decarbonize their power supply. PECO's DSP should include the requirement to sign growing volumes of long term contracts to telegraph to the Pennsylvania energy market and to potential renewable energy investors and producers that there will be a growing demand for their products with PECO, that PECO will be buying more and more affordable, renewable energy to help reduce and stabilize their customers' energy bills, and to do it now, not 4 years from now, now.

Rev. Nathaniel Mahlberg, Philadelphia

Thank you, Your Honors, and members of the PUC.

I am Rev. Nathaniel Mahlberg, a pastor serving a church on the Upper Mainline, the United Church of Christ at Valley Forge.

I am also a PECO ratepayer in my household, and I support a substantial increase in affordable renewable energy in the Default Service Plan.

As a pastor in a faith community, I have the privilege of hearing the deepest concerns on people's hearts. And I'll tell you, a lot of folks are troubled with worries - legitimate worries - about human driven climate change. Especially in the past few years now that the catastrophic impacts of the climate crisis have become undeniable, I've had more and more folks over a range of backgrounds and political perspectives share with me concerns about our shared future on a livable planet. This is especially true among young folks, but also with older folks who are worried about their children and grandchildren, if not themselves. I, for one, am here more than anything else, as a father who is concerned about the worsening natural disasters and ecosystem collapse in the world my daughter will be inheriting.

There's a strong value in my religious community around what we call Stewardship of God's Creation. But the hard thing is there's such a feeling of helplessness about how to meaningfully live out that value. In the face of the enormity of the problems of climate change what difference does it really make if I and my family make this choice or that choice or not? Objectively, not much. Objectively, not enough.

But it's a different matter when we ask what we can do together. Together we *can* make a meaningful difference to be better stewards. That's why we're coming together as citizens to influence those who have the power and the responsibility, such as the PUC and PECO, to direct our commonwealth in ways that are wise and effective in taking care of our community's needs now and into the future.

The good news is that if you take a longer view when it comes to energy procurement plans and substantially increase longer term contracts with renewable energy suppliers, you can find solutions that are both more affordable and more sustainable. This is born out in the research that Energy Justice Advocates has submitted to the Commission.

This is what I urge you to do with the Default Service Plan.

It's good stewardship, financially and environmentally. And it's what we desperately need.

Thank you for your time and public service.

Howard Sherman, Lansdowne

Good afternoon,

My name is Howard Sherman. I live in Lansdowne, Pennsylvania and am a current PECO customer.

First, I want to thank the Pennsylvania PUC for giving me the opportunity to testify here today.

PECO's reported criteria for choosing energy supply sources are the lowest possible cost and lack of price volatility. These criteria have for years and up through the present time led to energy sources weighted heavily in favor of fossil fuels. In my opinion, these criteria are insufficient and outdated. No less important but missing in PECO's list of criteria are the safety and health of Pennsylvanians, as well as the urgent need to address our climate crisis. In addition to the many health-impairing pollutants caused by burning fossil fuels to produce energy, recent, widely publicized research indicates that what is marketed as "natural gas" has been known to leak at any stage of its production, from wells and transportation pipelines to actual appliances in consumers' homes, thus leading to safety and health hazards.

PECO's deficient commitment to transitioning to renewable energy can be seen in an even more egregious practice—PECO aggressively markets "natural gas" to customers by offering

generous rebates if they switch to “natural gas” appliances and heating systems. Each month, I receive an insert in my bill or an email offering a rebate if I install a gas appliance or furnace. Here are some examples (show examples). Nowhere in these advertisements is a rebate for an electric or geothermal alternative even mentioned.

In sum, it is evident that PECO’s energy purchase policies disregard and propose to continue disregarding the adverse impacts of its energy products on the health and safety of its customers and other Pennsylvanians in its service area as well as on our worsening climate crisis.

Accordingly, I urge the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission to require PECO to expand its purchase of Tier 1 alternative renewable energy to at least 30% in its new purchase agreement beginning on June 1, 2025.

In addition, I urge PECO to immediately discontinue the aggressive, preferential marketing of fossil fuel appliances and heating equipment to its customers and instead switch to preferentially marketing appliances and heating equipment which utilize renewable energy sources. Thank you.

Jo Alyson Parker, Philadelphia, Professor Emerita of English, Saint Joseph's University

My husband and I are Peco customers. We have solar panels on our roof, and we are adding more. We have solar batteries in our basement so that we don’t have to pollute the air with a generator. And we charge our electric vehicle from home, drawing on the solar power we’ve generated. We are doing our part to help the planet, and we urge Peco to do the same by using long-term contracts for wind and solar power. Getting more energy from wind and solar power and less from fossil fuels will not only help the planet. Doing so will also make economic sense as the prices for renewables are stable. Electricity will thus be more affordable for Peco customers. I will probably not be around when the worse ravages of climate change occur, but I want to make sure that my descendants live on a healing, thriving planet.

Richard Whiteford, Philadelphia

Humans pumped 37.4 billion tons of CO2 into the atmosphere in 2023 driving the carbon concentration in the atmosphere to 419.3 parts per million above the preindustrial level of 280 PPM. The global temperature briefly reached 1.5 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels; a limit scientists say would be dangerous to exceed.

Former U.S. Climate Change Envoy for the Biden Administration John Kerry said that despite all the carbon reduction promises made at the COP-21 Paris Agreement in 2015, carbon reductions only amount to 7.5 percent when, by now, they should have been cut by 30 percent. He and many scientists agree that we are not doing enough fast enough to get to zero emissions by 2050.

According to the International Energy Agency, the fossil industry intends to increase fossil consumption by 2 percent per year into the future. If they succeed, scientists say it could

increase the global temperature to around 4 degrees Celsius or 7.6 degrees Fahrenheit. The planet will survive in a deeply altered state, but it's possible that humans may not.

That's why it is imperative that we stop burning fossil fuels as soon as possible and why PECO must drop fossil-based fuels entirely from their default energy mix.

Phyllis Blumberg, Wynnewood

I am Phyllis Blumberg, live in Wynnewood, Lower Merion Township and am a PECO ratepayer, and a grandmother. I care about affordable, renewable energy for everyone.

Today is my 73rd birthday. This issue is so important to me that this is how I am celebrating my birthday.

The world, but especially America must stop burning fossil fuels as soon as possible. PECO can and must pair affordable with clean, renewable energy. I urge PECO to put in place a Default Service Plan that includes the maximum amount of renewable energy that is possible at affordable rates. Renewables are getting cheaper all the time, while gas prices fluctuate and increase. In fact, solar power is now the cheapest energy source in the world.

Pennsylvania is an unregulated state, and therefore individuals, in theory, can choose to purchase energy from a third-party source. This is not a viable or understood option for many people. Individuals getting assistance do not have the option of paying for cheaper, clean energy and they are the ones who need it the most. Most people do not even know that it is possible to buy clean renewable energy and assume that they can only get it from PECO and the vast majority of PECO customers get their energy this way. Instead, we need changes to PECO's Default Service Plan so everyone can benefit from affordable renewable energy.

Currently figuring out how to purchase clean, renewable energy is confusing and much misinformation exists. But this is the only alternative today. Because I want to help people get affordable, renewable energy, I give workshops showing people how to buy renewable energy. The participants learned that they could purchase clean, renewable energy from a third-party supplier not PECO and that their rates are lower than PECO's. However, we need solutions for everyone, not for individuals.

PECO's rates continue to rise and will do so in the future because they have not made the commitment to long term contracts which are necessary to invest in wind turbines or solar arrays. If the Pennsylvania legislature passes the proposed legislation to update our alternative energy standards, PECO and other utility companies would be required to buy 30% renewable energy within the next few years. But PECO can and should do better than that.

Transitioning to clean renewable energy sources is entirely possible for PECO. I suggest they look at Con Edison to see how it can be done. Con Ed has made a commitment to 100% clean power by 2040 which is decarbonizing New York's economy. Con Ed is the country's second largest solar power producer and is investing in long-term contracts. Con Ed has found that wind and solar development mean lower costs for New York state's energy consumers.

Pennsylvania is behind in the shift to renewable energy, and PECO ratepayers are paying the consequence in higher bills and dirtier air.

If ConEd and individuals can get both affordable and renewable energy, PECO should also. I urge PECO to put in place a Default Service Plan that includes the maximum amount of renewable energy that is possible at affordable rates so that everyone can benefit from affordable, renewable energy. This amount of renewable energy should increase over time.

Zachary Goldberg, Philadelphia

It is an honor to stand here with my fellow citizens, my state senator, my childhood Rabbi. I am a PECO rate payer. I was born a few blocks from here, I have attended many Flyers games and seen many PECO power plays and I care about our community.

But otherwise, why are we here?

We are here because in the US we practice democracy which means people ultimately have power, not a few people, but all the people.

We the people have also decided that electric utilities are important enough that power should not be a market good such as our cable system hence the natural monopoly term. So while PECO is a private company that operates as a monopoly, although as others noted we technically have limited options to procure energy. Either way, PECO delivers and sells energy at the discretion of the public hence the PUC.

This is not perfect, which is highlighted by previous testimony, which I agree with, and by predatory energy dealers that routinely knock on my neighbors, especially who do not speak English, and my own door in South Philly asking for our PECO bills.

While I am young and this is my first time testifying at a hearing such as this. I have heard that these types of meetings in the past have been a sleepy affair. PECO has mostly operated as they wanted to for many decades, which is to make decisions that return money to their investors. This return on investment is almost guaranteed because they are investing in a monopoly. I would like some of that too, please!

However, the climate crisis is a serious societal issue, as almost everyone else has testified about their deep concern to concerns of more extreme weather. The stay quo cannot go on any longer. The people have a right and obligation to decide how utilities operate. They must listen to us or we should take away their license to operate.

Therefore, I ask the PUC to mandate PECO abide by this proposal set forth by energy advocates. Default service plans cannot proceed as usual, substantial steps need to be taken. I think this is a small step towards an energy future that provides equitable and ecological outcomes. Furthermore, the PUC should consider other ways the public can provide input into decision making over our power utilities that must stop using fossil fuel energy resources in

coming decades. I look forward to the PUC's decision, and opportunities to further our energy democracy. Thank you.

Rabbi Juile Greenberg, Philadelphia

Thank you for holding this public hearing to receive input from the public.

I direct POWER's Climate Justice and Jobs work. Today I am here as a PECO rate payer, a faith leader and a Mom. PECO must rapidly increase the total amount of affordable, renewable energy in its DSP.

I was a kid during the Cold War when the threat of nuclear war was pervasive. In elementary school we would have drills where we'd be taught to cower under our desks and then line up to go to the fallout shelters that were in the basement of every public building. One day a teacher asked a class of sixth graders, "Doesn't this make you scared? Who is scared?" Every child raised their hand except for one. The teacher turned to that one child and said, "Why aren't you scared?" The child said, "Because my parents are doing something about it."

PECO and PUC Commissioners, I call on you to be the adults who are doing something about it. You are the energy leaders. Ordinary energy users should not have to be experts in the energy system or on energy transition – we count on you to maximize the benefits for our region. PECO is lagging behind national energy trends that show how much affordable, renewable energy is possible. We know that significant increases in affordable, renewable energy are essential for our wellbeing but PECO is leaving these opportunities on the table, depriving our region of the benefits to our health, our budgets, our planet, and our future generations.

The single most frequent question I get about the necessary transition away from dirty fossil fuel to one hundred percent renewable energy is, What about individual consumer choice or shopping? **There is no individual solution to climate emergency in an age of extreme inequality.** The energy leaders of our systems, that's YOU, who serve the vast majority of energy consumers through the DSP, need to maximize affordable, renewable energy in the mix for everyone. Consumer choice *burdens* less educated and less wealthy people. Consumer choice is not a solution. PECO must give all of us, through the DSP, the right to have affordable, clean energy and if PECO fails to lead, the PUC must require better decision making.

I am no longer a little child under a desk cowering in the face of disaster. You may have noticed that many people testifying in these hearings are older retirees: these are the energy customers who have time to reflect and comment and be the conscience for our future. Let's all be the adults now.

The choices you make for this DSP can continue the path towards collective catastrophe or set the foundation for a liveable future. Good choices now are building blocks for a future of affordable, renewable energy for all.

Please listen and lead.

Pastor Rachel Sensenig, Philadelphia

Thank you for listening to the public's input on our energy future. I am a PECO rate payer, a hospice chaplain and a resident of South Philadelphia. I am here to stand for affordable, renewable energy in PECO's DSP.

Recently I joined with other faith leaders to work on getting better lighting in our low and moderate income communities. Better lighting will be good for community safety and energy efficiency.

But I realized, we can have all the light bulbs in the world but if the big energy utilities like PECO keep serving us expensive, fossil-fuel-based energy, we will not have safer, healthier communities.

PECO faces a win-win opportunity: commit to long term contracts that favor renewable energy such as solar, wind and geothermal. As renewable prices fall across the country, PECO customers can join in the financial savings and know that we truly will have a safer, healthier future.

I am a hospice chaplain, not an expert in energy transition. But I understand the moral urgency of moving towards an affordable, renewable energy future for all, rapidly and at scale. Right now PA as a state is lagging behind in this transition. PECO is lagging behind. PECO should not do the minimum that is legally required. PECO should lead the way to an affordable, renewable future for all.