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BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

In the Matter of the Development and Designation of Standard Offer Service in the District of Columbia	Formal Case No. 1017
In the Matter of the Investigation into the Impact of the PJM Capacity Auction and the Establishment of the PJM Capacity Auction Task Force	Formal Case No. 1138
In the Matter of the Investigation into Energy Affordability in the District of Columbia	Formal Case No. 1186

LEGISLATIVE-STYLE HEARING

DATE: Wednesday, June 3, 2026

TIME: 11:03 a.m.

BEFORE: Chairman Emile C. Thompson

LOCATION: Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia
1325 G Street Northwest, Suite 800
Washington, D.C. 20005

REPORTED BY: Alexzandar Nicholi Fullerton

JOB NO.: 8237845

A P P E A R A N C E S

ALSO PRESENT:

Richard Beverly, Commissioner

Ted Trabue, Commissioner

Jason Stanek, PJM Representative

Frank Mossburg, Bates White Representative

Lindsay North, Pepco Representative

Lawrence Daniels, OPC Representative

Romita Biswas, Electrify DC Representative

Matthias Paustian, Sierra Club Representative

Larry Martin, GRID2.0 Representative

Benjamin Burdick, DCSEU Representative

Mason Emnett, Constellation Energy Corporation Representative

Bill Zuretti, Electric Power Supply Association Representative

Van Freeman, DC Solar Savings Coalition Representative

Chris Sewell, Uprise Solar and Roofing Representative

Robin Dutta, CHESSA Representative

Nick Giannotti, Redball Energy Representative

A P P E A R A N C E S (Cont'd)

ALSO PRESENT:

Scott Elias, CleanCapital Representative

Khaled "JD" Elkurd, Solar Solutions Representative

Barbara Briggs, Washington Interfaith Network Representative

Edward Yim, Clean Energy at Lawyers for Good Government Representative

Brad Viator, Power of Tomorrow Representative

Lauren Sidner, District of Columbia Resident

Mark Rodeffer, District of Columbia Resident

Rebecca Barbisch Levinson, District of Columbia Resident

E X H I B I T S

NO.	DESCRIPTION	ID/EVD

(None marked.)

P R O C E E D I N G S

THE CHAIRMAN: Today is June 3, 2026. The time is now 11:03 a.m. And this is a meeting of the Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia being held in the commission hearing room located at 1320 G Street Northwest, Suite 800, in Washington, D.C.

I'm Emile C. Thompson, chairman of the Public Service Commission. Seated to my right is Commissioner Richard Beverly, and to my left, Commissioner Ted Trabue.

This hearing is called into order pursuant to D.C. Code 34-802 and Commission Rule Section 103.6, which allows the commission to hold, from time to time, informational hearings to obtain necessary information or helpful in the determination of its policies and carrying out of its duties.

So let's begin. Due to relatively low load growth, stable fuel prices, and other factors, electricity wholesale prices in recent memory were relatively stable. There was sufficient supply to meet demand. And in fact, many thermal plants retired

due to economic inefficiencies, environmental regulations, or some combination of both.

The result was historically low capacity prices. Capacity in PJM is defined as availability of power supplies to meet the need. For delivery year 2024 2025, the PJM capacity price was $28.92 a megawatt-day. That posture quickly changed.

The confluence of rapidly increasing demand from large loads, electrification, delays in interconnection, delays in construction of new generating units, and additional generator retirements caused capacity prices to spike.

For delivery year 2025 2026, the PJM capacity price jumped to $269.92 a megawatt-day, but that was not it. The conflict in Ukraine and other geopolitical events led to increasing fuel prices, all of which affected the cost of wholesale electricity.

Most recently, the capacity auction cleared at $333 per megawatt-day for the 2027 2028 delivery year. This has led to considerable concern among District residents who are only noticing higher electricity bills.

Looking at this image, well, the District's residential bills are made up of four different parts: generation, transmission, distribution, surcharges and taxes.

In 2020, generation accounted for approximately 20 percent -- sorry -- 50 percent of an average residential bill. But as of January 2026, it rose to roughly 58 percent.

In dollars and cents, since 2020, the average generation portion of a residential bill increased from $35 to $80. That's more than double. Certainly other parts of the bill have increased as well, but this portion of the bill has increased at the fastest rate.

Another increase in cost in the generation portion of the bill is RPS compliance. According to a report by Lawrence Berkeley Laboratories in 2020, RPS compliance costs were 5.4 percent of the bill. And in 2024, it had grown to 15.2 percent.

In terms of dollars and cents, $65 million were paid in RPS compliance fees in 2020, and

in 2025 it jumped to $272.6 million.

Having read some of the pre-filed statements, I want to be clear. I'm not advocating for a change to the RPS statute. That is a legislative mandate enacted by council, certainly outside of the commission's authority.

But I am acknowledging that this is a cause of rising costs and is a cost that is paid by all ratepayers. To date, there has been a robust conjecture about the cause of rising electric bills, but not from those who influenced the generation portion of the bill, no public forums or hearings.

In several states across the PJM region, state legislators have called hearings to inform the public to diagnose the problem and search for solutions. Today's hearing seeks to do just that. This hearing is not only to inform residents about the source of the largest increase in their electric bills but also to discuss possible solutions.

The commission appreciates and recognizes the important job that PJM has in maintaining reliability in the face of a changing

energy market, but the commission has the job of ensuring that bills remain affordable for District residents.

To that end, the commission, based on petitions by OPC, opened Formal Case Number 1183 to analyze affordability in a comprehensive manner and Formal Case Number 1183 to discuss capacity prices. Further, we continue to examine our SOS procurement process through Formal Case Number 1017.

Understanding our limited statutory control on the overall cost of District residential bills, we hold today's public hearing to hear from PJM and invite speakers to explain to the public the issues at hand, the reforms that are currently in place, and potential paths forward to lower costs.

It is my hope that this initiates a series of discussions to inform the public about their energy bills. The commission, through its rate-making authority, always holds numerous public hearings for each rate request that seek to increase distribution rates. That's only 27 percent of the electric bill.

The other portion, this 58 percent that

we're talking about today, needs similar attention. It should not be hidden within our regulatory dockets or in technical conferences where the general public may have limited ability to engage.

To that end, I hope that the hearing today provides the public with digestible and insightful information on all the components of the energy, specifically the electric ecosystem, and how they impact the cost reflected on a residential bill.

At this time, I invite Commissioner Beverly and Commissioner Trabue for any opening remarks.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: Good morning, and thank you for coming to this important colloquy into what this commission can do with regard to generation rates.

I understand that the witnesses have all filed testimony, and I've read the testimony. I know that this proceeding is a little bit compressed, and the written testimony appears to reflect that. If you have anything else that you'd like to add or say to me directly or to the commission, whichever way you

choose to do it, I'll read everything you send.

Thank you.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Beverly.

Good morning, everyone. Thank you very, very much for taking time out of your very busy days to come down here for what I believe is one of the most important hearings that we've had at this commission during my three and a half years here. I want to thank you for your interest. I want to thank you for coming out.

I note the importance, the criticality, of the discussion that we're having today. As the chairman noted, we are facing circumstances that, quite frankly, I don't believe were within any of our eyesight or our crystal balls.

When the city moved to a restructured market back following, you know, Maryland's move to a restructured market in the mid-nineties, we moved in '99. Supply was abundant; prices were low. And quite frankly, I think there's a valid argument that the market worked very well for the better part of a

quarter of a century.

The market was restructured at that point, and I think we would be open -- I think all of us would note that there comes a time when maybe we need to rethink where we've gone, where we think how we move forward.

I want to, as Commissioner Beverly said, thank you for the testimony that you submitted in advance. There are a few phrases and technical pieces within your testimony.

Please pardon me if I ask you to break a few of them down, because, quite frankly, I think that this is so important for the public, the members of our public, to be able to digest it that a lot of the energy-speak that we do on a regular basis will not be fully digested and appreciated by our fellow residents.

And so please pardon me if I ask you to break a few of these acronyms and industry speak down. But I think it's critically important that residents, businesses, all consumers, not only within this city but I would imagine that there's some within other

parts of the footprint of PJM or other parts of the country who are listening in as well.

We are not alone in the challenges that we face today, by any stretch of the imagination. We are far from being alone. All of us are struggling with how to move forward. Solutions are always welcome. And I thank you again for coming here, and I look forward to all of your testimony.

Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Commissioner Beverly.

And thank you, Commissioner Trabue.

Moving into today's program, we invite panelists from panel 1 to the tables: PJM, Bates White, Pepco, and OPC.

Before we begin with statements, I'd like to set a few ground rules. Today's discussion will be recorded, so we ask the audience to remain silent when commissioners and the panelists are speaking.

Panelists, when speaking, please introduce yourself and state your organization. To

speak, press the button on the mic and wait for it to turn green. Panelists are reminded to remain within the allocated time assigned. A timer is provided for you on the right corner of the commission's dais. This will allow smooth flow of today's discussion.

As to the structure of today's hearing, panelists will make their statements in the order you are seated, starting with the speaker on my right. After conclusion of all statements, commissioners will ask questions. If commissioner questions are not directed to a specific speaker, please place your name tag upright to be called on.

So we will now begin with panel 1. Thank you.

MR. STANEK: Thank you. Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Commissioners.

My name is Jason Stanek. I'm the executive director of PJM's Governmental Services Division. Briefly, at a very high level, PJM is your grid operator. We serve 67 million people in 13 states and the 700,000 residents of the District of Columbia. We are the bulk system operator.

We also have some additional responsibilities including ensuring competitive markets and planning the grid of the future.

Affordability and reliability, however, are top of mind. Many of your residents have concerns with their ability to pay their utility bills. And as the grid operator, we play a role in that large amount that you showed on that dollar bill where only approximately 27 percent of utility costs are within the control of this body.

So acknowledging that at the outset, affordability matters to customers, whether they be residential, commercial, industrial, or other businesses.

Just a few days ago, the Energy Information Agency released some information noting that residential prices for electricity in the District went up by approximately 27 percent year over year.

While that seems high and it is high, you look at other neighboring jurisdictions, including Maryland, which went up by 89 percent from last spring

to this past spring. It's caught everybody's attention from elected officials on down.

Yesterday, The Washington Post had an article on Pepco's upcoming rate increase. And they noted, I quote, "The cost for Pepco to buy power has exploded in recent years, jumping from $29 to $333 in 2026." That is not true. People are confused because of the terms that we're using.

They don't buy power; they buy energy. And in fact, they buy electric energy, so electricity. But it wasn't the power prices that went up from 29 to 333; it was capacity. So we need to be careful as we discuss these issues.

But I would argue that at the end of the day, your customers in the District don't really care about the components of the bills. They're looking at the what amount is due.

I can tell you that serving as a state utility regulator and working for the federal regulator, I appreciate these affordability concerns and recognize the limitations that a utility regulators such as the DCPSC are confronting right

now.

There are only so many components within your control on the distribution side. FERC controls the transmission costs. There is effectively no regulatory body that controls generation and supply, although PJM has a substantial hand in the operation of the markets.

I would note for the record that PJM acts as a nonprofit. We are fully regulated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, and we have oversight not only by an independent market monitor but by an independent board of directors.

Hand in hand with affordability is the fact that resource adequacy is becoming a greater and greater challenge. We've been in this business for ninety-nine and a half years, and for the first time ever, we've run short of our reserve margin last year.

We're also experiencing extreme weather and breaking records seemingly every other month. Last year we set the highest winter peak day, and three of our top-ten summer peaks were also set last year.

But the elephant in the room is increase in demand. Increase in demand is partly and largely to blame for the increase in the price of the commodity, the electricity. AI, data center development, electrification of transportation, homes and businesses all contribute to substantial amounts of demand on our system.

We're also seeing at this time a fair amount of base load thermal generation beginning to retire without adequate supplies of new generation coming online. And in fact, nothing significant is coming online in the District in terms of our queue.

I want to be clear, again, for the record, PJM no longer has a backlog of projects waiting to connect to the grid. You'll see that on page 7 of my testimony. Additionally, the District imports almost 100 percent, 99 percent, of its electricity from out of the District boundaries.

While PJM has a role as a market to ensure that the District's supply of electricity remains uninterrupted, having that amount of over-reliance, I would argue, puts the District at a

disadvantage when you look at states that are net energy exporters, including West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Illinois, and some others.

I recognize that I'm at time. I would just like to emphasize that affordability and reliability are linked hip to hip. We remain committed at PJM to working with our states, our regulators, policy makers, lawmakers, ratepayer advocates, and residential customers to ensure that this challenge is met head on.

And we'll have a number of reforms underway right now that we hope will address these affordability challenges. I look forward to your questions. Thank you.

MR. MOSSBURG: Good morning, Commissioners.

My name is Frank Mossburg. I'm with Bates White, and we are the market monitor for the standard offer service RFPs that Pepco holds annually. We're also the technical consultant in Formal Case 1017.

Wanted to do two quick things with my

time today, and they're more for the benefit of the people in the room here since you know these things.

But I wanted to, number one, explain how most generation rates are set for most residential customers in the District and then note three things that we see as contributing to the increase in bills over the last few years.

So how are generation rates set for most residential customers? Most residential customers in D.C. take what is called standard offer service or SOS. What this is is something that was established about 20 years ago, and it is a generation service for ratepayers who choose not to choose a competitive supplier in the District.

You can, if you want to. choose a competitive supplier. Larger customers often do. But residential ratepayers or anyone who doesn't want to do that gets this standard offer service. And again, it's been around for about 20 years or so.

How is it priced? We have an annual auction, so an annual request for proposals, and we have two bid days a year. What we do in those bid

days, we cut up the SOS load into a fixed percentage of blocks. So we call this a block, but it basically represents about a certain percent of the SOS load.

And wholesale suppliers compete. They offer a price. It's a price-only auction. We take the lowest price bid, and what they do if they win is they are obligated to essentially serve this load or absorb its costs.

And those are energy costs, capacity costs, ancillary service costs, as well as the cost of meeting D.C.'s renewable portfolio standard.

And they do this -- these are costs that normally would fluctuate. They go up and down in every hour all the time. And what they will do is take all these fluctuating costs and, for a fixed price, they will serve them. And for residential customers, they do this for three years.

So all these fluctuating costs, we get a fixed price product for three years. We bid out one-third of the residential load each year. So that means right now today, your customers are served by contracts purchased this year, a year ago, and two

years ago. And we do this because it allows for rates to be more stable.

And so if there are rate increases, hopefully they get rolled in slowly. This is obviously monitored each year. That's what Bates White does. And of course it's reviewed by you and approved by you in each bid day. And every year, stakeholders can suggest changes, if they want, to the process.

Something I want to note, this kind of process, there's little tweaks in each state, but it is used in multiple states throughout PJM: New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, Ohio. It's also used in New England too.

So this idea of we have a service for ratepayers who choose not to choose and it's served by a competitive bid has been successfully done for about 20 years or so throughout several states.

Now, in terms of why costs have been going up over the last few years, something that we've observed as we review the bids with you each bid day, we see three components increasing.

Number one has been talked about and will be talked about, I'm sure, a lot today, the cost of capacity. Starting in June 2025, capacity costs increased dramatically. And then that of course gets reflected in these bids.

The second thing is the cost of energy. Energy prices, it hasn't been quite as dramatic as capacity, but over the last several years we've seen energy prices creeping up with each bid. And this is represented in the cost of monthly peak futures that are traded in markets.

The final component is the cost of meeting D.C.'s renewable portfolio standard. Of course, these requirements are set by law. And they are very aggressive, and they have been increasing each year.

And so those costs also must be incorporated in a supplier's bid. And we're seeing our estimate, anyway, of those costs going up quite a lot over the last several years as those requirements increase.

So with that, I'd be happy to

participate in this panel and take questions.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MS. NORTH: Good morning, Chairman and Commissioners. Is it possible to have the slides with my statement? If not --

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not believe we have it loaded, so --

MS. NORTH: Okay. Well, everybody is going to have to play along like you can see my slides as I'm talking.

So good morning. My name is Lindsay North. I'm the director of clean energy strategy for Pepco D.C.

Thank you, Chair Thompson and Commissioners for convening this hearing to hear collectively from parties in the District about this important topic.

Is that better?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, thank you.

MS. NORTH: My hope is that through this discussion, we can identify areas of common ground on near-term solutions and long-term mechanisms

to stabilize the current energy and affordability crisis that we're experiencing.

I want to thank Mr. Stanek and Mr. Mossburg for discussing in detail the resource adequacy challenges that we face within the region and the SOS procurement process. In furthering that discussion, I'm going to be focusing my remarks on supply-side and demand-side solutions.

I'd like to start by framing this conversation in a way that our customers, how they may experience energy costs. Similar to what you shared earlier, a customer bill is broken down between supply, things that generate power like a power plant; and distribution, things that deliver energy like our power lines.

Although it's not exactly the same, you could think of this like a food delivery service. Pepco is the delivery driver, and supply is the restaurant that makes that food. As you cannot see from my diagram, many -- the majority of our current bill is driven by regional supply costs.

As was noted earlier, the District

imports 98.5 percent of its total electricity from PJM. And prices have been increasing due to shrinking supply and increasing demand. In particular, the Pepco zone has experienced significant periods of supply scarcity, driving up prices.

We even saw PJM call their first emergency demand response events for the season in the Pepco region just last month, which is early in the season, considering where we are.

So it's helpful to understand some of the drivers of supply costs and how the commission and the council can influence these elements. As you would see on the slide, some supply costs are driven by regional market conditions and policy decisions.

However, these impacts can be mitigated by running our SOS procurement process efficiently and administering demand-side solutions. For example, through the D.C. post-bid conference, Pepco plans to make suggestions to improve the procurement design.

But the overall decision is a shared decision from all participating parties and ultimately will lie with others to implement those changes.

There are near-term actions that can be taken to preserve the stability of the SOS procurement process as well as long-term stability. One near-term action would be to optimize the value of the PPA agreement which requires Pepco to sign and contract with a long-term renewable energy facility.

In that agreement, all the RECs or renewable energy credits are distributed to all suppliers. Pepco could instead manage the compliance through the use of tier 1 RECs received through our PPA and then, throughout the year, purchase and kind of supplement to help leverage that as a hedging strategy and drive costs down.

This would provide customers the full benefit of the PPA and help reduce some of those costs. We're planning to provide that comment more formally in the bid conference.

Transitioning from supply to demand side, there are strategies which are well known being deployed in the District today or in neighboring states like Maryland and Virginia and elsewhere across this country on the demand side.

First off, battery energy storage, which could be standalone or paired with solar, these resources can charge during low-demand periods and discharge when demand is high to reduce system peaks and reduce Pepco's load to PJM and related customers.

Demand response programs, these are programs that are active in the District now. They can incentivize customers to adopt smart thermostats, batteries, electric vehicles, or other technologies that can have a significant impact on Pepco's distribution grid by operating as a virtual power plant.

In a virtual power plant, these resources can stack multiple benefits. First, customers can save money by allowing Pepco to temporarily adjust how the devices operate to reduce peak demand. Second, these resources can generate revenue as a capacity resource in PJM on the wholesale market.

And finally, we can use these resources to solve local grid needs, potentially leading to the deferral of other distribution investments.

We could also adopt more efficient technology and influence customer behavior through marketing and incentives, things like energy efficiency programs that the SEU run in an expanded manner could result in significant savings to customers on their bills.

Lastly, and this is a topic that's not news, implementing time-of-use rates. These can help lower customer bills, reducing wholesale market costs, support the adoption of beneficial electrification technologies like electric vehicles, battery storage, and heat pumps.

These type of rate designs can further enhance affordability for all of our customers by attracting new customer usage at off-peak times, helping to spread fixed infrastructure costs in a broader customer base.

I'm just going to wrap up quickly if that's okay. So really appreciate the opportunity to speak here today. Affordability means more than just lowering a bill. It's about making costs manageable and predictable for our customers over time.

And it means a customer can stay connected to safe and reliable service without financial strain. In order to support our customers through our current challenges, the District needs a broader portfolio of near-term tools that can respond.

I've talked about a bunch of different ideas, and I think other folks in this room can agree and collaborate around several items that could deliver immediate and near-term solutions to stabilize our rates, respond to the energy crisis with proven technologies and programs, and do so with transparency through a benefit-cost analysis, all while ensuring our system remains stable and reliable.

Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Daniels?

MR. DANIELS: Yes, sir. Good morning, Chairman Thompson, Commissioners Beverly and Trabue. My name is Lawrence Daniels, director of litigation for the Office of the People's Counsel for the District of Columbia.

Thank you for convening this important hearing regarding the dramatic increase in the

wholesale portion of District residents' electric bills and the growing affordability crisis confronting consumers throughout the District of Columbia.

As stated in its notice, the generation portion of the average residential bill has increased substantially over the past two years. For many District residents, this is no longer simply a budgeting concern. It has become a question of whether families can keep the lights on while meeting other basic needs.

Let me make something very clear from the outset. The Office of the People's Counsel is not against economic progress. We are not against technological advancement, innovation, artificial intelligence, or modern infrastructure development.

We recognize that data centers and the new technologies are becoming an increasingly important part of today's economy and everyday life. We also recognize that data centers have the potential to create jobs, encourage innovation, and strengthen economic growth throughout the region.

However, that progress cannot come at

any cost. Economic growth that produces unsustainable utility bills, massive arrearages, and ultimately service disconnections for residential consumers is not responsible.

Growth that turns seniors on fixed incomes, working families, and small businesses into the venture capital fund for data center developers is untenable and unsustainable. Responsible growth must both support and protect the public interest.

OPC's concern is not the existence of data centers themselves. Our primary concern is who pays for the infrastructure necessary to support them. Under the current structure, many of those costs are being broadly socialized to consumers throughout the PJM footprint, including electricity customers in the District of Columbia.

Every month, rising utility costs can contribute to the increase in the number of customers in arrears and receiving electricity service disconnection notices. Behind every customer unable to pay for this essential service is a family struggling to survive.

For many households, it means choosing between keeping the lights on, buying groceries, or paying for medicine. And for some families, falling behind on utility bills can become part of the path towards housing instability or even homelessness.

This is particularly urgent when about 85 percent of low-income households in the District of Columbia spend 50 percent of their income on housing, leaving little money left to support their lives. Clearly, the state of the problem has outgrown the structure designed to manage it.

We are now operating in a fundamentally different energy environment driven by unprecedented large load growth, volatile capacity markets, transmission expansion pressures, long queues for renewable generation interconnection, and affordability concerns that existing frameworks were never designed to handle.

The current outcome of PJM's decisions are sacrificing the public interest on the altar of corporate convenience. Trying to cobble together the broken pieces of that system is becoming a futile

exercise.

A new system grounded in genuine cost causation principles, affordability, and flexibility to accommodate innovation needs to be developed quickly. A threshold question that needs to be asked is whether data centers are a viable long-term model for the emerging information revolution.

If they are not, more efficient and cost-effective technologies must be explored before we are saddled with billions of dollars in stranded assets. If they are, major reforms are essential to ensure consumers are not crushed by skyrocketing energy costs.

OPC submits the following list of high-level changes that need to be made to the system. First, transmission cost allocation rules must better align with the principle of cost causation. Large load customers should bear greater responsibility for the transmission upgrades necessary to serve them.

Existing residential consumers should not become the financial backstop for speculative projections of economic and electricity growth.

Second, PJM needs a more rigorous process for determining whether proposed large load development is legitimate and reasonably certain to materialize. Technology companies are projecting enormous increases in data center demand, yet a substantial number of those projects may be delayed, downsized, or abandoned altogether.

Transmission planning and demand projections should not be driven by speculative growth estimates.

PJM and transmission operators should require meaningful financial deposits or collateral for failed capital investment, contractual commitments, and demonstrated project viability before including large load projects in long-term demand forecasts.

Third, renewable energy interconnection reform is essential. PJM currently has a massive backlog of new generation projects waiting to connect to the grid.

Fourth, affordability must become a central consideration. I'll just wrap up briefly.

Affordability must become a central consideration in wholesale market and transmission planning decision. Reliability, economic development, environmental conservation, and affordability are not competing goals.

Affordability data metrics in the PJM region need to be used as a guide to evaluate the impact of PJM reforms.

At the end of the day, utility regulation is not simply about markets, transmission models, or infrastructure investments. It's about thoroughly examining all of the factors involved in producing and transmitting energy the public can use at affordable prices.

That is the responsibility entrusted to all of us. That responsibility requires us to ensure that the future of energy development in this region remains not only innovative and reliable but fair, affordable, and sustainable for the people we serve. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Daniels. I'm going to pick off kind of where you ended there

because we talk about capacity prices; we talk about the need for more supply, and you touched on that when you started talking about interconnection reform --

MR. DANIELS: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: -- and the backlog.

Mr. Stanek, I'm still used to calling you Chair Stanek. But, Mr. Stanek, PJM has certainly had very well documented issues processing the interconnection queue that led to substantial delays. In your testimony, you talked about that the queue was clear. Just talk more about that and since it's now clear, what's actually getting built.

MR. STANEK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

So the queue is clear. The backlog has been resolved. Effective April 27th of this year, we initiated a new class of projects called Cycle 1. Over 800 projects have entered that queue. We're currently using the next 90 days as an audit period, and then we will provide characteristics of those 800-plus projects.

I would be surprised if more than just a few of those projects, if any, are actually based in

the District. We have seen a change in the characteristics of the projects. The new 800-plus projects, comprised mostly of natural gas, which is the predominant fuel type, followed by battery storage, nuclear, and then in fourth place is solar.

That is vastly different than the queue cycle that we just closed, which was almost entirely clean and renewable energy led by solar battery and wind projects. I think that reflects a change in policies at the federal level, a change in where our developers are seeking to invest their dollars.

So hopefully the 90-day period is running; in another 60 days, we will unveil exactly where these 800 projects are. And then we'll be able to provide the District if any of those projects are actually within your jurisdiction.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. The portion that you have cleared, what do those look like in terms of now that they have assigned ISAs, are we getting steel on the ground? Are those coming online? What does that look like?

MR. STANEK: Slowly. We have

approximately 60 gigawatts of projects with signed ISAs, but not all of that 60 gigawatts will actually get constructed and be connected to the grid.

The historical connection rate of projects in the queue were only about 10 or 15 percent of the projects that actually made it through the queue would connect to the grid. We're hopeful. We're working with a lot of these project developers that have signed ISAs to get through their processes.

But there are hurdles once you leave PJM. You need siting and permitting authority from your utility regulator. Oftentimes we're having trouble with supply chains, particularly for renewable projects that are looking abroad for that infrastructure.

Layer on top of that new tariffs, some of these projects may no longer pencil out. So it's a concern. We need that 60 gigawatts of projects on the system. We needed it on the system last year. Whether or not that's all going to be developed is to be determined.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. A few more

questions. You certainly talked about -- actually, a few of you talked about D.C. being a net importer. And so please anybody respond to this. We're a net importer, almost exclusively a net importer. So it's not even net; we're an importer, yet we have a very robust RPS program.

How is that program factored in to what the District has to import?

MR. STANEK: Well, I would begin by saying that it makes it more difficult to the extent that the District has preferences for the power it's importing. Finding those electrons as opposed to non-preferred electrons makes it more challenging.

And physically you are connected to Maryland's grid. Maryland has a grid that is -- had been traditionally constrained and congested. We're predicting substantial voltage problems on the system beginning next summer due to the lack of infrastructure investment in that state.

The District is not only connected physically, but it's also a part of the Pepco zone, which straddles both Maryland and the District. So

these are other considerations. When trying to import, particularly electrons with RPS characteristics, it becomes more difficult.

MR. MOSSBURG: I'll just add on the renewable side, you know, particularly as sort of alluded to particularly in the solar requirements of your law, D.C. is kind of unique in the sense that solar energy needs to come from D.C. to count as a solar REC.

And so the fact that there's been less development there or development has not been able to keep pace with the requirements keeps solar REC prices high, which means that renewable costs are higher in terms of what finally hits your bill.

MS. NORTH: And I'll just add, and I think you all know this, that the District is constrained geographically. And I think that's why we've seen a lot of other jurisdictions look for other types of solutions that bolster the tools that we could have within our geographic region.

So one thing I didn't get a chance to mention but I think is an important point -- and I

mentioned the demand response call that happened. So on May 18th and 19th, PJM entered a pre-emergency condition on consecutive days within the Pepco zone.

And they actually requested the D.C. DLC programs -- that's our direct load control program -- to respond. And within those two days, the assets that we have in the District provided more than 40 megawatts of load reduction.

And that's in addition to generating over $500,000 worth of revenue from PJM, and those costs go directly back to pay down the cost of the program.

So that just goes to show, I think we've seen in Maryland, Virginia, other places looking at in-state resources that can hit that value stack of reducing the impact on the supply costs and provide distribution-level benefit through solving local system needs, like if there's a substation overload or instances like that.

MR. DANIELS: Yeah. I would say that, just briefly, I'd add on to the points that have been made. Any RPS reform really has to consider the

impact it could have on solar installations. We have seen not only anecdotally, but, you know, through evidence that solar installs can actually lead to savings.

So we would not want to, I guess, engage in any reform that would restrict the amount of extra solar that can be brought on to our grid here locally.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think I asked my question in a poor manner because -- let me ask it a different way because I appreciate the answers, but that's not what I was really trying to get at.

One of the reasons for our RPS is to build resiliency within the District so that we have our own power supply. How is that program -- how is what we generate from our rooftop solar factored into our load forecasting when we go out to SOS? How does it affect us being a net importer?

I'm really looking at it from more that way, not necessarily structural reforms, but how it contributes to supply, basically.

MR. STANEK: Every additional watt put

on the system, whether it be at the distribution level or at the wholesale level, limits or reduces the amount of energy that needs to be imported into your jurisdiction. So the programs that are happening that are being administered by Pepco and private developers in the District are helpful.

It will reduce the load; it will impact the forecast of what the District needs into the future. Those electrons we are blind to in our control room in Pennsylvania because they're happening on the distribution side of the system. But I would say that every bit helps.

We know that there's a number of projects going on across the District, from Barry Farms to the northwest. And we're hopeful working with our partners in developing these forecasts, notably our EDC and, in the District, Pepco to come up with a rational number.

But as we've been seeing, whether it be Pennsylvania, Maryland, or the District, we're seeing noticeable material increases in demand over the course of the next decade.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MR. MOSSBURG: Yeah. On the SOS side, you're going to get -- if you add more generation in the District, essentially you get a couple effects. You can have more than those, but, you know, number one, obviously if you have enough, you can lower the capacity costs from PJM's market.

Also, if that generation is low cost enough, if you can lower energy prices in the District, again, as I talked about in my opening statement, an SOS bidder is going to absorb local costs, local energy costs, that are hourly. So the lower those costs are, then the lower they can offer a bid. So it's going to help lower their bids too.

So those are kind of -- again, more development here locally will help both of those costs.

THE CHAIRMAN: Commissioner Beverly or Trabue?

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: Just one question for PJM and potentially for Pepco. We didn't provide for a round of rebuttal, so I'm just going to

ask you from PJM, did you read the testimony of the other witnesses?

MR. STANEK: Yes, sir, I did.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: Is there anything in those testimonies with which you disagree or you need to clarify as a misconception?

MR. STANEK: I think I did, for the record, in my opening statement. I saw some concern. I largely agree with the testimony of OPC, but I must stridently disagree with the fact that there is any backlog or PJM is either deliberately or unintentionally holding back generation.

We did have a number of years from 2021 through 2025 where there was a significant backlog. That has now been eliminated. We're moving very quickly, ironically, with the help of AI and Google to process applications now in a period of 12 to 18 months in and out with your ISA in hand.

But aside from that, no, I agree with the testimony of the others on the panel. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: Okay.

For Pepco too?

MS. NORTH: Sure. Thank you for the question. I think we tried to address everything I could in the five minutes that we were given. I think there's probably more that we need to dig into and try to collaborate with stakeholders around.

I think the main thing I want to convey is, you know, we've been working with stakeholders in the various working groups that were raised to identify some of these opportunities.

So the things we talked about today aren't necessarily new except for some of the suggestions we may make on the procurement process and in response to the PPA. So I would just offer that I think there's good awareness of some of the challenges we're having with the regional supply issues.

And I think really more of what we need to focus on is how can we collectively agree on a couple of solutions and how to move those forward to address the challenges we have ahead of us. So I'll say that and then may follow up with additional comments after we've had a chance to kind of digest everything that was said today.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: Okay. I just have one follow-up question. Is there anything that this commission is doing or not doing that would make it easier to perform your roles? And understand that wherever the criticism goes, even if it's this way, you can say it.

MR. STANEK: Commissioner, I would say that the District is in a very unique position compared to the other 13 states that we serve.

Because it is effectively a urbanized city, it is difficult to build new generation, whether it be transmission or supply resources. So we understand that. I would just like to recognize the engagement of your colleagues in OPC particularly.

That's a voice where the states are coming together, whether it be utility regulators and other interested stakeholders, to work on some of these solutions that nobody expected 24 months ago. Large loads, I think, came as a surprise to all of us in the industry.

It's not like a new Safeway is opening up down the street. The amount of new demand rivals

that of the industrial revolution, and we are playing catch up to figure out how to solve these problems.

So we're working with our states, Mayor Bowser. President Trump and his Dominance Council have been very involved in potential reforms to PJM.

I would only add that we mentioned the capacity markets quite a bit. PJM is not religiously wed to the capacity markets. It has served and served very well, as noted, for the past quarter century as an insurance policy. And when capacity prices were relatively low, we didn't hear from anybody.

And I would argue that many governors and lawmakers did not know who PJM was, but we caught their attention two years ago when capacity prices went up by a factor of nine times.

That said, when you take a look at the generation supply -- and I'm not trying to minimize the price of capacity -- but it is not broken down; it's blended along with transmission and the actual generation of the electricity.

We're working on that. We recently issued a white paper two weeks ago that I would

commend to your attention that provides three paths forward, and one of them is to reduce reliance on a capacity market such as other states, including Texas, which has no capacity market. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: Thank you.

MS. NORTH: Thank you for the question. I would offer that I think anything we do next needs to have transparency in the benefits and costs through data. And I think we've got a lot of that data, and we've heard a lot of it today in terms of what are the challenges and what are potential opportunities.

I think the one thing that I think the stakeholders in this room have been collaborating on for many years is a benefit-cost analysis framework, which can help all stakeholders kind of measure and understand on a level footing what are the things that we can do and what are the value and impact of those things.

And so I would just urge, you know, the commission -- I know there's been lots of work on it; there's been a consultant that's been hired. So I would just urge moving that process along and

releasing that framework so that stakeholders have another tool to think about and measure against any actions that happen next in response to this.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: Okay. I'm good.

MR. DANIELS: Well, I would urge this commission, knowing that you cannot influence the decisions that are made by FERC and PJM, you can be aware of the impact of those decisions.

So I would ask that you, when making rates, use those mechanisms that closely examine each and every cost that is being proposed, every increase that's being proposed, so that if any increases have to occur that they would be done as minimal as possible without compromising reliability.

I think also the commission -- I think we're on the right path now -- is to use a data-driven analysis with affordability, understanding different metrics, energy burden, of course arrearages and disconnections and other metrics to understand the impacts of rates that are being charged to consumers and to see how are your decisions are impacting those data points.

I would hope that once we have the data metrics in line that we could see, okay, we're trying to incrementally reduce, obviously, arrearages, disconnections, and an energy burden.

So I would ask that we would start to really set up a framework so that, you know, as much as we carefully examine Pepco's ROE, we should also examine energy burden for consumers.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: If I could ask another question in here, it seems to be a consensus that interconnection is an important part of reducing generation costs, at least from our end. So it would seem to me the consensus is that a smoothly working interconnection process on the distribution side would help reduce generation rates; right?

MR. STANEK: Yes, that would make sense. Interconnection reforms both at the distribution level and at the wholesale grid level, which we've undertaken, will expedite the processing of those resources.

On the other hand, we need state governments, District government, to work hand in hand

in order to ensure that those projects receive the permits necessary to build that generation quickly.

MS. NORTH: Yeah, I would offer, I think, for the question, we're fully committed to making the interconnection process and continue to evolve it with stakeholders.

I know we've been actively engaged in an ongoing process for many years, and we continue to evolve in that process and hope that stakeholders have seen the changes that we've made in our interconnection process to smoothen it out and respond to best practices we've heard around the country and to how other jurisdictions are moving faster or looking at the system differently so that we can move at the pace that our customers want to move.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: I had a suggestion for interconnections, smoothing it out, and I'm sure I'll get feedback from the company. I'll wait for that. Thank you.

MR. DANIELS: I think interconnection reform is important. And I think new rules that are being developed right now and implemented, I think

they're good, but I think they're better when they're enforced. When things are not going as they should, I think enforcement is critical.

And again, data metrics, making sure that, okay, we set up rules; we have enforcement. How effective are they? And then once you find out how effective or ineffective they are, then we can make some adjustments. So it's just -- it's a whole model. It's just not instituting a rule. It's the practical aspects of it after the rule is implemented.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: Thank you.

MS. NORTH: May I add one thing?

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: Sure.

MS. NORTH: And this goes to the broader point of thinking about the solutions collectively.

I think interconnection is a part of the solution, but there are a lot of other things that we've seen can move them needle significantly to help, as I said, create more tools for the District to help manage and make our customers part of the solution here.

So demand response programs, virtual power plants, these are things that are actively being pursued in other parts of the country and allow our customers to have another role to play in seeing them help solve some of the distribution challenges and reduce those system costs.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: Just in closing, I think you're mentioning holes that I haven't had an opportunity to discuss with Pepco. So at Pepco's convenience, if you can meet with me and explain to me the rest of what you're talking about, I'd appreciate it.

MS. NORTH: Absolutely. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Thank you.

Good morning, everyone, again. And again, thank you for being here, and thank you for your testimony this morning.

One of the things that I appreciate your laying out during your opening statements was this procurement process.

And specifically, Mr. Mossburg, you go into detail about how we have gone about, for the past

20 years, procuring the energy, procuring, you know, capacity here in the District of Columbia, a model that as we, you know, may say worked well in a low-cost environment, an environment that does not exist today.

How might we think about changing? Have we thought about changing that procurement process for this high-priced market in such a way that we might take -- or we might bring some of these prices back down?

You mentioned some of the volatility that is factored into some of the pricing. You know, is the three-year tranche too short? Might we look at, you know, longer terms? You know, I would think -- you know, I know we have our auction in late December and early January.

I always say that those are times when gas prices are high and we know that we are strongly reliant on natural gas as a source for some of the generating stations within our region. Are those higher gas prices that are occurring in the middle of the winter even factored into the procurement?

I mean, you know, I'm open to any suggestion, changing the timing of the procurement, the length of, you know, the years, anything that you might have, because we are in a very different environment than that which is one, as people say, worked for quite a while but it's not working now.

MR. MOSSBURG: Sure. So there's a couple ways that -- because again, the District is not alone. People are -- every state is dealing with this and trying to handle it the best they can.

So what you're seeing is a couple things that there's -- before I get to stuff we can do within the process, many states are looking at solutions that would supplement the process.

So things like you'll see in Maryland and in New Jersey, things outside -- they're keeping their procurement process the same, but saying, well, we want a procurement to incent new, you know, storage generation or new other generation that will work to add these resources to the market and then that's going to work its way into the wholesale bids.

So that is one thing, and that's kind

of separate. In terms of the actual procurement itself, we could certainly look into lengthening the procurement. The three-year is about the longest that anyone does.

And then the reason for that is a couple reasons. Number one, the depth and liquidity of futures markets, which suppliers are going to use to hedge themselves.

Typically three years was thought to be about the longest that most people can go out. The other thing is in the past, it very well worked with PJM's capacity market pricing, which we kind of need; the suppliers need that to price their bids.

One thing that we're looking -- one thing, though, that we are looking at -- and we have this biennial review process in docket FC 1017 is something that is to split out the responsibility for the maintaining renewable portfolio standards, for meeting those standards.

And again, that's not to do away with them or anything; it's just simply to say rather than bundling them in with these SOS bids, we can split

them out. And that's something that's done in other states. You see that in sometimes in Pennsylvania and in Delaware and so forth.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Has that process worked in other states to help reduce prices?

MR. MOSSBURG: It can. It's going to give you a couple things definitely, and then you hope it also reduces prices as well. The two things that gives you for sure, number one is price transparency. Right now, a wholesale supplier is going to sort of lump that cost in with their bid. And we can estimate what that is, but they don't say it for sure.

So when you split it out, it is more clear. It is more definite. You know what you're paying for it.

Number two for sure, you get policy flexibility. So currently if you want to do something like your long-term PPA or something like that, you have to think about how do I integrate this in with this SOS process? And it gets a little more complex.

But when you separate it out, you're no longer stuck to that three-year term. You can do

these long-term PPAs, long-term REC procurements and that sort of thing. So you get those things.

And then you do hope it lowers cost as well because you are getting the renewable supply directly from the supplier. And you can do a competitive procurement to get the lowest cost that you can at the time.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Yeah.

MR. MOSSBURG: So that's another way to help where lowering costs work in as well.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Okay. I'm the newest of the three commissioners, but I remember we having a conversation with your team after when I was just recently appointed, having seen the first set of bids that came in.

And I asked a question at that time around, you know, we see the number of different bidders who have bid on our load and whether or not that was adequate, whether or not that was providing the robust competition that you would hope would happen and therefore bringing the best prices available.

And I know that some changes have been made. And those have been good, and we've been lately getting more bidders bidding on the D.C. load. Maybe this is a follow-up to Commissioner Beverly's question.

But is there anything that we can do as commissioners to even further bring about more competition for the load that we're bidding out here in D.C. and therefore potentially, if the economic theory is right that the more competition you have, the lower prices you might realize?

Is there anything that we can do from our seats here, anything we can suggest to our city council that might help us, you know, bring about more robust competition as we're bidding this load out every year?

MR. MOSSBURG: So again, you've alluded to this, but I think some of, you know, your current support has been very good. We have made some tweaks in the process which have helped bring in more bidders. And I will say that this process has been very consistent over the years, and that does help.

There's a predictability to it that we find suppliers. Like if things get changed around a lot, that's pretty difficult.

In terms of, you know, additional changes, one thing -- again, I'll go back to it -- but the splitting out the RPS might help as well attract new suppliers because then that's something, as a wholesale supplier, I no longer have to deal with that.

I don't have to put that in my bid. I don't have to go find RECs. I don't have to worry about running short of RECs. So that could be another thing that in addition to the benefits I talked about, also helps bring in some additional suppliers as well.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Okay. Okay.

MS. NORTH: And if I may, I wanted to welcome up my colleague Debbie Sears to see if there's anything else she wanted to offer in response to that. I assume she's going to agree with most everything that was said, but just in the event --

MS. SEARS: Hi. My name is Debbie Sears. I'm with Pepco Holdings. My team is the

energy acquisition team that runs the auctions, and we work with Frank and his team. You know, they're observing what we're doing during --

THE CHAIRMAN: Pull your mic up a little closer.

MS. SEARS: I'm sorry.

We work with Frank and his team. They're observing my team while we're running the auctions. And we're doing the administration work as well as then the settlements with the counter-parties that win the portions of the load.

Yes, I agree with everything -- you know, Frank worded it very well with the RPS. Especially now with the PPAs that we're introducing into the portfolio, when we are receiving these large amounts of RECs, currently it's written that we're to allocate them on a load ratio share.

This way, if we are the ones that are managing this process, we're not worried about if there is a hedge having to go in place to protect for if not all those RECs are created.

We'll have actual quantities that are

coming in and can create a hedging strategy so that we're, you know, working in tangent with the, you know, OPC's desires on how much we should have throughout the year.

And we're getting real-time prices for them rather than, you know, looking at a forward price that might be available three years out when we're bidding on the load. We'll be getting the prices at that time. So as more generation is added and those prices come down, we can optimize that value.

You know, the second piece I think that we, you know, will need to look at too is then as these PPAs are coming in, you know, the breaking out of a portion of a load, it creates uncertainties for the suppliers that are participating.

And additionally, it creates a risk for customers because they're intermittent resources and we'll be having to buy that energy from PJM in the periods when those resources aren't producing energy. And when we're seeing more volatility, that can create, you know, a large cost to customers on top of just the PPA cost.

In Delaware, they have renewable PPAs that we manage where they're managed financially. And then so the customers are getting the benefit of the revenue offsetting the expense at the location of the -- that the generation is produced. But then they get the benefit from those REC for reducing the RPS costs.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Okay. Final question. And this might be a little bit outside the box, but I think we need to do some thinking outside the box right now.

So as I understand it currently, when you guys are going to procure the load for the Pepco D.C. portion of the load, our standard offer service, it is strictly the residents of the District of Columbia who are on SOS. It is not that portion of Pepco's load that is in Montgomery or Prince George's immediately adjacent to the District of Columbia.

You can probably anticipate my question. Is there any potential savings by these two loads, the Pepco Maryland -- you know, the Montgomery County, Prince George's are immediately adjacent to

the District, served by many of the same transmission lines and everything like that.

Is there any possibility of putting those loads together and bidding them out as one, maybe realizing some economies of scale versus separating them out as we've been doing for a while now?

You know, I remember, they -- I think about the old Pepco even, you know, after the 1990 regulation act, it was still effectively, you know, one company serving the District of Columbia, most of Prince George's, and Montgomery County.

And if that's too dangerous a question, if I'm -- you know, maybe it's something that you may not want to talk about here on the record, and we might talk about it separately. But, I mean, I'm just, as I said, trying to think creatively here and, at the bottom line, trying to help our residents. And this is -- yeah.

MR. MOSSBURG: I can just start, and I can say just from an analytics perspective, you know, there might be like a -- you can get more bidders for

more load bid out, so you can get a small gain on the margin. The overall numbers are still going to be dictated by what the wholesale energy and capacity markets are.

So putting aside all the challenges, of course, you know, getting the Maryland commission to jump in with you --

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: I understand, you know, we have an RPS that's different than Maryland and other requirements as well.

MR. MOSSBURG: Yeah. Yeah.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: I understand that.

MR. MOSSBURG: Putting aside those things, if we're talking -- let's just talk wholesale energy and capacity. You know, the prices will still be kind of fundamentally kind of similar.

You might get a small gain on the margin, but it's not going to be, you know, a huge difference by bid. Bringing in two more bidders, it won't massively drop the price.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Okay.

MS. SEARS: Yeah. I agree with Frank that it would not -- I don't -- and Pepco as a zone is tending to trade at a higher price. So I think you wouldn't see a huge savings.

You might see a small savings for the size, but then we would have to get over -- like, they have a two-year procurement versus your three. We'd have to look at the -- there would be a lot of rules that we would have to work out. I think it would be a very difficult path to get there, just aligning the rules between the two jurisdictions.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: All right.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Thank you to all the witnesses.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am going to -- sorry. I do have a follow-up question.

And, Debbie, I didn't catch your last name, but in your few remarks, you said a few interesting things when you started talking about the effect of the PPAs, how that affects the procurement

that we do during SOS, but also the additional things it requires in terms of capacity prices.

One of the things that we've certainly heard a lot about is the use of PPAs and how they can serve as hedging mechanisms.

If you could, one, I think it would be helpful for the public at large to hear about the progression of the 5 percent SOS PPA and why it took as long as it did to get where -- to get that signed, but what it includes and what it doesn't include and what, as a result, it requires Pepco to do.

MS. SEARS: Yes. And sorry. My last name is Sears. I'm Debbie Sears. Nice to meet you.

So -- okay. So the -- I mean, we ran four different RFPs to get to the final -- to get to a finally signed agreement. So that progression did take time. The first occurred during when the PJM interconnection queue was stalled. So it was difficult to find a new project because new was one of the criteria.

The second RFP, we did add that it could be an existing project, so we got a little bit

more response. But that was then at the point where there's starting to be issues with getting the renewable -- the materials needed. It was, you know, right around the COVID time, just following COVID, when there was supply chain issues.

And that is what happened with that agreement falling through. And then now this most recent one, we have a -- you know, we have the 5 percent that's entered into. The project is moving forward, and we're expecting it online at the end of December 2027.

THE CHAIRMAN: And if you could just talk a little bit about -- because you talked about -- you know, you talked about it being an intermittent resource.

MS. SEARS: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: And I don't know if this is a PJM answer as well, but what does that mean in terms of reliability when we start talking about the capacity market, capacity values, the effective load carrying capability, value of solar and what that means, especially when it's not paired with battery?

MS. SEARS: So the effective load carrying capability for solar is quite low. I believe it's about 20 percent. I didn't check the -- eight? Thank you. It's about 8 percent. So for the size of the project, it only gets an 8 percent capacity credit towards the capacity auction.

So while it does -- every bit helps, it is, you know, a lower impact because it can't be called on as needed. Now, if the sun is not shining, we don't have energy, or the wind is not blowing, we don't have energy. So that is what limits its capacity accreditation.

When you match it with storage, it does go up, but then that's an additional expense.

And you're not getting an additional megawatts for that storage on there at the same time because -- you know, it adds to the value in that we can be, you know, storing those megawatts, those additional megawatts being produced, you know, when we might have some excess when the project is generating more than needed and used at a later time.

So that helps with the hedging

mechanism of having the generation throughout the day. But it's not, you know, adding to the total output of that one facility if you have the storage with the solar. But again, it gives you a higher capacity rating, so it has a bigger impact on, you know, the capacity market itself.

As it is, you know, with a renewable project, when if it's not -- if the renewable resource is not available, you don't have generations. So then you -- with this setup, we would then be just going into the PJM market and buying that on an hourly basis.

You know, I was looking at Winter Storm Fern when that hit. And you had very little renewable generation during that time because of the storm, of the conditions, and prices were well over a thousand dollars during that entire time.

And that's a risk to customers that we are protecting with the current SOS product because they have just a flat price that's served throughout the year and those risks are calculated when the suppliers make their bid. So that would take our

ability to protect them from that away.

Another piece that is that for large-scale projects like this, it's difficult to build them within the District. So there's going to be a congestion component. So the congestion comes where it's generated in one location and then it's being delivered in another location.

So we might be selling at, you know, $70 in one location but buying at a hundred. I'm just using made-up numbers. But that can be very close at times. But that spread can get large depending on conditions, you know, generation outages, you know, total load that changes every five minutes.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: One more question, if I may, Mr. Chairman. Okay.

So in 2008, the District passed the Clean and Affordable Energy Act, I think which made a substantial commitment in direction in terms of the District of Columbia realizing that we don't have supply here within our borders or nearby, that we were going to try to reduce our load in the District of Columbia, and probably starting around 2011, 2012, to

make significant strides towards reducing that load, you know, by a percent or so a year.

Have those investments helped us realize savings overall from the markets that you operate and might enhancing those investments help us further along the way? If we can't increase supply, we can reduce demand, which is what we've been trying to do for the better part of 15 to 20 years now.

We have not, in my view, moved on the demand reduction piece as aggressively as some other states.

I mean, you know, I had this conversation with the council many years ago that we were only investing about seven-tenths of 1 percent of utility revenues on demand reduction versus other leading states were investing 4 to 5 percent of utility revenues.

I understand sometimes there's an investment; there's a price up front to realize savings on the back end. But is that something that you're seeing in your market, is being felt, realized? Thoughts about -- please, I see you nodding. I

welcome your thoughts on this.

MS. NORTH: Yeah. Thank you for the question. Yeah, I think one of the biggest things that's changed probably between 2008 and today is technology and the willingness for our customers to take actions and invest in solutions. And so I think the opportunity we have with demand reduction is pretty significant.

So and I know I threw out the term "virtual power plant," which is maybe new to some and maybe not new to others, but this idea of, you know, traditionally we built the grid where we built large generation someplace else and we shipped that in.

Nowadays there are many devices at our fingertips within the District that could offer demand reduction and, as you said, may require some investment up front but could have long-term reducing impacts on the supply side of the bill because they would functionally act as reducers to the supply we have to buy.

So for example, that demand response that I told you about, those 40 megawatts of load that

we flexed between May 18th and 19th in response to PJM, that's 40 megawatts of SOS we didn't have to buy. So that is significant.

And those are -- you know, there are lots of different opportunities to engage our customers where historically I think we were pretty limited to putting a switch on someone's thermostat. And that can be frustrating as a one-way. I think now there are lots of ways to engage customers.

Maybe you have an EV that you've already purchased. What if we pay you $10 a month to manage that load, so you charge it at off peaks in the grid?

Or maybe, you know, a customer is going to buy storage to pair with the solar they've already invested in. What if that resource could be paid a performance payment to operate and reduce demand? So my point is --

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Let me interrupt you real quickly right there.

MS. NORTH: Yeah.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Because you

talked about the EVs, and that's really important. I mean, I think, gosh, over the last few years, we've registered over about 10,100 EVs here in the District of Columbia. We're one of the leading jurisdictions in terms of EV registration.

So I know a pilot project was run in Maryland --

MS. NORTH: Yes.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: -- on just the terms that you're discussing to incentivize customers to charge those EVs between like two in the morning and five in the morning or something like that, you know, very off hours. How well did it work? If it was successful, how quickly could we bring something like that to the District?

MS. NORTH: Sure. So I could follow up with some more specific information because I think that would be particularly helpful. But on the whole, it was a very successful pilot, and Maryland has authorized it to run into a full-fledged program where we have thousands of customers that are engaged.

And you mentioned the hours. I think

the importance of, we call it, managed charging -- the idea is not just set hours because that's like a time of use where you know exactly when you're charging. It's really -- it can be pretty dynamic pretty quickly.

So if you get five cars coming on one single feeder and they're adding load, having the ability for the utility to flex any time within a range, our customers want it. That is that flexibility that can add significant value.

So to your question directly, wildly successful from a customer standpoint because they don't have to change their behavior. They come home; they plug it in and say "I got to be ready by 8 a.m." From a grid side, it's incredibly helpful for us.

And we can provide numbers on the amount of load we've been able to shift and shape and, over the long term, can have -- you know, Maryland is looking at that along with a bunch of other things like demand reduction measures that can actually contribute to our distribution grid running more effectively and potentially deferring the need for

future investment in certain areas.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Thank you very much.

No further questions.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: I mean, just on the last EV thing, I hate to point out the charging times. You know, a lot of people in the District don't have any place to charge at home. They may live in apartments. They may live in houses without any place to charge it.

I know people that stretch electrical cords across the sidewalk and things like that to charge it. But that's probably, I don't know, a mile or hour that you get charging it that way.

If you're talking about people who have to go to a charger, who's going to the charger -- I'm just asking -- who's going to charger at two o'clock in the morning? I'm not doing that.

MS. NORTH: Yeah. I think that that goes to the flexibility of having charging stations where people live and work. So I think, you know, we have a program that we're still running where we're

looking to incentivize workplace charging or on-the-go charging to meet people where they're at.

Because your point is an important one. If it's not convenient, I'm not going to do it. And I think that gets to demand-side solutions where if it's not just a customer wants to do it because it's good for them; it's got to work for their lifestyle.

And the more that we can offer demand-side solutions like a managed charging program that offers an additional incentive to say not only should you go buy that car and we're going to make it easy for you to charge, but we're going to help reduce or give you an incentive to charge at places and at locations or times that benefit the grid.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: Okay. I just have one comment. It's completely anecdotal. But my observation is that with regard to chargers, the people that are using them on these off hours are almost always men because women would have to be sitting out somewhere late at night or early in the morning in places, to me, that, you know, just sitting in a car for, I don't know, an hour or more, two hours

or something like that to charge a car, when you're by yourself.

And even the places where I charge -- I charge at, you know, the Safeway in Georgetown in the basement -- there are almost no women charging down there late at night. So I'm just pointing out that it really depends on safety issues and things like that, convenience. There are a lot of factors that go into that.

Being a man, I feel like I have more options because nobody is going to necessarily bother me, or at least I feel like they won't. So I think safety should be a concern wherever you place these things, but I'm just pointing that out.

MS. NORTH: Agreed. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Last question. It's a quick one, I promise. Going back to the discussion before, do we have at least an estimate of how many batteries there are in the District? I know we keep very robust records at the commission in terms of solar installations, but what about battery storage? Does Pepco have or OPC? Anybody have that? Okay.

MS. NORTH: We can get that information for you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. And maybe somebody on another panel will have that information as well. But thank you. Thank you.

We now invite panel 2 to the table. This includes Electrify DC, Sierra Club, Grid2.0, DCSEU, Constellation, and the Electric Power Supply Association. And after this panel, we will take a brief five-minute break.

And we'll start from the left or -- yes, your left.

MS. BISWAS: Hello. Can you hear me?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MS. BISWAS: All right. Thank you. I actually do have to run right after this so I won't have time to answer questions. But to start, I'm Romita Biswas, representing Electrify DC.

Chairman Thompson, Commissioner Beverly, Commissioner Trabue, and representatives of PJM, Pepco, and the local power community, thank you for the opportunity to testify on the potential

pathways to address energy affordability in the District.

Our energy system is the backbone of the local economy of the District of Columbia. The financial burden of the rising costs of energy has impacted the financial independence and freedom of the people of D.C.

The impact on financial independence encroaches on the survival of small businesses, local economies within the District, and harms the district itself through the reduction in taxes being levied.

Under PJM, D.C. shares the same load deliverable area, LDA, as Virginia. Our capacity costs, which are discussed frequently, are impacted by the exposure to large load growth and the shortage of capacity resources in the LDA, which also have been impacted by the ELCC rating changes.

The energy costs we incur are tied to our own consumption of energy and the lack of generation within the District. When we are unable to produce our own energy or at least control the consumption of our power, we are directly exposed to

market volatility.

We're exposed to congestion driven by demand across the District, the cost to transport that power, and the ultimate need to meet marginal demand through procuring energy at a higher cost. The common thread across these challenges is scarcity.

Our increased exposure to volatility and energy capacity and transmission is due to our lack of local resources. Often, pressure to manage affordability is by suppressing prices retroactively, but affordability is ultimately determined by the local balance of supply and demand.

Therefore, long-term affordability requires building resiliency, efficiency, and affordability into our system in order to reduce the need to procure increasingly extensive power from outside.

In order to seriously consider energy affordability, we must not look for easy winds but we must discuss first performance-based regulation frameworks, expanding the resources we consider local capacity, and passing plug-in solar legislation as a

very brutal summer approaches.

Resiliency in the face of supply chain disruptions, large load growth, and electricity market volatility requires building an efficient self-reliance system. If resiliency, efficiency, and therefore affordability are the primary objectives, then the underlying incentives to achieve those outcomes must be scrutinized.

The District's regulatory framework supports a century-old financial structure that rewards capital deployment and asset accumulation, not necessarily performance or satisfaction of the objectives that impact quality of service like efficiency, resiliency, affordability.

Customers now benefit from service that is affordable, not necessarily capital expansion like we had a century ago. Under cost-of-service regulation, utilities earn returns by investing in physical assets with limited compensation for avoiding costs through efficiency.

Utility incentives remain tied to capital expansion rather than customer outcomes. A

modern regulatory framework like the RIIO which is used in the U.K., standing for Revenue Using Incentives to Deliver Innovation and Outputs, basically aligns utility incentives with customer outcomes by setting multi-year revenue frameworks tied to measurable performance outcomes.

This results in a structured balance, basically allowing utilities to gain a reward for delivery efficiencies while customers benefit from lower long-term costs.

And I think this is something that is relevant for the District because I think we're facing the same misalignment where between, like, utility incentive and customer service, we don't necessarily have the alignment.

As someone with an electrical engineering background, I think the most direct path to technically addressing these challenges is to accelerate the adoption of DERs, but doing so hasn't necessarily been simple. Adoption in the District has not progressed at the scale or speed required to meaningfully impact system-wide costs.

Solar deployment in the District remains constrained in practice by interconnection delays, upfront capital costs, and reliance on things like federal tax credits and SRECs, which do not uniformly drive adoption across all customer classes.

Programs such as Solar for All have expanded access to rooftops solar for LMI households, but they do not begin to address the majority of customers or the majority of electricity consumption in the District.

Given that approximately 60 percent of District residents are renters and 75 percent of LMI households are also renters, a large share of our load still remains fully exposed to market volatility.

And this exposure is most acute during summer months when we have peak demand costs or peak demand events, and the capacity costs are determined directly by our contribution to those five summer peak hours.

Just a couple weeks ago, we had what Lindsay North from Pepco mentioned. We had a demand response event where -- can I go a little longer,

please? -- where we basically had to reduce demand because we already had high heat. And that's not something we're really used to in our region.

But what that does mean is we are capable of reducing our load when required as a capacity measure. And by having enough DER penetration and demand response participation, we can try to ensure that we're not procuring as much expensive power to meet high demand.

So DERs, we're basically using them to soften and shift our peak load and reduce this exposure to market volatility. It's important to note that both Virginia and Maryland, they both face the same grid pressure and affordability concerns, and they've passed legislation enabling plug-in solar.

And D.C. Councilmember Charles Allen has also proposed a similar bill in D.C. which includes legalizing and protecting balcony solar from interconnection requirements.

And also in Con Edison, we have a demand response pilot which basically pairs plug-in battery systems with window air conditioners, which is

very beneficial for renters. And this leverages something that Lindsay North was also saying, which is time-of-use rates.

So one last point I want to mention before I wrap up is, there has been a concern of the SREC market issue; right? But the SREC markets, I think, is an example of scarcity in practice.

Basically, we don't have enough supply, so we're always trending towards alternative compliance payment, which is $440 per megawatt, resulting in a clearing price of around 380 right now. But again, I don't think this is necessarily a failure.

I think what we need to do really is expand what we consider as, like, local capacity that is able to meet that demand; right?

So I think we should be expanding that set of resources to all DERs, right, not just traditional rooftop solar or large solar but also traditional storage, plug-in batteries, and any type of flexible load device that all contribute to local capacity, which is what matters.

To wrap up, I think in order to seriously consider energy affordability, we have to look at PBR frameworks, expanding the resources we consider as local capacity.

And finally, with this El Nino summer approaching, we need to pass plug-in solar so that people have some type of power to make sure that their AC and lights are still running and they're not exposed to coincidence price spikes.

And with that, I conclude my testimony. And I would love to address questions later, so please send me anything you have. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. I understand you have to leave. I'm not -- I think last time I checked the docket, we didn't have your testimony. So if you could, just make sure you --

MS. BISWAS: Oh, no, it is up there.

THE CHAIRMAN: Oh, it is up there. Okay.

MS. BISWAS: I just -- I uploaded it at, like, midnight, so --

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Yeah, we have it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Perfect. Okay.

MS. BISWAS: Yeah.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MS. BISWAS: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: All right.

Mr. Paustian?

DR. PAUSTIAN: Thank you very much, Chairman Thompson and Commissioners. My name is Matthias Paustian, and I'm with the Sierra Club.

I want to make one central point today. Local regulators absolutely do have significant control over the generation-related portion of D.C. electricity bills. Too often generation costs are treated as if they're simply dictated by PJM or by fuel prices.

But procurement strategies including power purchase agreements, distributed energy generation policy, demand response design, and rate structure like real-time dynamic pricing all materially affects what District residents ultimately pay.

I'll elaborate on each of these issues

in my testimony, and there's more in the written testimony that I have submitted.

Leading jurisdictions around the country no longer treat generation cost as something imposed on them. They actively manage procurement risks. They shape load curves. They deploy flexible demand responses. And they use the DER strategically to reduce wholesale market exposure and customer bills.

So first, regarding standard offer service and power purchase agreements, we are scheduled to get 5 percent from a PPA for standard offer service. And around 2020, when we're first aiming to procure those PPAs, we were -- we would've been able to sign PPAs at around $35 per megawatt-hour.

Last quarter, the first quarter of 2026, average PJM locational marginal prices -- that's the comparison to the PPA price -- they were around $88 per megawatt-hour. We didn't procure a lot back then; we procured little and late. But, you know, that shows you what the missed opportunity was.

Had D.C. procured about 80 percent of standard offer service to long-term PPAs around that time at around those prices, SOS customers today could have saved over a hundred million dollars annually at those comparison prices that I just made.

Even securing half of SOS at those prices in 2020 would've still saved us tens of millions of dollars of generation costs.

Now, that illustrates an important point. Renewable energy is not only a climate policy; it's a price stability policy. I think the commission should aggressively examine expanding long-term fixed price procurements within SOS going a little bit above the 25 percent that you're aiming. I would recommend 50.

So let me get into local solar and battery. Local solar directly reduces PJM generation costs and the wholesale market purchases. Yes, we pay for the SRECs, but there is direct monetary offsets on the distribution side.

Because of splitting this thing up, we can't really talk about the benefits because this is

generation only and so we'd be looking at a partial issue if we get into the cost discussion.

Every megawatt-hour generated locally is a megawatt-hour not purchased from PJM. Solar output aligns strongly with high demand summer afternoons, 2:00 to 7:00 p.m. Wholesale prices in PJM can spike into the hundreds of megawatts hours during stress generation periods.

Those are the exactly the hours when solar is producing; batteries can discharge into the grid. Together, solar plus battery storage is a way to dramatically lower these costs.

Leading states increasingly treat distributed solar and storage as a grid cost management tool rather than just an environmental resource. The District should do the same.

Third, demand response and virtual power plans. PJM capacity costs are driven by a small number of peak hours every year. Small reductions in peak demand can yield very large savings in these capacity costs that have spiked.

Targeted demands response that are

aligned to reduce these small number of hours of peak demand charges through automated thermostats, EV-managed charging, commercial load controls, smart water heater, and battery discharge, they can dramatically reduce capacity costs that we are paying.

A 3 to 5 percent reduction in peak demand during PJM peak hours might save several millions of dollars annually in capacity costs.

Vermont is a national late leader in VPPs that aggregate distributed batteries, EVs, in coordinated ways, and D.C. should adopt the same kind of model.

Fourth and perhaps, at some level, most importantly, real-time and dynamic pricing. Most D.C. customers still face completely flat electricity costs, whereas the actual resource costs are varying by the minute, by the hour, in a way that customers don't see.

And therefore, they don't have incentive to affect, you know, when they charge, how they charge, when they do their laundry.

Wholesale prices, you know, do vary,

and we do need to have a way to engage with those varying resource costs through letting the prices show through to consumers. States like Texas and California have moved away towards dynamic pricing and automated demand flexibility using smart devices.

Just to be clear, I don't advocate that anybody would be forced on real-time pricing, but I think these real-time pricing deals should be on the table and every big supplier of electricity should be required to actually put one of these out and people can choose them if they want.

So let me just summarize. Generation charges are not outside your control. You can sign PPAs. You can encourage distributor energy policy. You can encourage virtual power plants. And you can require Pepco or other generators to offer a real-time pricing product to consumers that can opt in into it.

Thank you very much for your time and attention.

DR. MARTIN: Afternoon, Commissioners. My name is Larry Martin. I'm here with Grid2.0 working group. Thanks for the opportunity to address

affordability of electricity from PJM.

I'll confine my comments to solutions. They are in sequence. First, produce more power locally. Second, manage local power generation and demand to serve grid needs. And third, cut PJM costs from capacity charges and create revenue from PJM power auctions.

The decisions made by the commission on the structure and operation of our distribution grid have a direct effect on the total cost of power from PJM in three ways: Firstly, how much power we purchase; secondly, how that power is managed by the grid; and thirdly, the capacity charge multiplier we pay as a result of peak demand.

First, the more power we generate locally, the less we purchase from PJM. The surge in cost of power improves the cost effectiveness of the power we generate locally. The District now has over 262 megawatts of face plate solar generating capacity and an average of 930 megawatt-hours daily.

And it's growing. We've invested millions of dollars in solar, and there are already

many ratepayers in D.C. who financially benefit. The majority of the 20,000 installations citywide are on people's homes.

The D.C. Sustainable Energy Utility has been a key. It's invested heavily in D.C. energy efficiency, and it's been key for solar installations by low- and moderate-income ratepayers, ensuring the benefits are spread fairly.

Third-party verification of the SEU's programs document 2.2 billion in lifetime energy costs. I hope I'm not stealing your thunder. That's more than $3 value to ratepayers for every dollar that we've invested. And the value of that goes up with the rising cost of PJM power.

These savings are alongside 10.1 million metric ton lifetime reduction in greenhouse gases. D.C. is still a part of the solution to climate change, and that shouldn't change. Does our investment in solar and energy efficiency bring down the price of power from PJM? No, but we buy less, and that equals savings.

Second, utility business as usual

creates obstacles to expanding local energy production.

The commission can hasten grid modernization to better integrate solar by streamlining interconnection and incentivizing improvements to feeders and circuits to receive full solar power. Smart grid design also gives us the ability to control our power demand from PJM.

Third, there are steps the commission can take to reduce the price of power from PJM. One factor in PJM's cost of power is the District's peak demand on the five coincident peak occasions each year, the CP5. Simply, if we can reduce the amount of power imported during those peak demand periods, we can lower the rate we pay for our power.

In 2026, the total cost of wholesale electricity increased 76 percent from the same time in 2025, as we've heard. But capacity cost increases are far greater. They've spiked a thousand percent since the '24 '25 delivery year. For every megawatt we can reduce our CP5, I estimate we can shave about $200,000 from our collective bill.

Our high summer peak is about 606,800 megawatts. And by my reckoning, if we wanted to cut our collective bill by $10 million a year, we'd need to shave 50 megawatts from our CP5.

We already heard from Ms. North, PJM, that we have shaved 40 megawatts without even the improvements that I think we need to be making to our grid. So it's quite doable, but not with business as usual.

D.C. could also design grid management such that we could bid demand reduction into a PJM power auction and receive compensation. Improved grid design could help D.C. ratepayers save millions of dollars a year.

There are other dockets where this hearing is important, including Formal Case 1156 where rates and tariffs can be changed to incentivize ratepayers to reduce power during peak periods of the day and incentivize Pepco to invest in batteries on feeders to better absorb solar generation and inject power back into the grid during peak demand periods.

In Formal Case 1166, the commission can

lay down the basics for how to use batteries on the grid.

We learned from the PSC study on battery potential published in 2018 that other jurisdictions have installed batteries to optimize power management on their grids cost effectively. Last I checked, a hundred-megawatt battery cost about $13 million installed.

In Formal Case 1188, the IDSP proceeding, that's the gorilla in the room. Pepco needs to plan how to incorporate new and existing distributed energy resources into the service of the grid and manage the power from them to optimize cost effectiveness.

In broad strokes, a successful IDSP will chart the course for Pepco to facilitate solar interconnection, manage feeders and circuits to meet solar hosting capacity requirements, and use demand-side management, including batteries, to improve power management and reduce the District's demand during the CP5 events identified by PJM.

This is widely referred to as a virtual

power plant. And happily, the commission is in a position to be releasing a contract for that RFP very soon. So we should see what we can do with an RFP for the virtual power plant in D.C.

Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: -- Martin.

Mr. Burdick?

MR. BURDICK: Good afternoon, Chairman Thompson, Commissioners Beverly and Trabue, and thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

My name is Ben Burdick, managing director of the DC Sustainable Energy Utility or DCSEU. We appreciate the commission holding a hearing on this critically important topic.

At the DCSEU, we've seen firsthand the significant challenges many D.C. residents continue to face as rising utility costs, unemployment pressures, and broader economic uncertainty place strain on households across the district.

Today's conversation about the rising generation portion of bills reflects what we are seeing on the ground. Energy affordability is more

difficult for many District residents and businesses and became very evident during and after the extended cold weather this winter.

With the DCSEU running energy officially programs for the last 15 years, I want to begin with one enduring truth that I think everybody here is grounded in, which is that the cheapest megawatt-hour of electricity is the one you don't use.

The most cost effective and durable way to protect D.C. residents and businesses from rising generation costs is to reduce how much electricity is needed from the wholesale market in the first place. Through energy efficient -- through efficiency and distributed energy resource, the DCSEU exists to do exactly that.

Since 2011, the DCSEU has delivered $2.2 billion in lifetime cost savings for D.C. residents and businesses. Every dollar invested delivers $6 in lifetime cost savings. I want to make sure that we get that in there. So for every dollar invested is $6 in lifetime cost savings.

Targeted investments in low-income

communities, which ensures benefits reach those most impacted by rising costs. Investing more than $120 million in programs and services for LMI residents.

840 single-family and 254 community solar facilities installed through Solar for All that will deliver more than $80 million in lifetime cost savings for over 11,000 income-qualified residents and more than 10 million metric tons of lifetime CO2 equivalent emissions reductions.

These programs directly reduce customer bills and blunt some of the impact of increases in generation prices.

Capacity price increases, growing demand, and supply constraints are real and likely to persist. This has three implications. One is that energy efficiency remains a very effective price mitigation strategy. Every kilowatt-hour avoided is energy not exposed to volatile wholesale market costs.

Energy efficiency programs are consistently the lowest cost resource for utilities at a cost of about $21 per megawatt-hour according to a recent ACEEE report.

This is less than half the cost of generating new electricity, where even the cheapest new fossil fuel sources like gas fired plants typically range from forty-five to a hundred and eight dollars per megawatt-hour.

Second, peak demand reduction is increasingly critical. Programs that reduce system peaks help reduce capacity market exposure, infrastructure strain, and system-wide cost passed on to customers.

And consider an example from Massachusetts this past winter. During a cold snap, wholesale electricity prices surged to $520 per megawatt-hour.

Energy efficiency reduced demand by over 2,000 megawatts, saving taxpayers over $1 million and avoided costs in one hour alone. Given the trends in the PJM wholesale capacity, market efficiency programs are more important than ever for the District.

Another important tool to make energy more affordable for District residents is the District

Solar for All program. The Solar for All program has helped lower electricity bills by at least 50 percent or more for more than 13,000 income-qualified D.C. residents through single-family and community solar installations.

Participants in the DCSEU's Solar for All program can see more than $500 in annual bill savings, and the value of this work only increases as electricity prices rise.

Low-income households are under the greatest pressure from rising utility costs and carry a higher energy burden. That remains critically important in this proceeding.

The DCSEU was designed to address these issues by investing millions annually in programs for LMI residents and owners and operators of affordable housing, expanding access to no-cost solar and electrification programs, and targeted interventions that deliver long-term energy bill savings.

As generation costs rise, programs that deliver long-term reductions are not optional; they are essential consumer protections.

The District is facing a structural shift in electricity costs, largely driven by regional forces. What the District can have some control over is how much energy we require from an increasingly expensive system.

For over 15 years, the DCSEU has consistently demonstrated that efficiency can provide immediate reductions in energy costs. Distributed energy resources can reduce long-term exposure, and programs focused on serving LMI residents ensure no one is left behind.

I'll close by saying we stand ready to collaborate on solutions as it relates to future efforts on efficiency for demand response, including things like virtual power plants, distributed energy resources to reduce energy use and costs.

I appreciate the opportunity to testify, and we look forward to working with the commission and other partners on solutions that keep energy affordable, reliable, and equitable for all District residents. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Mr. Emnett?

MR. EMNETT: Afternoon, Chairman and Commissioners. My name is Mason Emnett. I lead the public policy team at Constellation Energy, a competitive power generator and retailer in PJM and across the United States. My testimony is not in the record; I will correct that and get that in.

Constellation operates in every region of the country, and we are seeing the effect of increasing power prices on our customers. As a Pepco D.C. customer myself, I've watched the SOS rate increase over time, and I'm paying that same rate.

But I've lived in D.C. for 30 years, so I've seen that SOS rate go down as well. It goes up and down depending on the market price of electricity and the cost of RPS and administrative costs. That means that to understand where we are today, we need to look at where we've been.

Across all of PJM, the all-in cost of electricity capacity and ancillary services -- that's the electricity component of the power bill -- was generally declining until around 2025. In 2024, the

all-in cost per megawatt-hour was right around $40. Today it's right around $70.

So what was happening when prices were lower? Generators were retiring because that's what the prices were telling us to do. Over the last ten years, 34 gigawatts of generation have left the PJM market. Over the last 20 years, 50 gigawatts have left. That's almost a third of the total generating capacity that's currently operating in PJM.

As for the $70 price today, that's actually lower than it was when PJM started the capacity market in 2008. Back then, the all-in electricity costs range from around $80 to $115, so up to 60 percent higher than it is today.

Prices feel higher today because we had such a long period of lower-than-average prices. Customers saved money; generators retired. Now that we have growing demand and need to build more generation, prices are coming back up to a historic average over that time, and we're feeling the change.

So what are we doing about it? At Constellation, we're investing in our power plants.

We've repowered three wind farms in Maryland. We're restarting a nuclear plant in Pennsylvania, and we're expanding output at other nuclear plants throughout PJM through up upgrades.

We've also submitted 5,000 megawatts of new projects in the PJM interconnection queue, and we aren't the only ones investing, as Mr. Zuretti will share. There are things that the commission could be doing as well.

First, we think protect customers. As mentioned earlier, the current SOS auction design smooths price changes over time, but longer-term procurements would give more protection to customers during periods of market volatility.

It's like a house mortgage. I can choose a variable rate for a couple of years, or I can lack in a fixed rate for a longer time. I like fixed rates because I can plan for the cost, and I don't have to worry about interest rates spiking.

The same is true with power costs. Suppliers like Constellation like longer-term transactions because that gives us the stability that

we need to invest in our generation. And customers benefit by stabilizing the power portion of their bill over a long period of time.

As others have suggested, the District also should get more distributed solar online. I have panels on my roof and lower my energy usage, reducing my power bill, and I lower peak demand on the Pepco system, which reduces the demand for capacity in the PJM market. That's a win for me as well as other customers.

I also agree that the commission should reevaluate time-of-use rates. Pepco D.C.'s current time-of-use rate is essentially the same as its standard rates. So I have no incentive to use my home EV charger at night, even though I know it would reduce peak demand and therefore capacity costs for the District.

And I appreciate that that's not an option everywhere. For the people like me, I should have the financial incentive to do something to help not only my own bill but other customers' bills.

Finally, the commission should support

implementation of the backstop capacity procurement at PJM. We're facing increasing demand after years of no load growth, and we need to fill that hole of generation retirements.

PJM is still working through the details of what its procurement will look like, but the plan is to get that done by the end of the year. That's a critical next step for bringing more power online in the PJM grid.

Thanks again for the opportunity to speak today. I look forward to questions and discussion.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Mr. Zuretti?

MR. ZURETTI: Thank you. Chairman Thompson, Commissioners Trabue and Beverly, good afternoon. My name is Bill Zuretti, and I'm the director of regulatory affairs and counsel at the Electric Power Supply Association or EPSA. I will also make sure that my testimony gets into the record as well, like Mr. Emnett.

EPSA is the national trade association

representing America's competitive power suppliers that compete in all regions that utilize competitive wholesale power markets. Please note that my testimony represents the position of EPSA but not necessarily the views of any particular member.

EPSA members own and operate approximately 225 gigawatts of generating assets, including dispatchable, intermittent, and storage resources across all ISO RTO regions in the country, including over 90 gigawatts in PJM. EPSA members share a deep commitment to electric grid reliability.

Over the last 25 years, competitive energy markets have proven to be the most efficient, cost effective, and transparent way to meet our nation's electricity needs while protecting electricity customers from inefficient investment.

In recent years, for the first time in decades, demand for electricity is rising and is expected to rise significantly by the end of this decade in PJM. While this load growth has brought about increased capacity prices, prior to this step change, PJM had been in a period of flat or declining

load and unsustainable low-capacity prices.

PJM's capacity market cleared at historically low prices beginning in the 2022 2023 BRA and bottomed out at a price of nearly $28 a megawatt day for the 2024 2025 BRA.

These historically low price signals constituted a retirement signal, which some generators followed and opted to shut down, exactly as you would expect. With rapid and historical load growth immediately following these retirements, capacity and prices in PJM began to rise, sending an investment signal, calling for new resources.

As recent data from PJM shows, a significant amount of new resources are responding to this signal and are set to come online in the region with 413 megawatts placed into service since January and over 12 gigawatts currently under construction.

PJM also recently cleared its interconnection queue and has approximately 53 gigawatts of interconnection projects with signed agreements to connect to the grid. However, many of these projects are being held up by issues beyond

PJM's control, including permitting, siting, and supply chain challenges.

In addition, under PJM's newly announced interconnection process, over 800 projects reflecting 220 gigawatts of a diverse mix of resources are being studied in its first cycle.

If even a fraction of these resources reach their operational stage, they will put downward pressure on both capacity and energy prices in the region, the way the market is intended to function.

While we know that load growth is happening, the scale and pace of this growth is still an open question. This uncertainty creates perhaps the greatest risks to both reliability and affordability for electricity customers, that being the dangers of significantly under or over procuring capacity during a time of volatile demand projections.

EPSA remains engaged with grid operators, regulators, and policymakers to identify ways to ensure more accurate forecasts for growing demand are developed to better signal needed investment in generation.

Fortunately, competitive markets remain the best vehicle to protect consumers amidst this uncertainty. When competitive power suppliers like EPSA members invest in generation, they do so without guarantees of cost recovery or an approved rate of return.

The risk of investing in generation remains on the developers and owners of these plants, not ratepayers. As such, EPSA urges the commission to reaffirm its commitment to support well-functioning, competitive wholesale energy markets.

In terms of other potential solutions, an investment environment that encourages and incentivizes voluntary bilateral or physical colocation agreements could be transformative in sparking critical investment and protecting ratepayers.

Voluntary bilateral contracting and colocation isolates the risk of investment to the contracting parties and should be encouraged wherever possible.

Finally, EPSA believes any discussion

about retail electricity rates should include a close examination of the economic drivers impacting retail bills.

Multiple independent studies conducted in recent years have concluded that increases in retail electricity rates in the last few years are primarily due to sustained utility spending on transmission and distribution infrastructure. State and local policies have also driven costs higher.

To be clear, this is not a criticism of necessary utility investments. Instead, EPSA believes it's important to identify the economic drivers impacting retail energy bills as regulators are determining where to place investment risk and how to solve these complicated issues.

Thank you again for the opportunity to be here today. I'm happy to answer any questions or be a resource in these discussions going forward.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. My first question is a quick one for Mr. Emnett. You said that you're a Pepco D.C. customer. You're on SOS? You're not on a third-party supply from Constellation.?

MR. EMNETT: I'm not. Our rate is hire, and so I choose SOS.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. There you go.

MR. EMNETT: Yeah.

THE CHAIRMAN: No, but a more serious question, you know, I think certainly a lot of discussion about supply and the need for more supply.

And I think what my left side of the table -- my right side table more was on the generation -- oh, sorry -- on the distribution side, whereas the other side talked more about it on the transmission side. Specifically, you guys talked about the use of battery to really buttress our system to allow for shifting.

And that's why I asked the question to the last panel how many batteries we have in D.C. because a lot of the solutions that have been discussed really revolve around the intersection of battery and solar deployment.

And so I guess the question from me to you, at least this side of the table, is what really needs to be done to have our battery adoption match

our solar adoption? I'll just put it out there.

DR. PAUSTIAN: So I think what we need is to incentivize battery adoption in a way that specifically incentivizes the owners of these batteries to charge and discharge in a way that is beneficial for the grid and therefore, you know, lowers the capacity cost.

So I think we want to get away from "Let's just build out a bunch of batteries" and say "How can we deploy these batteries so that they're beneficial to the grid and end up reducing costs?" And that's a slightly different question.

And I think the answer there to me is we have to basically allow people to, you know, do what in the stock market you call, you know, buy low, sell high.

You want to -- if I had a battery as a residential customer, I couldn't even say I charge it at night when the wholesale price is, you know, $10 a megawatt-hour and I discharge it at 4 p.m. when the wholesale price is potentially $300 a megawatt-hour.

I don't have access to that price

arbitrage because there is no product for me as a homeowner that allows me to access that kind of tariff. Right?

And then the other question is, you know, if people put batteries in front of the meter and they, you know, discharge and charge in the way that I just said, should they be paying distribution charges? Are they, you know, causing any extra costs? I don't think so.

But I think they would be, the moment they feed into the grid in front of the meter, be treated like that. Although they're beneficial for the grid, they're paying grid fees. So there's lots of things you can get into, lots of little details.

But I think the basic thing is people have to see the prices that would naturally incentivize them to arbitrage, and they're not seeing them right now.

And by the way, you got to change your benefit cost manual because you're not allowing the tracking of these issues on an hourly basis because the benefit cost manual said we're doing -- I can't

remember what it is -- daily average or monthly average or annual average pricing.

Your benefit cost manual can't even capture any of this stuff because of that decision. So -- sorry. Got to say that.

DR. MARTIN: Wouldn't disagree with anything Matthias had said to say there. I would add that it's not only about matching to solar.

But certainly the grid could implement a battery strategy of batteries in front of the meter, batteries owned by, well, the utility or it could be a third party even potentially that would manage energy on the grid such that yes, you could absorb the excess solar during the day, some of it which is being wasted now because the feeders and the circuits can't take as much as being fed in.

But also, the batteries in front of the meter could charge during the time of day, as, you know, Matthias was pointing out, when energy might be less expensive, but then discharge during those times of day and times of year when there's going to be a capacity question or a capacity issue on the grid.

If we could bring down our capacity charges during those CP5 that I mentioned, we could save tens of millions of dollars a year. And that would of course equate to ratepayer reduction, you know, less charges for ratepayers.

So using batteries to manage the grid, not just matched to solar, could be very strategic for how we operate our grid in D.C. It's been done all over the country. It's not even a pilot anymore. This is just kind of almost standard operating procedure in a lot of places, and we're pretty far be behind in taking advantage of that opportunity.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

And then to the left side of my table, I'll ask you one of the questions I asked PJM earlier in terms of, you're a builder; you're the ones who are actually building the plants, and then you're representing organizations that are putting them down. You said both, you know, thermal baseload as well as renewable resources.

What do you see as your biggest impediment to getting new units in the ground? One of

the things that's always talked about is it needs to be this price signal. Well, the price signal is there. It's been sent. We're now two, three auctions into the price signal.

What's going to get these -- whether they're baseload thermal, whether they're intermittent, whether it's battery, what's going to get them built?

MR. EMNETT: Sure. So yes, the increase in the capacity cost, the capacity price, we saw that year over year and we got a reaction to it; right? We got a regulatory reaction of that's not sustainable and it will be capped for four auctions. And so what we look at as an investor in generation is stability over time and regulatory certainty.

Of course, then once you make the financial case, you need to actually be able to get something built, get it through the interconnection queue, get it permitted, getting the supply. That's all got challenges, and I'll just -- let's wave a magic wand and assume that that's taken care of.

But what we need to make the financial

case is an expectation of outcomes over time. Not necessarily a guarantee, but faith that the market is going to be allowed to work. And that's in question right now, to be blunt.

And so we are hopeful that the conversations that are going on at PJM to talk about moving to a longer-term solution, that we'll start to get some -- see some progress there in terms of market reforms. The backstop option that I mentioned, do a one-time procurement to get additional generation kind of on an expedited procurement basis underway.

But it's a challenging time from an investor perspective to not know what market outcomes are going to be over time. So a way you can resolve that is not rely as heavily on the PJM market itself and enter into contracts, so long-term contracts with load or individual customers, and then you stabilize that.

We all have our view of what those market outcomes are over time, but you'll contract and get the certainty that you need to make the investments you need over time. Again, then you need

to get through interconnection and permitting and supply and everything else, which is challenging. But that's our job.

MR. ZURETTI: And I'll just sort of foot stomp the permitting and siting issue that Mr. Emnett referenced. EPSA has been act actively engaged in federal permitting and siting reform discussions. You know, we're hopeful that Congress will pass something at the federal level.

You know, while I know in the District you're unlikely to build, you know, large central station power or anything like that given the District's constraints, you know, you all are impacted by the decisions of other states that make it a little more difficult to bring resources, you know, both on the generation and transmission and distribution sides, to the market.

So, you know, while I think the District can lend its voice to that discussion and, you know, encourage our neighbors to lean into streamline permitting regime, you know, I would note that within the PJM footprint, states like Ohio that

have streamlined permitting and leaned, double-downed on a competitive markets approach have seen a pretty robust response to their generation needs, which, you know, I think all PJM member states and territories will benefit from.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

And then, Mr. Burdick, I certainly agree with you. The cheapest megawatt is one we don't use.

What have you found, from the DCSEU's point of view, to be -- I don't want to say the most effective product, but perhaps that is -- the most effective product that you guys offer that allows customers to really manage their energy efficiency and create savings on their bill?

MR. BURDICK: Thank you, Chairman Thompson. I think historically, and as Commissioner Trabue would be well aware, I mean, historically, lighting and HVAC is our bread and butter. I mean, that's where we're focused.

I think in terms of where we achieve our most cost-effective savings from a customer

standpoint, it's large commercial. I mean, there are -- those organizations historically have had the dollars to invest.

THE CHAIRMAN: Sorry. Move your mic a little bit closer. Sorry.

MR. BURDICK: Less so now. You know, the environment that we're in from a commercial real estate standpoint, but certainly commercial lighting, commercial HVAC historically have been the biggest opportunities.

As codes have gotten more stringent, our ability to incentivize those technologies has gotten more strained. And so I think, you know, we'll continue to have to innovate there.

From the SEU standpoint of what is next for us, I think VPPs, batteries, are what are next for us. And to Matthias and Dr. Martin's points, you know, we believe we can incentivize batteries. We're still working that out in terms of -- but doing it from a GHG standpoint, not necessarily from a demand standpoint.

So commercial and institutional, you

know, efficiency lighting, HVAC upgrades have been certainly cost effective.

And then certainly our engineering team is available from a technical assistance standpoint to go and do the low- and no-cost kind of operational things. And I think that's an area where we can continue to look at demand.

That's something we have not done as much of in the past that we can look at demand costs and helping building owners on that large commercial side and multifamily side, you know, monitor and also kind of model and map out where they're having their biggest demand days and hopefully help them avoid that, possibly through technologies like battery storage.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: One of the things I noticed from this proceeding is perhaps underscoring the need for integrated resource planning, which we're a little late in doing, and perhaps it's not doing what it's supposed to do.

So on that note, for any of you that

participate in the integrated resource planning working group, are you able to get your thoughts that you're expressing today into that proceeding?

And specifically, I see Mr. Martin leaning forward, and that's who I have in mind because his testimony seemed to me to be, what's the word, unpackable. You have it condensed and gathered and layered over in a way that I think there are lots of things that are implicit in it that you may not have articulated.

But I'm trying to pick at this one in particular for integrated resource planning.

DR. MARTIN: Actually, the working group in 1182 met for the fourth time yesterday. We have five meetings planned. It's a very compressed schedule.

And at the end of our meeting, we did talk about how we do not have the opportunity to get into the level of detail and critical thinking and conversation among parties in the working group that is necessary to actually give a good product.

The commission, I think, was reasonable

in setting a timeline where they wanted to get something accomplished. To your point, Commissioner Beverly, we are a little bit behind in advancing the IDSP here in the District compared to other jurisdictions.

So specific to your question, are we getting the chance to say everything that needs to be said? It's very compressed. And while we may be able to put points on the table, we're not getting good discussion because it's just so time limited.

Other states, I think Maryland is into its third or fourth year -- and I'm not saying that's what we should be doing -- but they've had probably ten times the meetings that we're expected to have to accomplish a good IDSP.

Whether or not we extend the time to put out a report on the proposed framework for integrated distribution system planning, setting that aside, there are points; there's a lot to unpack.

The commission and Pepco have opportunities to advance a design for our distribution grid that will lead to a lot more opportunities for

efficiency and for purchasing electricity when it's less expensive, reducing our demand charges. These are all things that we could actually design into our grid.

And it's going to require a good benefit-cost analysis and a robust IDSP to accomplish that. There are a lot of moving parts. I don't have to tell you that. And trying to fit those pieces together in a way that leads to a substantial cost savings for D.C. ratepayers and a more efficient grid is going to take a little bit of time.

It's not kind of like a either or. It's a bunch of pieces that have to fit together very much like a puzzle. Again, I'm not telling you anything you don't know. I think the IDSP requires a little more time than we've given it, frankly, in order to get all these issues out and to think about them robustly.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: Are you requesting more time in the working group, or is there something you need us to do as commissioners to --

DR. MARTIN: Colleagues have requested

more time in the working group. That was really the last 10 or 15 minutes of our conversation yesterday within the working group.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: I was unaware of that. So I'm just -- I'm asking questions --

DR. MARTIN: Yeah, that's all right. Yeah.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: -- with regard to how I think things can be. Some ideas don't turn out with good work products because you're doing them too quickly or juggling too many things.

So I can -- I used to give this example to a former boss when she would ask me to do all these things in a short period of time. There's a limit to how many balls the clown can juggle before the clown drops all the balls. So I'm trying to make sure that we have something that actually gets a good work product.

If you need to file something before the commission to get the work -- to get the schedule expanded -- I'm not saying that's what we'll do -- but I'm saying you can certainly request it. I'm

interested in it.

DR. MARTIN: Good. Thanks. It's good to know. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Let me stay with Mr. Martin and Dr. Paustian for just a moment. In your testimony, written testimony, I believe you talked about, with respect to battery deployment, a variety of different ownership models that were examined in other states.

Were any of those ownership models differentiators, difference-makers? And if some of them were more successful than others, is there any regulatory or legislative cure that might help here in terms of if we're thinking about battery adoption moving forward?

DR. PAUSTIAN: Yeah. Thanks for the question. I appreciate it. This is an important topic. I do not have enough knowledge on the ownership question to give you anything useful here, but I do have a little bit of a sort of differentiation; right?

So you can think about, you know, small

scale behind-the-meter systems within the District of Columbia, then in front of the meter in D.C. And then you can wonder whether we should be doing anything, you know, outside of the District but between us and the feeder serving us.

The number one thing I think you can do to improve the economics is to look into the grid fee question. If you have in front of the meter battery, my understanding of the current tariffs is you charge the battery from the grid; you pay for all of it. You pay for the generation, distribution, transmission; you're just a regular customer like anybody else.

And then if you were to discharge into the grid, again, the people on the other end who would be your customers, they'd be paying the grid fees again. And you'd most likely do this as a front-of-meter large scale battery in a way that actually helps the grid.

You'd largely charge when, you know, costs are low and demand is low, and you'd largely discharge when prices are high and the grid is stressed. So you're actually operating in a grid

beneficial way, almost surely, and yet you're paying grid fees twice. That makes no sense.

The actual sort of generation spread needs to be so much larger to compensate you for paying these grid fees twice. Other countries have just exempted these places from distribution grid fees; right? Because they're not actual stress on the distribution grid. They are a stress reliever.

So there are lots of things like that you can do. And I think the moment you basically allow people to see the true costs and be able to arbitrage the true cost, you don't even need a large administrative program.

You might not even a VPP or an integrated distribution plan -- that's great; it should happen, but I think just let the economics work through. And that is currently not happening.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: All right. Thank you.

All right. Let me come down to my friend here at the Sustainable Energy Utility, as it's kind of a passion of mine, obviously having worked

with the organization for so many years.

When the District started the organization, the investment was low. Returns were correspondingly low.

But over the years, the District moved from, you know, as I was talking with the earlier panel, maybe seven and a half million dollars a year up to a point north of $60 million a year, thankful for some money that we've received from the inflation reduction legislation.

Where are we -- let's say, we're almost at the end of the fiscal year, you know, so going into next fiscal year, roughly where are we in terms of our investment in this very important operation that I think is the lead organization of the District for helping us reduce our load?

MR. BURDICK: Sure. Thank you, Commissioner Trabue. In terms of certainly our FY 27 budget, like many other agencies and programs, is a bit to be determined right now with it at the council.

In terms of, you know, year over year, what's coming from a local funding, our sustainable

energy trust fund, or in some cases sometimes from the renewable energy development fund when there is funding available there and DOE makes that available.

This year we began the year with FY 26 with about $24 million from the SETF for a variety of programs. We kind of separate it into our base contract programs, which really contribute to our overall performance benchmarks.

And then DOE, over the years, has expanded some of our programs to things like the Affordable Housing Retrofit Accelerator, the Affordable Home Electrification program, Solar for All. So that's in totality what was available across all of those programs.

About 18 million of that was available for our core kind of base contract. Right now in FY 27, what was submitted to council was 12 million in local funding from the SETF. And, you know, right now it's before the council awaiting to see, you know, what our -- what the final budget may shake out to be.

With federal funds, obviously we do have some access to, as you mentioned, Inflation

Reduction Act funds through the -- and this is obviously in flux right now with the announcements that came out and guidance that came out this week from DOE. But there is funding available there.

On the Affordable Home Electrification program side, we have to leverage local dollars in order to utilize those federal dollars for electrification projects for the retrofit accelerator. We can utilize federal dollars pretty robustly there.

So right now, very much up in the air, but certainly a significant investment from the District and with those additional federal dollars this year.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Okay. So with the funds that are available to you for electrification this year, roughly how many homes do we think -- you think you'll be able to serve?

MR. BURDICK: Barring any, you know, issues with these new federal guidelines, we're hoping to reach at least 100 projects, 100 units electrified, hopefully fully electrified. Compared to previous years, I think the most we've done is kind of in the

50 to 60 range. So it is an increase, but --

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: But you said you're looking at a significant decrease for next year?

MR. BURDICK: Right now, you know, obviously budget-dependent, that will really dictate how many we're able to do in FY 27. But right now for FY 26, about a hundred units for FY 26.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Okay. Okay. All right. What about for like Mr. Martin has talked about, you know, this peak reduction? You know, some of the -- are there any programs available that you're thinking about, you know, investments to help us, you know, shave these five days that have been discussed here?

MR. BURDICK: Certainly. I mean, in general, obviously efficiency, while we don't have a performance benchmark around it, we did used to have tracking benchmarks around this. But certainly efficiency overall does decrease overall peak demand.

I think, you know, in tracking it over the last 15 years -- I would want to get back to you

on a final number, but if I recall, it's somewhere around 150 total megawatts, I think, reduced in terms of overall demand across 15 years.

But certainly something that we're looking at, as I mentioned, we believe, you know, working with DOE, we need to work these things through.

We have a pilot that we are looking at launching in terms of doing some water heater storage, work with water heaters, aggregating those, as well as some batteries storage.

We think we can incentivize batteries on a GHG reduction basis. So there are things in the work, and obviously our engineering team would play heavily into that, helping some of these larger buildings implement those things.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Okay. All right. Thank you. And thank you for the continued great work that you guys do.

MR. BURDICK: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: No further questions, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: One quick follow-up for Mr. Martin -- sorry, Dr. Martin, on the IDSP conversation. Have you found the consultant who's moderating or organizing the flow and the material to be helpful in the exercise?

DR. MARTIN: Yes, they're well prepared. I think within the constraints of their contract, they've done a good job. I think that they're well aware of the opportunities for using IDSP to improve the design of the grid in the District and our energy consumption and energy management here.

I would add, though, that if we were to look to extend the time of the working group, it wouldn't necessarily require a consultant to do that.

I think that the PSC staff would be perfectly capable of moderating the kind of work that we need to do around debating the finer points of the framework, which is really what we need to get the consensus on, what is the framework for Pepco's IDSP.

We're not actually doing the IDSP in the working group; we're developing a framework for Pepco's development of the IDSP, as you know. So I

don't know that it would necessarily entail having to extend their contract or renew it because we've done a lot of the sort of conceptual work.

It's now working out the details, getting to consensus and, you know, fine-tuning the language.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you. That's very helpful. I don't have any further questions. Thank you, panel 2.

Okay. We will take a brief recess, let's just say till 1:35 by that clock. There's bathrooms out in the hallway. They're right by the elevators. But thank you so far.

(Off the record.)

THE CHAIRMAN: Panel 3, which includes DC Solar Savings Coalition, Uprise Solar and Roofing, CHESSA, Redball Energy, CleanCapital, and Solar Solutions, please come up front. Thank you.

And we will begin with Mr. Freeman.

MR. FREEMAN: Thank you, Chairman Thompson, Commissioners Beverly and Trabue. Thank you for letting me speak today.

My name is Van Freeman. I'm a Ward 5 resident, homeowner, and I'm the founder of the DC Solar Savings Coalition. I'm here because I am a resident, but also I'm a concerned citizen who works with a lot of people in the community.

I've been an advocate. I've been an organizer. And throughout this process, I've learned a lot about solar. 2019, my wife and I bought a home in Northeast D.C. We renovated it, took it to the studs, built everything, made everything our own to where we truly made a house a home.

And if you drive by my house, you'll see the lights, the Christmas ornaments. You'll see everything. And of course that that comes at a cost when you talk about solar, when you talk about energy. But with that in mind, we do that every year because that's what we truly enjoy. That's what my wife enjoys.

And through that, we learned about various programs to offset that cost through solar energy. I'm a beneficiary of the PPA program, so I greatly appreciate that. We had our panels installed

in December 2025. However, they were not turned on till five months later. Personal story, that's what my bill looks like.

So recently, I've been able to benefit from the PPA program. You know, since then, I think it's very important that I applaud all the work that the mayor and the council and you all have done, from the Solar for All program to the Clean Energy Act to the PPA program, which I took advantage of.

I think roughly or nearly 20,000 solar systems have been installed in D.C. Seventy percent of them are in Ward 4, 5, 7, and 8. Those are the areas that need it the most. So greatly appreciate that, and I want to make sure that you all and the council know about that and who really takes advantage of these programs and the RPS and SRECs.

Sixty cents of every dollar goes to supply. And that's what solar helps us with. Solar is our only tool in D.C. Solar is my only tool as a resident to fight against higher bills and higher prices. And I think that's very, very clear and very, very evident, and I want to make sure everyone

understands that.

And with that, I think we should look at how that 60 percent can really be affected. You know, D.C., its rates and its demand has been flat over this entire time. And I think that's due to the amount of solar energy that's being produced in D.C. and the amount of solar that's gone off on each roof and that's in each home.

And with that, I want to make sure I make a clear, concise ask of what I'm asking this regulatory body to do. One of the panels earlier mentioned the value stack.

I think we must be clear about the value stack, not just the cost, but the value that solar brings to the community and that it brings to residents, the value of these programs that it not only brings to D.C. but that it brings to residents, how it makes us resilient from effects of high price and AI data centers in other jurisdictions.

So I think that is one of the main things that we need to truly take a look at and that we need to understand what is the value being brought

to District residents so that way we truly fortify ourselves against high rate increases. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry. Thank you.

Mr. Sewell?

MR. SEWELL: Hello. Good afternoon, Commissioners.

D.C. families, their electric bills have doubled in six years, which is astounding. And that's why we're here today. We're here to talk about what's causing that as well as what's already out there helping.

Thank you all for convening us, and thank you all for giving me the opportunity to share our experiences here. So thank you. I'm Chris Sewell. I'm the founder of Uprise Solar and Roofing. We're a District CBE of 35 employees headquartered in Ward 4.

We install solar, batteries, EV chargers, other smart home technologies for hundreds of District homeowners each year. At the end of the day, we're in the business of delivering electrons to consumers the way they want to consume it.

You've convened us to talk about things that are affecting electric bills, like capacity constraints in PJM, demand from AI and data centers, Pepco infrastructure upgrades. All these I know contribute to this doubling of the electric bills the last six years.

But I want to call attention to an underlying driver that's at the root of all this. And forgive me; I know this is not new to you all. Yeah. Forgive me, but I know this is not new to you all experts. But the root cause of what we're up against is that we're ten years into the transformation of a 130-year-old electric market.

I want to call out two simple market forces here. Electric demand, demand for electricity is changing. Think EVs, think AI; right? And also supply, the mix is changing as well. As things become more affordable, like solar and storage, it's changing the way that the market is supplied.

Consumers want these things. That's why I have a business; right? And more importantly, those technologies can be distributed rather than

centralized. So I want to look backwards for a minute in order to look forwards and talk about how transportation went through a transformation of its own.

Transportation transformed from being structured around centralized technology like trains, subways, trolleys, right, to revolving around independent solutions, cars and trucks. Consumer demand for independent transportation wasn't new, but come the 1950s, sixties, seventies, that became more affordable; right?

You actually watched this transformation in transportation as it not just transformed that sector but also our economies and our society at large; right?

Today's rapidly rising electric bills are symptoms of the same key problem. It's just the same move we're playing out again. Our centralized business models to deliver electrons will not survive against this tide of changing market demand. So again, forgive me as I go to solutions that you all are obviously already thinking about; right?

But the solution that will bring down electric bills and make things more affordable is structuring our businesses, our regulation, our infrastructure to evolve in ways that meet that changing demand; right? There's good news. There are new business models that are already proving what can work.

Uprise is an example of that. Solar reduces electric bills for all of my customers; right? Batteries provide resiliency that customers can't find anywhere else. And we're hired daily to install EV chargers for customers that have already purchased that EV; right? The demand is there. The demand is changing; right?

But more importantly, these technologies provide grid-wide benefits. They're providing reduction in peak demand, avoiding costly infrastructure upgrades. They're reducing line losses. And they can mitigate the reliance on expensive energy imports; right?

D.C.'s 312 megawatts of solar, this is local power that's already blunting the PJM capacity

crisis. With the right storage policies, we could blunt that even further; right? Rooftop solar really is the only way the District can meaningfully increase its own local production, local generation.

If we used half the rooftops that don't have solar today, residential rooftops, about 34,000 rooftops, we could probably produce another 350 megawatts of solar; right? And that's just conservatively estimating half. There is an opportunity to increase our local production and address this current problem.

I'm not being compensated for the grid services I listed; right? That means ratepayers aren't getting full credit either. So what's the value of these services?

And if you'll allow me, I just have a couple more minutes. Thank you.

If 350 additional megawatts of local generation went onto D.C. rooftops right now, what's the value of that avoided infrastructure cost; right? These -- someone in this room should be able to quantify this and have updated numbers, especially as

savings are basically increasing the higher regional market prices go up.

So the challenge before this commission isn't whether the old business model is under pressure; that's just the root cause. The challenge here is to decide are we going to support that transition, or are we going to try and resist it; right?

Are we going to create the future that's a shared resource or another example of the haves and have-nots? D.C. families are already paying double, and I don't think we can afford to give them the equivalent of an H Street trolley in the era of car or into design.

So we need to build the structures that support where the market is already going. And if we do that, D.C. won't just solve its affordability problem, it'll show the rest of the country how it's done. Thank you again for your time, and thanks for letting me participate.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Sewell.

Mr. Dutta?

MR. DUTTA: Thank you, Chair Thompson, Commissioners Trabue and Beverly. My name is Robin Dutta. I'm the executive director of the Chesapeake Solar and Storage Association. We were founded back in 1984 and have been representing solar and now solar and storage businesses in the region ever since.

We changed our name actually about five years to make sure we included storage in our name because we saw where the trends were going.

I'll be submitting written testimony into the record. Apologies that I did not do it before the hearing. But before I jump into kind of my core remarks, I just want to kind of respond to what some previous speakers have talked about when characterizing the solar carve-out as being undersupplied.

What's actually been happening, we've been outpacing the solar demand in the renewable portfolio standard for the last few years. I remember when I moved to the District in 2013 and 2 percent solar carve out was considered -- we were all debating can we even meet it?

We're at 5 percent and growing and currently outpacing, you know, the District targets. So I just wanted to make sure we were all aware of that before jumping in. And it's important to also note that as we're talking about solar deployments and just how popular solar is, I've got -- everyone here is a member company of CHESSA.

You know, we've been active in this region and active in front of the commission and the D.C. council for as long as I can remember. And, you know, what we're able to be doing right now is help to, you know, support the policies that are enabling solar being adopted at increasing scale.

The District and what's being faced now with the affordability crisis, you know, the regional demand growth is a PJM problem. This has become a District problem because the district has become so reliant on PJM and on those capacity auctions. I don't want to dive into all the why; plenty of people have talked about it, your own comments as well.

So I want to focus more on the solutions. In D.C., you know, those who are most

shielded from this affordability crisis are those who have solar are those who have taken energy efficiency measures because it's already lowering their bills. So the increase in Pepco bills, you know, they're somewhat insulated.

And when you also are increasing the amount of solar generation in the District -- and we're at, I think, now a little over 340 megawatts depending on the data source you're looking at -- you know, that is capacity then that Pepco does not have to go to PJM and request.

And this gets into, then, also a lot of the solutions. I remember years ago talking to someone who used to sit up at that dais, Chair Phillips, and talk about, you know, D.C. has no central generation. D.C. has to import electricity as a result.

But with all these rooftops, D.C. has tremendous opportunity to be building on the built environment and to help offset demand and offset generation -- or offset annual demand and peak demand right at the source. It's almost like the second-best

thing to energy efficiency to play off.

And so to go what Ms. North was saying about, you know, the, you know, Pepco can kind of be like a, you know, food delivery, distributed solar can be like good home cooking. It's cheaper, and it probably tastes better than what you're getting from the food delivery.

What we can be doing structurally and what I think is fully within the purview of this commission, it's not trying to influence how you're getting your wholesale generation; it's how do we improve the autonomy and the flexibility that the District has and the District residents have.

First and foremost, and it's been brought up already, load flexibility programs, peak demand reduction programs, solar, continuing to scale solar in the District and adding battery storage to that mix, whether that is paired with the solar or standalone storage.

This can be structurally lowering peak demand in a way that can prevent, you know, transmission lines having to be built for the

District, distribution lines that have to be expanded.

This could also be trying to align the utility business models with not building out new infrastructure but instead trying to look at the non-wire solutions -- not alternatives, I would say primary solutions that bring in private capital and allow the ratepayers to not be on the hook for these strategies.

And just with the time remaining, I just want to make sure I mention the work this commission has done over the last five, six years and longer. I think of the MEDSIS report; I think of the report you all commissioned that was published in 2023 that looked at the value of DERs.

DERs are a lot largely solar storage as well as other advanced energy technologies. If those can be applied or be deployed at scale and with load flexibility programs, that report showed that the District would not have to greatly deploy expanded capacity on the distribution feeder lines which they otherwise would.

We're dealing with regional demand

growth now. The District is going to be having demand growth with regards to electrification, EVs, large load users, perhaps a new football stadium on its way.

And so in order to not have all of that compound the problem, these are all measures that the District can do to be taking care of, providing some cost efficiencies today, as well as insulate ratepayers from the growing demand that will be coming in the future.

Thank you very much.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Dutta.

Next, Mr. Giannotti?

MR. GIANNOTTI: That's correct.

THE CHAIRMAN: There we go.

MR. GIANNOTTI: Yeah, that's correct. And we even got it switched from Zack since I'm stepping in here. So good afternoon, Commissioners. Thank you very much for taking the time with myself, my fellow friends in the solar industry and storage industry, and then of course others who have been speaking today.

As I said, my name is Nick Giannotti.

I'm a co-founder of Redball Energy. We're a D.C. solar company located right here, 16th and L. Washington has been my university home, my family home, my work home for the better part of 30 years. And the solar industry here in D.C. has also been a part of my professional life here for the last 15.

So my business partner Zack, who's also one of my best friends, Zack is a lifelong D.C. resident, born and raised here, gone to school here as a kid. And together, we've formed Redball Energy, which is a long-term buyer and holder of solar assets here in the District.

We invest about $6 million a month in solar here in D.C., and we own and operate over 3500 systems across the District and on the feeder line as well that provides probably about $6 million of annual savings to users here in the area, which I think is important.

Those are homeowners. Those are tenants. Those are businesses. Those are schools. Those are house of worship, apartment buildings, you name it. I think that that number, as Chris just

stated, about, oh, what does 350 megawatts do? Well, you extrapolate that; that's another 60 million of savings from what we did.

And our solar is not, you know, in one or two wards; we're spread out amongst all of the wards. In fact, most of our solar is deployed within wards 5, 7, and 8, which I think is also really important.

We have 19 employees, mostly of which all of those employees are here in the District going into that office at 16th and L. And we impact another probably 150 to 200 jobs here in the District with the people that we work with as well.

So I know that this hearing is more about affordability, so I won't take up my full five minutes for that, as others will more articulately say the things that are needed more than I will.

But I believe in the solar industry as the city has supported us through forward thinking, long-term stable policy, you know, that it is an affordability solution and actually helps and can continue to help delivering better long-term, you

know, electricity rates that are down throughout the reduction of need in the distribution upgrades.

Further, I deeply believe that we should live up to a social compact, one that the city council, the mayor, and even this commission have wanted for this industry for the past 15-plus years.

And that is what I'm here to represent, proof that those of us in the industry have taken the city's goals, put our own financial resources, our own time and effort and talents on the line, to make D.C. a cleaner -- to create a cleaner community, to create hundreds of jobs, stable jobs, and to deliver a local source of generation that we can offset that load growth from the electrification that we otherwise will necessitate the expansion of the distribution system.

So in conclusion, as an industry, we support direct savings for many thousands of city folks who most need it, affordability for those who need it most. And we are a part of that long-term solution in reducing needed system upgrades, not just Redball, but everybody here at this table, and again, people who aren't that are a part of this community.

I know that we are all in support of working with the commission, the council, the mayor's office, Pepco, other stakeholders to make the next 20 years of growth in the solar industry in D.C. as massively socially beneficial as it has been over the last 20 years and ensuring that we study the quantity, you know, and quantify the financial benefits to the grid and thus ratepayers from the incredible density of solar that the city has inspired.

So thank you very much.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Mr. Elias?

MR. ELIAS: Good afternoon, Commissioners. My name is Scott Elias. I've lived in the District for about ten years now, and I'm a director at a company called CleanCapital. We are a leading independent power producer that develops, owns, operates, and invests in distributed solar and energy storage across the United States.

And to date, CleanCapital has invested more than $1.5 billion in clean energy projects serving communities nationwide. We only own and

operate solar currently within the District. We do have storage assets in New York and California.

And to Pepco's comments earlier, we'd love to partner to be able to bring more distributed storage to D.C. because we do think solar plus storage is part of the affordability solution.

Here in the District, we're deeply invested in making clean energy work for D.C. residents. We have invested more than $30 million in the District's solar market, and we currently employ a ten-person D.C.-area team that does the long-term operation and maintenance of systems across the District.

We're also under contract to acquire additional D.C.-based assets that would expand our footprint to approximately 25 megawatts of solar capacity, including 85 Solar for All projects, which are primarily located in Wards 4, 5, 7, and 8.

And as you know, the Solar for All program, under that program, participating households receive a 50 percent reduction in their electric bills for 15 years. For those households, Solar for All is

not an abstract clean energy program; it's a source of meaningful bill relief.

And when you add up the systems that we have, that translates into more than $1 million in annual electricity bill savings. So we're saving households money. We're saving schools, churches, temples, and businesses across the District money.

And that's extremely important given sort of everything we've heard about what is happening in the District with bills and often things that are happening outside of those individuals' controls with those bills.

At a time when D.C. households are facing this rising electricity cost driven increasingly by volatile wholesale markets, the bill credits from D.C.'s Solar for All program and the Community Renewable Energy Facilities program provides a meaningful source of bill savings and helps protect families, particularly low- and moderate-income households and renters, from future rate increases.

And I want to acknowledge a couple things here. Congress repealed the tax credits that

are incentivizing solar and energy storage across the country. And, you know, the stability of D.C.'s local SREC framework is now even more important than ever.

It is now one of the few remaining mechanisms that enables private capital to finance solar projects that reduce electric bills in the District's lowest income residents. And it's important to note that because often where we're doing work, we're not necessarily doing work in urban areas.

We have the ability of the economies of scale of large ground-mounted solar. That is not something that D.C. geographically has the same opportunity on, which means it's more expensive in the District to be able to actually build that solar.

And so I just want to reiterate that the CREF and SFA programs together with the value provided by SRECs for local projects enable investors like CleanCapital to finance the construction and the long-term ownership and operation and maintenance of these D.C. projects that are delivering long-term bill savings to D.C. residents.

And I mention that because

affordability and investment certainty in these programs are not separate issues; they are two sides of the same coin. And the District's successful programs have created what is I think probably the most equitable distribution of the benefits of solar in this country.

I want to sort of pivot to, you know, the commission is obviously right to investigate rising electricity costs. The evidence, as we've sort of heard today -- I won't sort of reiterate it -- suggests that primary drivers of recent bill increases are regional market dynamics largely outside the District's control.

And prior speakers today have talked about why local solar is good for the grid and good for D.C. ratepayers. And I won't really reemphasize that other than to say I thought that the analogy around the pizza and delivery drivers actually is quite appropriate.

And I won't use the same sort of analogy that that Robin made, but when I think about it, what we're seeing is a lot of congestion. Think

about it if you're in the Navy Yard when there's a baseball game; it's pretty hard to drive around. Think about what will likely happen when hopefully the Commanders come back to D.C.

What we are doing through distributed energy and what we will be able to do increasingly better with distributed solar as well is make it so that there is less congestion on the grid. Make it so that when you're ordering that pizza, it arrives on time and it's not cold.

So I just want to sort of emphasize that against this backdrop of what is happening due to data centers, due to what's happening in PJM due to things that are not within your control, against that backdrop, distributed solar remains one of the few tools the District directly controls to improve affordability, to diversify its energy supply, and to reduce reliance on imported electricity.

And that connects directly to what PJM said: an electron on the grid here means less needs to be brought into the District. So thank you.

I just want to, with my five remaining

seconds here, just acknowledge that I think we need to really make sure that we look at the overall benefits and the costs when we're looking at things like the RPS so that we don't chill investment but also so that we are making sure that we are accounting fully for not just costs but also for the avoided costs and for the benefits that local solar provides to this District and to the community as it serves.

Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Elias.

And last but certain not least, Mr. Elkurd. There we go. Thank you.

MR. ELKURD: Chairman, Commissioners, thank you. My name is JD Elkurd, and I'm the owner and CEO of Solar Solution, a locally owned and operated solar company that has served D.C. since 2008.

I moved here personally in 2012 for grad school. I studied energy and environmental security at Johns Hopkins. So this is kind of right up by alley in terms of the situation that's happening.

I don't think that -- I think that there's going to be a lot more meeting meetings like this in the future but more revolving around climate change. And I think, you know, ultimately the solution is going to be doubling down on local energy microgrids and storage.

So but just to kind of dive in, to hear from the perspective of a company that works directly with homeowners every day, it is clear that solar, it has been one of the most, if not the only, tool that has been available to help D.C. residents combat rising electricity prices immediately.

Through D.C.'s RPS and the SRECs, companies like ours have been able to provide solar at no cost to thousands of D.C. families through a zero-cent PPA. Last year alone, we provided about a thousand D.C. households with zero-cost solar. This year we're on pace to exceeding that number.

We've installed about 6,000 residential systems across D.C. with that zero-cent PPA program. And that is because the value of D.C. SRECs covered the cost of building those systems. It's about 70

percent of our business model of what we've done.

And now that the tax credit has gone away since, 2026, about 90 percent of all new business with us has been PPAs because people can't afford to invest in solar.

Solar benefits are extending beyond homeowners. Nearly 12,000 D.C. residents receive savings through community solar subscriptions, and more than 10,000 low-income households participate in Solar for All. Together, these programs ensure that renters and residents who cannot install rooftop solar can still benefit from lower energy costs.

The broader results speak for themselves. Currently there's about 20,000 solar systems in operation, about 312 megawatts of systems installed in solar capacity. That solar deployment has exceeded statutory requirements by approximately 27 percent.

There were more than 3500 new systems added in 2025 alone, and growth continues to accelerate in 2026. So this is evidence that it's a program that is succeeding and delivering measurable

results for D.C. residents.

And as you'll learn from other speakers today, there is a sharp rise in residential costs, but that's mostly generated as a result of regional wholesale electricity market pressures, including PJM capacity costs and transmission costs and broader supply demand challenges affecting the entire region.

It is a supply versus demand kind of economics in terms of what's happening. I know that it was highlighted that there is a cost from the RPS, and that's about 15 percent. And about 60 percent of it is a solar carve-out, so not the entire RPS is actually linked to the solar portion of it.

But even if we did take away the RPS, for example, hypothetically speaking, the rates will continue to go up. But we would be left at that point with providing no kind of immediate relief for any homeowner or business in D.C.

And I did want to mention in terms of like a company like ours, we've installed about a hundred megawatts of solar in D.C. And about 70 percent of that has been PPAs that we have contracts

in place for 20 years to maintain those systems.

A lot of those systems, you know, we are financing those systems. If any changes do happen to kind of the RPS, it would risk the financial longevity of our business and the maintenance of those systems in the long term, but also not being able to provide new systems continuously as we are doing right now.

At some point that the D.C. SREC values, them being of how high they are is an evidence that they're too generous. But I do want to respectfully suggest a different perspective on that. The SREC program is more valuable than in many other states. It's because it's accomplishing what multiple separate incentive programs achieve elsewhere.

Maryland does have lower SREC prices, but they do combine with it the $750-per-kilowatt rebate up to $7500 for residential systems. New York provides state tax credits. So in D.C., the SREC program really serves as the primary mechanism that enables zero-cost solar access.

And it's the reason that thousands of

families has been able to go solar without taking on any debt or making any significant financial investments.

And from my perspective, it is not the time to reduce support for local generation; it's time to expand it. The goal of the hearing is to identify solutions to rising electric costs. We should just, in my opinion, focus on the programs that are already delivering measurable savings to D.C. residents.

Through solar, we're able to reduce future energy costs, eliminate homeowners' electric bills by an average of 75 percent, strengthen local energy independence, create local jobs, and keep energy dollars circulating within our local community.

But most importantly, it does help people stay in their homes. Thousands of D.C. residents are already benefiting from these programs today, and thousands more are waiting.

I do think that there's a benefit and some things here to kind of look at in terms of storage.

Time-of-use, I think time-of-use needs

to be the first kind of focus so that we can enable storage programs in D.C. and some sort of incentive program to compensate people for sending power back to the grid whenever the peak demand rates are the highest.

That can incentivize homeowners but also like a company like mine. If I have 8600 systems that are installed, solar customers, and I go to them and be like, "Okay. Add a battery to your system," there hasn't been much of an incentive, although there is a tax credit still on batteries until 2032.

But besides that, there's not a local incentive because the grid is reliable. But if we do a program like in Massachusetts where you can install a solar system and, during peak demand usage whenever the rate is the highest because there's a time-of-use rate there, they can sell power back to the grid.

And they'll get two to three thousand dollars a year in compensation getting that peak rate by selling power back to the grid during those times. So this can be rolled out very easily for my company in terms of the amount of customers that we have.

We can even look at a PPA model where the company, Solar Solutions, would cover the cost because we could generate that -- recoup our investment while providing the backup ability to our customers at no cost.

So but I'm over time. Thanks for your time.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Elkurd.

First, I'll begin and I'll reiterate I said something at the beginning of the hearing for those who weren't here.

My mentioning the cost of the RPS program in D.C. is not based off of any intention of wanting to change it. It's not even within my or the commission's authority. It's solely to show what cost drivers are part of the bill.

I probably shouldn't say this because it may make me sound biased, but I have solar in my home, and I certainly enjoy the benefits that it provides. And so again, that's not my intention.

My question I do have -- and you actually started talking about some more towards the

end of your testimony, Mr. Elkurd, but I'd be interested to hear from everybody else, is about storage; right?

You guys heard me ask this several times, and I think it would be, one, interesting for me to hear -- because certainly when -- so I think I got my system in 2022, did not really think about storage at all; right? And in hindsight, perhaps that was shortsighted of me.

I'm glad to hear that the tax incentive is still in effect till, I think you said, 2032. But realizing that you operate in multiple jurisdictions, how have you seen battery incentivized elsewhere that could be replicated here?

And then also, anecdotally from the installations that you are doing for customers, are you seeing -- historically, have you seen an increase in storage requests, requests for storage from customers? Has it been the same? Are you getting any requests at all?

Just, what are you seeing out in the field? And then, sorry, last question. We heard a

little bit earlier about supply chain issues and how it's affecting installations and workflows.

Certainly hear about it on the macro level, but certainly curious more on the smaller level, not in a pejorative, but just on a smaller level how it's affecting your business models as well. So --

MR. DUTTA: I can start in talking about the policies. And I can let the companies talk about customers because my customers are my members. So for starters, when looking at policies, you know, states are starting to look at battery storage, incentivize, incentivization.

And, you know, except in specific circumstances where you have these external factors -- could be wildfires, could be extreme weather events, or states that just have very unreliable grids: Michigan, Louisiana being two notable examples -- there's not an inherent -- I think, you know, a few people here touched on there's not an inherent value for backup power.

Battery storage on its own, where you

have customer adoption, it comes down to the value that it can provide for backup power. And no one is going to be going getting storage because of how they can be helping the grid.

You know, this isn't a -- you know, we talk about deployment, and I think sometimes we use interchangeably "deployment" and "adoption."

And when we're looking at residential and CREFs and commercial solar, it's more a question of adoption because all of these solar companies needs a customer to sign, to countersign that contract and say, yes, I want it because it's in my interest.

And then it's making sure that there are policies in place that make sure that's a win-win, not just for the customer but for the community and the grid and, broadly, stakeholders.

The example I would give for policy is to look at Connecticut. The commission there, and when she was the chair, Chair Marissa Gillett, really led -- it was a kind of a corollary to what D.C. did here with MEDSIS. It was a ten-part regulatory docket looking at all kinds of grid modernization.

And one of the products of that was their battery storage program. And just high level, it's in two parts. Part one is an upfront incentive because you cannot leverage what is not on the ground and live. So that's part one.

But one of the big strings with that upfront incentive was you have to participate in the grid services programs that were then developed, peak demand reduction being one of the big ones.

But there are a number of benefits that distributed resources, and, you know, the load flexible assets can provide the local distribution grid within the auspices of a state commission.

And so those systems then get compensated for service, very much like a demand response program for industrial users but instead, you apply the model to all participating types of ratepayers and classes of ratepayers.

So you do that, and even with the compensation, it's a compensation for service. It's a compensation for being called. And it's designed to be offsetting expanded grid infrastructure costs, but

still then and bringing down energy costs.

And even with the compensation for service, it's being done in a way that is lower cost than what would be the more traditional top-down, you know, grid strategy. So that's what I would kind of set as kind of the state to look at.

MR. ELIAS: I would, just to add on briefly, I think there's a couple other states to look at as well. I mean, what Robin is referencing also sort of connected solutions is sort of a program that's happening across the northeast. That's probably particularly something that's good to look at for the residential sort of systems.

But New York has both a retail program as for both behind-the-meter systems as well as front-of-the-meter systems. Illinois is going through a process where they're creating sort of a rebate. And both New Jersey and Maryland are also looking at how do we create sort of these grid services programs.

I would say the main barrier right now is that there's a couple things. One, there's no sort of program to create the market signals that investors

need to be able to actually understand what sort of the revenues would look like.

But I think more importantly, we would need to create a structure where we can work with Pepco and be able to, you know, have performance payments that are responding to specific calls, you know, over a certain duration of times over the course of the year.

That's sort of the general structure that we're seeing is pairing sort of upfront incentives with performance payments or just sort of just a grid services sort of walk-up program.

I'm happy to sort of provide some more information about some of the different programs that are being developed across the country and sort of, you know, continue to discuss with Pepco and others, you know, how we could sort of create that type of program here.

But I think there could be some distinctions between whether you're doing it behind the meter and in front of the meter as well.

THE CHAIRMAN: Any comments on current

customer adoption or any supply chain issues that are affecting your workflow? Or is it more on the interconnection side?

MR. ELIAS: I think it's a little both. I'll just say I'm not actually sure that right now in the District, a front-of-the-meter DG storage project has a path towards interconnection. I know for certain that in Maryland, you're not allowed to apply for interconnection until they finalize their program. That's been a barrier we've seen elsewhere.

I think the other thing -- and this was sort of alluded to in the prior panel -- is the battery under current tariffs may be treated as commercial load, which it shouldn't be.

And so we might need to actually update our tariffs to be able to be able to deploy batteries on the system irrespective of whether there was any other incentives.

MR. ELKURD: Yeah. I just wanted to provide feedback on the demand. In D.C., it really hasn't been that much. It's about $20,000 to install a battery, and I think that most of our customers just

really can't even afford it, even with a 30 percent tax credit.

I think if there was some sort of program that would compensate for it, maybe either a rebate or maybe even long-term revenue similar to the program in Massachusetts, I know we can take a look at different programs out there.

But I think the most cost effective one is being able to sell the power at higher rates during peak demand because then it would be attractive for investors to come in, install that system at no cost for homeowners, and then just recoup long-term investment from it versus just like a one-time rebate that might not even cover a hundred percent of the install. So that's feedback from me.

MR. SEWELL: I won't repeat all the many wonderful things they just said other than we need price signals and so I can share that with my future customers and say, "Hey, this is how it would benefit you economically" because that's, at the end of the day, what drives all of our customers right now: savings or maybe some income that they can make

off of these technologies.

I would define our customers that are currently using it as like practically like luxury customers that have the money to afford it. Like I've had a customer that said, you know, "I have a $200,000 stereo system and I want to protect the equipment with like perfect, perfect electricity." I'm like, all right. Cool.

You know, and the other really -- the valuable one I think at a human level is, like, we have a lot of customers that end up saying -- "a lot" being, you know, dozens; this is not hundreds of customers.

But we have customers that'll say, "Hey, I have to use a ventilator. Hey, I need emergency equipment at home. Anytime there's a storm coming, we kind of have to go to a hotel." So there's almost an economic incentive and definitely a safety and comfort, yeah, health reason to do it. And so we see that a fair amount.

And it helps more on the exurbs where grid stability is a bigger issue. And here in the

city, you know, almost nothing. And we just very transparently tell customers that are interested in it, it's like, we're cheaper than Solar Solution, we're fifteen thousand, not twenty. Right? And --

MR. ELKURD: Do I have to read an antitrust reminder?

MR. SEWELL: And the fact is that it's just not economically, you know, a great investment. And we would love to see some price signals from the market.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.

MR. FREEMAN: I'll definitely chime in on the resiliency part because I've actually asked the group here because I have the panels now. it's like, well, what's the next step? Can I get battery? Because I think about the resiliency piece. I've been through the power outage.

And my kids are like, okay, so are we staying here? Are we going to a hotel? What's going on? Like, what does that mean as far as our safety? So these are resiliency pieces I think of as a homeowner. And then I try to communicate and

quantify, like, what does that look like in policy?

Like how do we quantify that to create a market to say, "All right. If I have someone knock on my door, I need to know what does that look like." Like "Make it make sense for me. If I get solar panels, how much is it additional for battery?"

Because if I price that out of my head, mathematically, I think it was like 30,000 for panels. If you're talking about another 20,000 for battery, that's 50,000 total. Average home price in D.C. is, what, 500?

That's 10 percent of their home price. So either you're going to take out a HELOC or you have 50,000 cash. You're probably not going to get all that. So it's a matter of making it make sense to create that demand signal for people to get it. Because I think the demand is there. You already have it with people getting solar.

Again, this is that tool to lower that home price and home -- I mean the electric bill, and this provides them with an additional layer of resiliency.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.

MR. SEWELL: I would also back up saying that people are interested; they ask all the time. But again, that economic justification is not there.

I really -- I'm going to repeat what I said in my testimony of like, I really would love to understand what the true value is of storage to the grid because I think it's more than individual benefit. It's a grid-wide benefit. And I would love to put in numbers how that would benefit D.C.'s communities and households.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MR. GIANNOTTI: Can I say one quick thing? Yeah. So first off, Chairman Thompson, I would say that even if you did get batteries, don't feel so bad about them. Several years ago, I mean, there was -- the reality is is that it's in its infancy; right?

We're still in early, early days, as Chris just said, about understanding what -- how storage can really help with the grid and help

resiliency. I mean, we're starting to understand it now as people are talking about virtual power plants and how that helps with peak shaving, all of those different types of things.

The one thing I would say is that one of the reasons why I first off came to Washington D.C. to go to school here and study but then also to build a business inside the District of Columbia was simply because of we are forward thinking on lots and lots of things.

We are seen, obviously, as leaders, and sometimes we're not seen as leaders in different areas. But specifically when it comes into energy and energy efficiency, we have really been forward thinking. I think, you know, all of us would say that, and that's the reason why we're sitting here in this room today.

You know, the RPS has been rejiggered, has been reworked, and we've thrived. The industry has thrived. Homeowners have thrived. Businesses have thrived. Organizations as a whole have thrived. And savings in energy; right? Same thing we talked

about with energy efficiency that the DCSEU really put out and managed for many, many years.

So we're in those early stages. And I think that as we start to understand what -- how storage can help the grid.

And as Scott and Robin just talked about about how other markets like Connecticut and Massachusetts are providing an arena for people to invest in that to be able to help alleviate the problems of the grid is really, really like where we should be looking and taking it a step further, leveraging the dollars that are coming in and saying, "Hey, listen, let's do this."

We have a fairly stable grid. We don't see power that goes out a significant amount, even when, you know, when storms come out. We know we -- but, you know, those are when storms come. Like, but when on a day like today, we don't see the grid going out like brownouts or rolling brownouts and things like that.

So but if we could leverage storage to do that, what's great is, like, we have a community,

and I'm not just talking about the solar community. I'm talking about the D.C. community of people who are doers, people who do things and are ready to solve problems.

And I think that's where you guys should look at is leveraging the intellectual and hardworking capacity of the people in and around the room. So anyways.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: Just a question just to clarify. You say that there's a lot of rooftop potential in the District, but what do you see as the most significant impediment to people installing solar?

Just as my -- another anecdotal observation in my neighborhood, to me just looking at it, people are more likely to put a deck up there than solar. Okay. Since I've been on that upper roof more times than I care to imagine, it's seriously hot. So I'm not sure what advantage you get from a deck up there. I don't have one, obviously.

So I was just trying to get clear, what do you see as the biggest impediment? Is it cost? Is

it trees? Is it permits? Is it takes too long for interconnection? What is it?

MR. FREEMAN: I'll take this as the first swipe. I think it's cost in general, whenever you look at it initially. Like I said, I got solar installed December 2025, and I had several people come knock on my door and pitch me with different products and different programs.

And I was like, that math doesn't quite make sense yet for me. I have to look at some things. I had to evaluate certain aspects because I have a growing family; I have three kids now. So my cost structure was changing again.

2019, I bought my house, and things have changed since then. So that cost structure around what it takes to then pay for solar. My neighbor got it before me and he was like, "Man, you got to get this." And I said, "Yeah, it's on my list of things to do." But until it became financially, it made sense.

And through the PPA, it just -- it made sense to do it. I can get it now. They leverage the

value of the SRECs to pay for it over the long term. I benefit from it; they benefit from it. It's a win-win situation.

So I think really it took the math to work out for me in my situation and then really understanding the math behind it to allow, I think, others to make sense for it.

Because I think as people learn about programs like PPA and other possible programs that will come out, I think there will be an increase in the number of people that take advantage of these programs.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: So it may be lack of information?

MR. FREEMAN: Yes.

MR. ELIAS: I just want to --

Oh, go ahead.

MR. SEWELL: Sorry. Can I go?

I would -- I'll just point to my own business and talking to other friendly rivals like JD and some of the other solar companies, like, our cost of customer acquisition on a home-by-home basis is

extremely expensive.

It's 30 percent of my operating budget. So when we're charging customers a little less than $3 a watt, 90 cents a watt for that install is marketing. It's paying door-knocking teams. It's paying salespeople to actually design it and walk through contracts.

It's like the entire process is so extraordinarily expensive. And what we hear over and over and over is from customers, the main objection, it's like, "Oh, no, that's a scam. There's no way it's that good. People have been knocking on my door all the time. Get out of here."

You know, so it's practically just a -- we need a public service announcement saying, "Hey, it's not a scam. It's really good. The city wants you to do it.

"Here's how it benefits you, them, everybody," just like laid out there from a trustworthy source because when we're out there as a private company knocking on a door saying, "Hey, give us your business," it's obvious we can't be the first

source of information.

They got to go do their homework, but they need to hear from folks like you all that they can trust as a neutral observer saying this is good for us.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: Do you have an example perhaps of a state that provides information like you're talking about as a public service as opposed to just a marketing thing from companies?

MR. SEWELL: Yeah, I've seen it. Different states do different things. I like Maryland's structure where they just have a list of installers. They're not saying which one is the best. They're saying this one is bonded, insured, licensed here, you know, meets a minimum qualification. Here's a short list of 20 companies you could talk to.

Because a lot of what people get here in the District is door-knockers that who knows who they're representing, and a lot of them aren't representing one of our specific companies.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: I'm not going to hold you up with this now, but if you think about it,

if you want to send something to the commission or to me directly as to what you think would be useful ideas in the District to boost solar installation, things that we may not be doing that we can do. Simple things.

It could be just information like you're talking about now and the fact that the commission thinks that it is not that this is the best deal but that you're not being fleeced or some kind of flimflam artist, which I'm sure there are some.

But if you're looking for the endorsement of the commission that this is a legitimate company that can provide something to use, maybe that's a useful thing. So if you think about it, and you can send it to me, whatever you think your ideas -- you know, whatever idea you have, I'd be interested in looking at it.

MR. DUTTA: CHESSA members adhere to a business code of conduct, so the flimflam artists will be non-members. But I would echo that cost and education are two of the big barriers for adoption. Sometimes it's also process. And so I'll be clear.

This comment I'm making is kind of more generic, not District-specific.

But the adoption of advanced energy technologies, if you're doing a home energy retrofit, it's not just getting solar and storage. Right now with storage, there are questions: you know, what's the zoning? What's the permitting? Where can you install it? Is it inside the home only? Is it outside the home?

Not every single-family home or duplex has a garage. When we think about, you know, residential battery storage adoption, when you see all the stock photos and videos, it's a larger single-family home, not a row home, that has a garage.

So can you install it on the outside? How do you connect it with an electric vehicle? So there's a lot of smaller things as people are thinking about not just solar or storage or EVs, they're thinking about everything all at once.

Or they're thinking about how to lower the cost of electricity for their home. They're thinking about efficiency and closing up the building

envelope as part of everything. And that's even more complicated when we're talking about commercial and multifamily buildings and what that process is.

So I would say that some of it's on the front end and then it's the cost, but then it's also just what is the user experience to go through, you know, design, permitting, interconnection.

I'd say more I think we would find that that supply chain disruptions are occurring with regards to grid upgrade components. And that's a national issue. So do you have to wait for the grid to be upgraded before your system can be interconnected with the utility?

And so the longer it takes, the more it costs, and the more the customers are kind of questioning, "Is this going to happen?" when a lot of this is then outside of the solar company's control.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: Is part of the installation cost upgrading the circuit box?

MR. DUTTA: Yeah. Sometimes, yes. With battery storage, it can be. There are also components that -- like meter circuit collars that can

be installed that then kind of remove the need to upgrade the breaker box for a home. So there's a lot of different options.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: Okay.

MR. ELIAS: I think, just to piggyback on that, I think that question, the uncertainty and that cost is actually one of the drivers of additional costs; right? So interior connection cost and timing uncertainty, we've estimated, adds up about a dollar a watt to build costs, which is roughly a third of build costs.

So that's not insignificant. And I think, you know, there's a lot of talk about interconnection. Obviously, you all, the D.C. council, can't fix PJM transmission interconnection, but we can do more to fix distribution level interconnection.

And so I'm sure Robin would be happy to elevate CHESSA's recommendations from the interconnection technical conference that recently happened. But I think there's some good ideas in there about tangible things that the District can do

to speed up that because that is a major barrier, particularly for non-residential solar.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: I'm just thinking in terms of information now. For certain communities, the houses are like mine; they're exactly the same. You know, the whole block is the same house. We would all face the same kind of issues with regard to storage, battery storage or solar or anything like that.

Some of the housing is different in that all of them probably had high skylights and some of them eliminated them for various reasons and there's no skylights. So there may be issues with regard to that.

But if you had something that was informational that could tell people in a particular neighborhood at a glance that I have that same situation, I can kind of tell what I face in terms of pricing in looking at, do I need to get rid of the skylight? Do I have to put a place in the back for storage?

Everybody has the same limitation with

regard to the square feet of the backyard roughly, you know, that kind of thing.

MR. ELKURD: And if you don't mind, I want to jump in to provide and answer as well. And I do think that it is a constant education. There was that email that came out last year by the attorney general's office about be worrying about solar scams, and I think that that was, like, very far-reaching.

I don't think that there was any kind of, like, follow-up to provide a kind of resource to be like, you know, who are legitimate solar companies. I think that that could be something that could be worked on. I know that the DOE sends out letters about solar co-ops.

I think maybe a resource letter to provide just solar education with a list of CBE firms that are like solar CBE firms. That way we make sure that they're local D.C. companies; they are licensed and bonded correctly.

And in terms of your question about upgrades, grid upgrades account for -- about 9 percent of solar systems right now do get declined for solar

because they require grid upgrades to their home: thirty, forty thousand, sometimes even more.

We've been trying to push a solution that if we can couple a battery with it to solve that problem because the idea is is that you can't export any power back onto the grid because the transformer is maxed out.

Well, what if we install a battery? That way all the excess power is just being stored on site and there's nothing that's being exported. So I think that that could be a solution to be able to tap in additional 10 percent of the market share.

And also PPAs, the PPAs that Solar Solution does offer, we are able to cover some of the costs. Like you said, some of these homes are built a hundred years ago. They do require electric panel upgrades. They do require new roofs.

They do require structural upgrades to support the roof because they were built a hundred years ago. They're not up to the current snow loads. So PPAs do cover the build in cost for those with no upfront out-of-pocket costs for the homeowners. So

that's something that is helping there.

MR. GIANNOTTI: One last thing. I don't have the date on it, but anecdotally, I mean, when you think about residential solar, solar is going up on -- or any solar, if solar is going up on a roof, it's meant to be up there as an energy infrastructure power plant for 30-plus years.

And so if a roof is not up to standard, you know, that's going to be an impediment for anybody. And that's going to -- you know, commercial real estate in this market in this community is pretty expensive real estate.

And so the reality is is that, is the juice worth the squeeze to put solar up on my roof versus the things that are going on below my roof or further expansion and further development. So those are -- those can be impediments.

Again, I don't have any data around that other than when I've talked to people, you know, over the past 15 years of my business career in the solar industry.

And so but you know, there's -- I think

from an educational perspective, everybody knows what's going on here, knows that solar is a big thing. It's hard to go down and drive down a street and not see somebody putting up something that talks about "I got solar; call me," you know, something of that sort. So --

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: Well, just as you're talking about it, it reminds me that the lifespan of the roof itself is probably factored into whether and when you put the solar on; right?

MR. GIANNOTTI: Absolutely.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: So if my roof is expiring in the next five years in terms of it has a 15-, 20-year lifespan, it's expiring the next five years and I might not want to put up --

MR. GIANNOTTI: One should have a conversation with that person about, like, whether it's the right thing to do or if it's a flimflammy person; right? You want to do what's right for everybody. And I think I'm sure that that comes up more often than none. Yeah.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: I'll have one

clarifying question at the end. But I have worked with so many of you over the last 15 or so years, I don't have a lot of extensive questions right now.

I think you know where I stand in terms of your community and the outstanding work that you do here in the city and the benefits that you bring directly to our residents in an extremely tangible way. I'm going to talk about one of them in just a second.

But, Mr. Freeman, you offered, at the beginning of your comments, a thought about the majority of solar in the city as concentrated in Wards 4, 5, 7, and 8. I think someone else echoed that sentiment, which is a very interesting observation.

You know, when I started working with some of you going back almost 15 years ago, you wouldn't be able to make a statement like that. The map of solar installations in the city looked extremely different than what it looks like today.

When I started working with you guys, we took a look at a map of wards concentrating our solar in the income-qualified community.

We took a look at a map and found that there were about 11 solar installations in Ward 7, about less than that in Ward 8, about a dozen in Ward 5. You're talking about a third of the city that had less than 40 or so solar installations.

And you have seen, I think through very intentional work, a lion's share shift to the point where there was this -- some few years ago, two or three years ago, there were more solar systems in Ward 7 than there were in Ward 3, which I think is a huge statement about the equity that we're deploying here and the benefits that we're bringing to the residents of this city.

I remember after installing, us working with the D.C. Sustainable Energy Utility -- full disclosure, you guys know I ran the organization for over a decade -- after we installed solar on a particular lady's house out in Ward 7, we went back to check order a year later to see how she was doing.

And she said, "Well, you know, I used to get around with my BMW." And I said, "What?" She said, "Bike, metro, or walk." That was her BMW. She

said, "Now that I have solar on my house and I've been saving so much money, for the first time in my life, I've been able to buy a car." She bought a used car.

She said, "I can take my son to football practice," which was a life-changing event, the first car that this lady had ever owned. And I was just so proud of the work. I mean, I got up on one roof one time, almost had a heart attack up there. I couldn't do this stuff. It's difficult. It's hot up on these roofs.

It is really tough manual labor when you're doing these installations. And you guys know, and the crews that you've trained and the number of D.C. residents that you've brought into this industry, I look at Nicole Rentz back there who was, you know, legislative director in Mary Cheh's office who was making sure that we had the resources that we needed to get this work done.

There's so many people I see out here who really, really worked with us over the way.

And then on the affordability side, you know, when members of the Sierra Club came to us and

talked about starting an electrification program and we looked at not only the cost of converting these houses from gas furnaces and water heaters and stoves over to all the electric but what it would do to the energy burden for the resident, and what we found was that even five, seven years ago, the cost of energy at that time, which was significantly lower than it is today, was going to increase the resident's overall energy burden.

So being able, as we converted those homes from gas to all electric, to connect those homeowners to a community solar facility or put solar directly on the roof itself was vitally important to making sure that the residents overall energy burden didn't go up.

And so that's, you know, the work that comes out of this industry and the benefits that come out of this industry and making sure that we maintain affordability. But JD, you said something a couple of minutes ago, and I don't know if I heard you correctly.

You said a certain percent of

applications for solar now are being declined. What was that percent?

MR. ELKURD: Nine percent.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Ninety?

MR. ELKURD: Nine.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Nine. Nine. Okay. Good. Nine. Because of necessary upgrades to Pepco's distribution system. Is that like twenty, twenty-five thousand dollars for a transformer that's needed, or is it something beyond that that you're --

MR. ELKURD: It is typically for transformer upgrades. I think the average cost is coming back around $40,000 for each homeowner, average cost. Some can be as low as 1500 bucks. It can go up to 200,000.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Up to 200,000?

MR. ELKURD: We've seen costs go up to 200,000.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: For a single family solar?

MR. ELKURD: If I'm not mistaken.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: And what would

those costs cover? I mean, obviously no one is paying them, but what is the --

MR. ELKURD: Transformer upgrades, when they get that costly, they're pretty much underground and they -- I'm not exactly certain about that specific scenario.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Okay. All right. All right. I won't --

Robin, I think you looked like --

MR. DUTTA: I would say just to -- I think to maybe clarify the 200,000 is referring to the grid upgrade that needs to be paid to Pepco, not the cost of the solar system.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: I understand that.

MR. DUTTA: Yeah. Okay. For everyone's clarify, I just wanted to -- I know you know, but I just want to make clear that that was the source of the cost increase.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: That -- okay. That we're not able to -- so I'm sorry. Yes.

MR. FREEMAN: But I think the resident

has to pay that cost. This is a conversation I've had with JD is the resident has to pay that cost. So if you're quoted for it and there's an upgrade that's needed, that's what you have to pay if you want the solar, if you want the project.

And I think as I said in my initial testimony and the testimony I submitted, solar is the only tool that a resident has --

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Yeah.

MR. FREEMAN: -- to fight against larger -- to fight against those bills. It's going to come; it's going to happen. Like, you're going to get charged in electric bill.

The only tool that I can now implement to decrease that cost is either turn off every light in my house or put solar on my house to where I can now generate it and I can now provide my own source of power. I can cook in my own kitchen.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Right. Right. Okay. Okay. All right. Thank you.

MR. SEWELL: We're seeing similar numbers too in terms of percentage and average cost.

One of the things that's not made sense to me is Van is describing that goes to the individual homeowner, but the first, you know, 10 or 15 homes that are on that feeder line got solar without getting -- I understand that it's a causation process.

And these are things beyond my knowledge. This is your all's world. But if person number 15 has to pay for it and then person 16 through 30 doesn't have to pay for, it ends up not making a whole lot of sense.

And this is where I just come back to the drumbeat of why don't we have a value of all the other grid services that these distributed energy resources are providing? Because the infrastructure -- I get that the homeowner asked for solar and so that's the cause, the reason to ping them with for the price.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Right. Right.

MR. SEWELL: But there's so many other services that these DERs are providing, why aren't we upgrading the grid to take advantage of all those services and just smoothing out the process and

speeding it up?

I think that the -- I know the average interconnection timeline for our customers, in my experience of a few hundred customers every year, is well above the five-day and 20-day rules.

And I just don't understand why after that this many years of talking about it, we have not smoothed out the interconnection process and figured out solutions to take better advantage of these useful assets that are going on the grid every day.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: All right. All right.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: Just one second on that. I think that's an obvious disadvantage and something that needs to be looked at because if somebody told me that my initial cost is $40,000 or more for a transformer, that's the end of the conversation.

I mean, that's -- but if it can be socialized -- you know, if I had to pay $200,000 for a transformer, then it's mine and nobody else should be

able to use it. But anyway --

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you to the panel. That was great. A lot of good comments there.

I think, Mr. Sewell, you get extra points for saying that the commission is a trusted voice and we should be sharing information, so I like that. But thank you.

At this time, I'm going to take a little bit of a chairman's privilege and call both panels 5 and 6 up together. Panel 5 has, I believe, three people, and panel 6 has -- sorry. Panels 4 and 5, 4 and 5. They both have three, so we'll call them both up at the same time.

And so we have Washington Interfaith Network, Clean Energy at Lawyers for Good Government, Power of Tomorrow, and then Ms. Sidner, Mr. Rodeffer, and Ms. Levinson.

I would remind all panelists if you have any personal pending complaints, this is not necessarily the forum for them, so please keep your comments broad and overarching. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: Just to clarify,

he means pending in the consumer complaint process.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: Not just a complaint period.

THE CHAIRMAN: Right. Yes, a consumer complaint -- yes.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: -- something like that.

THE CHAIRMAN: And we'll start with you, Ms. Briggs.

MS. BRIGGS: No pending complaints, but an apology. I'm going to have to scoot immediately after I testify, and I'm really sorry for that. This has been fascinating.

My name is Barbara Briggs. I'm the coordinator of Friends Meeting of Washington's Washington Interfaith Network task force and convener of the Beyond Gas Climate Faith Initiative in which WIN and our Quaker meeting are partners.

I want to clarify that policy statements of WIN as a whole are developed by WIN'S issue teams and agreed to by a strategy team composed

of leaders of our member congregation.

However, I can say that the Washington Interfaith Network as a whole is increasingly concerned with the Public Service Commission's actions in managing the modernization of D.C.'s energy system and in speeding our transition off polluting fossil fuels to clean energy sources.

Thank you for calling this hearing regarding the cost of electricity. D.C. residents are hurting due to rising utility costs. Also, managing costs is crucial to speedy adoption of electric systems.

As we engage in this discussion, it's important to keep our long-term objectives clearly in front of us. Climate change is real and a serious long-term threat to the wellbeing of D.C. residents. In D.C., our buildings contribute over three-quarters of climate warming emissions.

And D.C. government has established climate commitments to reduce our emissions to net zero by 2045.

We also know that when we stop burning

fossil fuels in our homes, our families will be healthier with less childhood asthma, less lung disease, less cancer. Those benefits in school and workdays not lost and medical costs saved far outweigh anything being discussed on the balance sheet we're discussing today.

As you know, most new energy generation today is clean renewable wind and solar, which is quicker and more economical to build than fossil-based energy. So long-term prospects for inexpensive and abundant energy are good.

If our community and the Public Service Commission are able to weigh in on increasing the supply of clean energy and reducing the cost of electricity from PJM, that would be terrific. But D.C. is a cipher, and our influence is quite limited.

Where the Public Service Commission can have more impact is assuring that D.C.'s own grid is highly efficient and fully utilized so that the cost of maintaining our wires is distributed broadly.

Here are some actions that the Public Service Commission can take. And actually, a lot of

these have been discussed today, and I'm really -- you know, this is a 12-hour old testimony. I would write it differently right at this minute.

Accelerate the transition of D.C. homes and buildings from gas to electric; support programs that help D.C. homes and businesses modernize the state of the art, highly efficient electric equipment including heat pumps; support distributed energy systems to control and manage peak load so we can get more out of the grid that we already have instead of bulking up on more dumb grid scale to peak load.

This includes maximizing use of solar panels to provide locally generated inexpensive energy in D.C. that is not subject to rising costs of electricity purchased from PJM. Batteries that can store excess solar energy or charge when electricity is cheap to be used at peak.

Smart appliances that can operate or charge during off peak times and potentially lend stored energy to the grid during peak times.

It's up to you, D.C.'s Public Service Commission, to coordinate the ramp up of D.C.'s

electric grid with the ramp down of our gas system so that the transition is smooth and customers are protected.

Please assure that our gas utility is not permitted to use ratepayer dollars to build new infrastructure that diminishing numbers of gas customers must pay for. You have to drive an intentional well-managed ramp down of our gas system.

Gas costs are rising faster than electric costs. Over half of these costs, 60 percent nationally, are for infrastructure, not the gas itself. So winding down the gas system will save our community money. But there must be careful coordination to avoid failures of systems while some customers still need them.

Systems will need to be kept operational even as they are supplying gas at levels below what they were designed for.

Especially given that Washington Gas is a gas-only utility, the Public Service Commission's role in maintaining this transition -- in managing this transition in the interest of our community and

D.C. policy is absolutely crucial.

In short, there's a lot that you, D.C. Public Service Commission, can do to keep our electric rates manageable.

Please focus most on the areas under our control, managing the energy transition we know D.C. must make, increasing grid utilization, supporting D.C. residents to maximize energy efficiency, using distributed energy resources and smart appliances to use the electric grid we have instead of throwing resources into building for peak load.

Thank you. Whoa --

THE CHAIRMAN: Perfect timing. Thank you, Ms. Briggs.

Mr. Yim.

MR. YIM: Good afternoon. Thank you, Chairman, Commissioners, for holding this important hearing.

My name is Edward Yim, former energy policy advisor for the Department of Energy and Environment, currently director of Clean Energy for

Lawyers for Good Government, which is an organization that provides pro bono legal and technical assistance to communities, local, state, and tribal governments to help deploy clean energy projects.

I offer today just a high-level assessment and a few specific recommendations. So at a high level, our current framework for accessing electricity -- not generating or receiving them, but accessing electricity in the United States is becoming outdated and unsustainable.

The raging debate posed by the problem of data centers and whether the grid will primarily serve the public or tech companies only underscores this reality. A true measure of a community's energy sustainability is the extent to which the community controls its own energy destiny.

Even before this year's major price hikes, D.C. residents and businesses paid $2 billion last year to outside corporations just to import electricity. And there are savings opportunities in that two billion.

Aside from a small amount of local

solar generation, the District is entirely dependent on imported energy along with all the volatility that it brings from outside. But the District can alter its course. Today, as many noted, advances in DER have permanently changed the equation.

Today, it is possible for communities to become self-sufficient in meeting their energy needs. Even in 2018, when I was at DOEE, we received concrete proposals for buildings that will be net energy positive. And with storage and control technologies, they would have self-sufficient supply.

Net zero or net positive buildings in neighborhoods with backup power and islandability would completely change D.C.'s grid and make it more resilient and affordable.

Each year that the District fails to reduce the amount of imported electricity at a staggering cost of two billion is a missed opportunity to build a better local energy system. In short, the best path to achieving lasting energy affordability is maximally using the buildings in the district as DER infrastructure.

I recommend some specific items. First, the commission should focus on Pepco using long-term PPAs to supply a significant portion of SOS. Doing so will provide long-term stability and help hedge against market volatility.

In November 2018, DOEE reported that an abundant supply of new wind and solar would come online by 2022 in PJM with available 15-year term PPA prices at roughly $30 per megawatt-hour, as the Sierra Club witness earlier suggested.

And we urge the commission then to procure solar and wind to supply a portion of the SOS. That price, $30 per megawatt-hour, including today's capacity and ancillary service and hedge prices for the extreme heating and cooling days, would come out to be about 8.5 kilowatt-hour, in other words, 40 percent lower than what they would be facing today.

So locking in renewable PPAs a few years back then would've protected D.C. ratepayers from these price increases that we're seeing caused largely by the data center increases in PJM and we wouldn't -- we may not be here today.

It is now evident that missing that opportunity back then came at a significant and avoidable cost to District ratepayers, and the commission shouldn't miss another opportunity.

Second, focusing only on the price per kilowatt-hour is not prudent. The key components of the bill are rate, volume, and fixed charges. When ratepayers have access to high-efficiency buildings and appliances and opportunities to self-generate and manage their volume, their energy bills can stay low even if the rates are high.

Third, the high customer charge at roughly $18 per month warrants scrutiny. Pepco D.C. now has one of the highest customer charges in the country.

I'm about done, if I may. This is particularly concerning given that the sister utility Pepco Maryland charges $8 per month while Pepco Maryland serves roughly 30 percent more customers, allowing cost to be spread across a larger customer base. That difference doesn't seem to justify a charge that's more than double the Maryland level.

High fixed charges are a regressive tax, as you know, for low-income customers, but simply punitive to low-demand customers.

Thank you for your time.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Yim.

Mr. Viator?

MR. VIATOR: Mr. Chairman --

THE CHAIRMAN: Make sure your mic is on. Yeah.

MR. VIATOR: Oh, yeah. Now it's on.

My name is Brad Viator. I'm the president of Power for Tomorrow. Thank you for the opportunity to address all of you.

Power for Tomorrow is the nation's leading resource for the -- on the regulated electric utility model, providing research, commentary, and practical information to help the public and policymakers understand the regulated utility model and how it's the best path forward to affordable and reliable energy for customers.

Power of Tomorrow was launched in 2021 in direct response to Winter Storm Uri, the

catastrophic Texas grid failure that left millions of families without power for days and cost many lives. The disaster was a direct consequence of electric deregulation.

PFT's mission since day one has been to help lawmakers and regulators avoid repeating the same mistake, which is why I'm here today.

As you know, D.C. sits within the PJM interconnection, the largest and longest operating wholesale electricity market, coordinating the grid across 13 jurisdictions. One of PJM's largest roles is to procure and supply the electric capacity for every jurisdiction it serves.

Currently, PJM is the sole provider of electric generation for supply for most of the utilities operating in this market, and utilities must accept whatever price the market sets; they have no alternative.

PJM is in a crisis on two fronts: price and reliability. On reliability, the 2025 winter capacity auction fell 6.6 gigawatts short of PJM's own reliability requirements, enough to power

every residential customer in Maryland for an entire year.

On price, capacity auction costs have skyrocketed 833 percent in recent years. The total capacity jumped from 1.6 billion to 14.7 billion in a single year back in 2024. I think we all know about this. And for D.C. residents, this translated directly into higher bills.

Pepco residential customers saw their monthly bills rise by an average of $21 beginning in June of 2025. D.C.'s Office of People Counsels has estimated that half of this increase was attributable to the spike in PJM's capacity market prices.

This year, residential customers across the PJM region are collectively expected to pay an additional $1.4 billion in capacity costs.

As you showed at the beginning, your fantastic chart, 58 cents of every dollar is focused on -- is directly attributable to PJM supply costs. Neither Pepco nor the commission has any direct remedy to change that figure. The price is set by the market. This is a fundamental structural exposure

that the District faces.

So how did we get here? Restructured or deregulated markets like PJM were built on a theory that price signals will incent developers to build needed generation. Competition will keep costs low, and customers will benefit. These are perfectly nice theories, but in practice it doesn't quite work that way.

The core problem is timing and incentives. Supply and demand may balance on average days, but when demand surges, prices spike faster than new generation can be sited, financed, permitted, and interconnected.

Developers have been slow to react and commit to new capacity because the market signals are so inconsistent -- we heard that on a panel earlier today -- and the result is supply shortfalls, reliability gaps, and price spikes that consumers bear the brunt of. They're paying more for power today, and they're getting nothing more for it.

This is not a new concern. In July last year, nine governors sent a letter to the PJM

board highlighting this crisis of confidence and just a cacophony of challenges.

The reform pressure intensified significantly this year, beginning in January with 13 governors and the White House getting together on a statement of principles of what they needed to do. FERC Chair Swett is holding a technical conference on governance issues on July the 19th.

And this all tells me that there's some sort of reform that's coming. But it's not coming fast enough, and people are just going to pay for it for the foreseeable future.

And, you know, a lot of people have had some interesting ideas, but I haven't heard anyone really focusing attention on what we're going to do about this affordability challenge that's right in front of us.

The contrast with how PJM works versus how traditionally regulated markets works is pretty instructive. States with utilities that retain a vertically integrated structure say they're going to build something, they build it, they divide the cost

across customers, it comes to market, they win with speed to power.

It's just what's happening all across the country right now. Forty percent of all new data centers in the country are in Atlanta today because they have access to power. If you can build power, you can increase the size of the denominator, and you can ensure that there is downward pressure on prices.

I think that there's been a lot of talk here about how, "Oh, we just need to let the market work, and we need market signals to sort of create new incentives for us to go build stuff." Okay. But at what cost?

I think the conversation needs to be more focused on some of the things that you were actually talking about at DOEE about how you can go procure more power in bulk. Because the one thing I've heard everybody say, "We want to figure out how to avoid PJM. We want to figure out how to" -- they haven't said it exactly that way.

"We want to figure out how to enter into a PPA so that we're not going through the

marketplace." I think that is something that we need to consider and we need to figure out what on Earth we can do to bring as many resources as possible, solar, but I think the pairing with storage is incredibly critical.

So thank you for your time and attention.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ms. Sidner?

MS. SIDNER: Hello. My name is Lauren Sidner. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I'm a D.C. resident and also a senior policy advisor at MIT and the Clean Economy Project. Our team builds data tools to inform policy discussions, and so that's the perspective I come to -- or that I bring to this issue.

The current energy charge portion of the average household's bill measured as a change in 12-month trailing average is up 111 percent in the last five years. And as discussed, those rates are set to go up again.

In its recent compliance filing, Pepco estimated that compared to the same summer period in

2025, for a typical residential customer using 614 kilowatt-hours per month, the increase in the energy charge portion of the bill would be just under $10 per month. We haven't been able to exactly replicate that number.

We estimate that based on past average summer usage, D.C. households will pay closer to $20 per month more than they did last summer over the course of the summer of 2026.

In our view, the increase to date and the continued upward pressure on prices means that local officials and Pepco must take steps to mitigate impacts on consumers even if they themselves can't address the entirety of the problem.

As it stands, though, there's an important barrier to designing the right policies and maximizing benefits for consumers.

Using publicly available information, policymakers, analysts, researchers like myself can identify or understand what goes into those energy charges, and they can kind of piece together different bits of information on the direction and the general

magnitude of the change over time in those components.

But they can't, kind of, with complete precision, estimate the full component breakdown of those energy charges and quantify how much different drivers have contributed to both volatility and rates and to increases in those charges over time.

They also can't readily evaluate important trade-offs that we've already talked about a lot today. Pepco's presentation for this hearing states that 30 percent of total supply costs are attributed to RPS, but how specifically is that calculated?

What is the total cost of compliance and the breakdown in those costs? How might long-term renewable PPAs affect costs over time? And most importantly, how do RPS compliance costs compare to the costs avoided as a result of the RPS obligation?

Interested stakeholders can't answer those questions today, but with some important changes, they could, and that could help with this policy discussion.

We recommend and think it would be

quite helpful to require more detailed disclosure on SOS auction outcomes that disaggregate supply cost by component and to quantify the RPS compliance costs and benefits including potential savings, reduced volatility, and household affordability impacts.

In parallel, as has been discussed quite a lot today and you've heard already, we believe local officials and agencies should study and explore ways to lower solar installation costs and reduce the time it takes to install solar by requiring more transparent and predictable interconnection fees and accelerated interconnection timelines and should study and explore ways to expand demand response and control initiatives and incentivize battery storage.

And the commission has a critical role to play in proactively ensuring that the utilities it regulates supports rather than hampers those aims.

Thanks very much.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Ms. Sidner.

Mr. Rodeffer?

MR. RODEFFER: All right. Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify, Chairman

Thompson and Commissioners Beverly and Trabue. My name is Mark Rodeffer. I've been following stuff here in the PSC for a little over a decade. Appreciate the opportunity to testify.

Electricity prices have risen around the nation in recent years, especially in the PJM interconnection, but D.C.'s electricity prices have soared beyond those of any other state, inside or outside PJM.

Inside Climate News reports that from 2020 to 2025, D.C.'s electricity prices nearly doubled, jumping 92.3 percent. That spike is almost twice as much as the PJM with the next highest electricity price increase. The 51st reported that from 2017 to 2025, D.C.'s electric rates surged at 68.1 percent, far more than nearby PJM states.

The chart that's below in my testimony, which I will submit, looks at neighboring electric utilities and shows that D.C.'s electricity rate increases were more than double the increases in Virginia and Pennsylvania and about 50 percent higher than Maryland's two largest electric utilities.

So the question is, why are D.C.'s electricity rate and price increases so much more than everyone else's?

Now, Chairman Thompson, you've issued a press release. You've put a statement on LinkedIn, and you also wrote a piece in The 51st saying that you only regulate a portion of the bills, you being the PSC.

Now, that is certainly true, but it fails to explain why D.C.'s electric rate increases are so much more than that of other PJM states or even non-PJM states. I've never heard an explanation for why that is.

Now, today you're asking how you can -- sorry -- you're not asking about reducing the distribution rates that you control and that have increased faster than anywhere else. You're asking about something that the PSC has little control over, maybe some control but that you don't regulate, which is generation costs.

Now, the Sierra Club and others have offered good ideas today for reigning in generation

costs, and I urge you to consider them even if they mean, you know, changing the normal way of doing business. But I think changing the way you regulate distribution rates is even more important.

Now, the publication Heatmap published an article in which they said, about the skyrocketing electric rates in D.C., "In the face of this crisis, local officials have done little but blame regional markets, emphasizing the parts of the rate increases they don't fully control, generation charges, rather than any proactive measures that they could take to offer relief to D.C. households."

Then, talking about the two-to-one rate increase that was thrown out by the courts, Heatmap reported "When a regulator is doing such a poor job that judges have to step in, that is a five-alarm signal." Now, I'm asking you all to recognize this five-alarm fire and to put it out with the tools that you have.

And that doesn't mean saying the problem is PJM. I'm not denying that PJM is a problem, but what I am saying is it does not explain

why D.C.'s rates are up so much more than everyone else.

And I think you all need to figure out ways to do whatever you can to reduce the parts of the electric bill that you regulate directly. Now, there was this rate increase, you know, that the courts have ordered you all to reconsider.

And I was disappointed to see that you kept the rates in the case that was unlawfully decided. You kept those rates in place while you reconsider the issue. You know, I mean, I think it makes little sense to be charging people rates that the courts have said were determined in a process that didn't work.

And I understand you're going through your process, and you haven't come to a conclusion yet. You don't know what the rates will be when you're done. But in the meantime, charging people these, in my view, outrageously high rates that the courts have said the process was wrong was a mistake.

And D.C. residents are paying for that mistake. And so that is why I am asking you all to

fix that. And in this rate case that you're reconsidering to, as I said earlier, do everything you can to get the distribution charges that you directly regulate under control.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Ms. Levinson?

MS. LEVINSON: Hello. I appreciate the opportunity to testify before the commission today.

I know that this is not about my consumer complaint that has been pending without resolution since October 2024, but it is hard not to reference that because I didn't know anything about -- I thought a meter reading was a meter reading back then.

And I'm 4,000 hours uncompensated time into simply trying to get Pepco to give me a verifiable meter reading. They have now decoupled the meter from their meter data management system. I can diagram it out. Their own documents that they produced prove it.

And so Kunle Adeyemo admitted to Mr. Daniels back in October that they were applying a 1.5 times multiplier to residential meters. That was withheld from me until March. I didn't even know about the rate case until then. And now I've dug into the numbers, and it's frightening.

I just started looking into the form 1s that were filed by Pepco. Back in 2017, they said that they didn't have any assets left to mortgage. But since then, they've raised 3.5 billion in bonds. I think you guys just approved 1.1 billion as of January 1st.

They've already raised 300 million of that with, I think, 130 million of it scheduled to close the day after the primary. And it's all 30-year fixed mortgages. I pulled up the records from OTR. There's not enough collateral to support these. They are selling junk bonds to institutional investors.

And this blended ROR, I mean, I shouldn't even have to know about any of this because this isn't my job.

But they're charging a 9.5 percent

return on equity on all of the back-filled data that they're putting in for calendar years '23 to '25 to up the numbers to justify all these rate increases because what they're doing is they're taking this multi-year rate plan and they are using that as guaranteed profits instead of complying with -- is it -- sorry. I don't have the right terminology, but they're supposed to use a blended rate of turn.

They're transferring -- they transferred in $1.2 billion in software for Exelon to our bills. And I just don't understand. I mean, I think this is like clear violation of the ring-fencing provisions of the merger agreement in 2016. I think it's, what, SC 1119.

Betty Ann Kane, when she dissented, said that expensive wedding gifts are nice, but all the money in the world can't make a bad marriage good. And I have been the victim of abuse, abuse for two years. Nobody will listen to me.

And Pepco is funneling billions of dollars and not building infrastructure. Our rate base isn't increasing.

If you compare their form 1 filings to the stuff that they're providing to the commission, like, I don't know if anybody has looked at this, but they're dumping -- like, Maryland said, okay, we're not going to do these multi-year rate plans anymore.

They're actually in active negotiations about like whether this White Flint facility is good or not. And now all of a sudden we're paying for it. They're not building infrastructure here. They're letting our infrastructure rot. The form 1s show that like -- I mean, even ComEd in Illinois is dumping their cost onto D.C.

We're not getting any benefit. And I just -- I don't know what to do anymore because nobody will listen. And the way that everything got timed, all of this stuff, it's just so bizarre because I know that you -- I think it was -- I mean, the SOS rate increase was applied for on March 2nd.

So nobody bothered to tell residents for three months. I agree it is a $25 increase and most people use way more than a 620 whatever kilowatt-hour. So people are looking at like fifty to

seventy-five dollars easily increases on top of the rates that have already been vacated.

D.C. law requires Pepco to charge the legal rates. And they're a public utility. They have a public franchise. They have to follow the law no matter what you guys do. And so, like, Attorney General Schwalb will prosecute them for billing fraud. They're shutting off people's power.

Lawrence Daniels at OPC just withdrew from my case because I'm trying to stand up for my rights. And then I start getting shut-off notices on disputed bills that you guys can't even adjudicate yet because the hearing officer didn't create a record or close a record.

So now I'm in legal limbo again. I've been stuck here. So, like, I'm a single resident fighting this on my own, and I'm going to have to go file a writ of mandamus to get somebody to investigate what's going on in FC 1050.

That was February 4, 2025, before I even had to file my -- I mean, I petitioned for a formal hearing in February 2025 that was approved. I

had already been stuck in this process since August -- October of '24. Like Pepco -- I didn't even know what a billing determinant was back then.

They are manipulating the billing determinants to change bills. I can prove it. Those billing determinants are what they're using for these forecasts, those forecast for what's driving the rate increases. And then there's no reconciliation.

I think it was -- I think there was a motion to dismiss by OPC back before you scheduled the legislative hearing in July 2024. And 95 million of the 115 million in their rate increases weren't even used for capital improvements in D.C., but they kept the money and paid it to their shareholders.

They're making 400-plus million a year, and it seems like a good portion of Exelon's profits are just coming from us. And I just --I don't know why nobody will -- why I can't get anybody to listen to this.

And so it's devastating because I'm a good person and I'm ethical, and Pepco's attorneys have lied in every pleading and it's just getting

rubber stamped. And so if anybody knows how to fix this or anybody cares, I would love to talk to you.

I did manage to get a hold three or four minutes with Charles Allen, but he's burying it too. They're stealing Sustained Energy Trust Fund, which I know you guys don't regulate. They have -- they raided it. Mayor Bowser raided it. It is a special purpose trust. There's a trustee. They moved the money to the general fund.

Like why are Pepco customers paying the bills of the D.C. government? And then they changed the law. They just sort of removed one portion, which without even actually making an amendment. It just sort of disappeared. And now the new rule says -- the new legislation says that they have to -- they can pay -- money if it's for energy efficient programs.

But one of the other sections of law says that you -- the mayor doesn't -- like, that's not even in effect until 2028. The guy, Lee, who's the CFO, just transferred $70 million from our money to the general fund because of this new legislation? I just -- I don't know why nobody will help.

And I am going to go bankrupt before anybody fixes anything. And all of this legislation is being paid -- like all of this, it's going to continue in rate cases -- nineteen with no reconciliation.

34-909 requires Pepco to tell us what these rates are about before you guys even have jurisdiction to approve them. I can't tell what they're about and I spent 4,000 hours on this.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Ms. Levinson. Thank you.

I'm going to begin. My first question is for Ms. Sidner. I think I said that -- you talked about the availability and transparency of data so that you and others can reconstruct what's being done.

We currently have a rule-making trying to clarify some of what should be filed when there are -- when Pepco files or whether utilities file their tariffs.

I want to direct you to that because I think that's something that certainly we have realized collectively, which led to the NOPR because a lot of

times we would get just PDFs where you cannot actually see how the underlying data is constructed.

So I'll say please take a look at that. See if you think that would help aid you in some of your reconstruction. And if not, certainly would welcome your comments there.

Mr. Yim, you talked about PPAs and the ability of PPA to serve as a hedging mechanism. And I think you talked about the study that said that in 2020, renewable PPAs were a certain price and if we had locked in then, by 2022 we would've been able to realize a fair amount of savings.

Pepco talked earlier about how they tried that; right? And they were unable to, for a number of reasons. One because of COVID and then because of the PJM interconnection queue, they were basically unable to enter into that type of PPA. Any comment or response to that?

MR. YIM: Yeah. Well, first, there is a fairly extensive study that was done on using PPA as a portion of SOS that was submitted by DOEE to this commission. So I will just simply just note that for

the record.

In terms of the earlier comment about the PPA and the issues with about procuring capacity ancillary services and hedging against extreme heating days and cooling days, it was never suggested in that study, nor am I suggesting now that all you need is a piece of document, just a 15-year PPA contract, in lieu of something that will give you all of the services that you need along with energy.

That was never the suggestion. That's not what the study says. The study recommends a block and index approach, widely used standard or strategy for procuring power, that you block a chunk of power for number of predictable hours and usage patterns.

And then you then buy the remaining hours with a different structure of varying prices. You still have to buy a capacity. You still have to buy ancillary services.

It's just that the main idea of the PPA study was that currently when you use -- just when you just put out an RFP to get SOS products, they will charge you arm and a leg for that hedging those

extreme cooling and heating days.

Let's just kind of break down the price that was given. Today we're paying 13.50 cents per kilowatt-hour. As Sierra Club witness noted, 8 cents comes from the generation price, but 2 cents per kilowatt-hour will roughly correspond to the capacity prices of $300 per megawatt day.

That means there's 3.5 cents per kilowatt-hour is -- that's the ancillary service for the reliability, the frequency, and most importantly hedging, just because they're just calling a number and charging us arm and a leg just to cover their prices.

So the idea of the PPA study was that can we do better in getting a lower price for that hedging ancillary services frequency while getting the same protection for those extreme weather days. So that was the idea.

MR. RODEFFER: Can I add something to that?

MR. YIM: Sure.

MR. RODEFFER: So on Monday, the Hill

Rag published a piece about how there was 2018 legislation requiring Pepco to buy 80 percent of its SOS -- procure 80 percent of its SOS through PPAs.

And the story got into how Pepco successfully got the D.C. Council, via one member who oversaw utility regulation, to kill that requirement for 80 percent of PPAs because they didn't like it. So what that tells us is Pepco does not like PPAs.

Then, you know, when they succeeded at the council and then you all ordered them to get 5 percent of SOS from PPAs, it took them years to even get a contract signed. And then it fell apart. So what I'm saying is, it's pretty clear they don't want to do PPA; right?

When there was a legislative requirement, they killed it. When there was a regulatory requirement, they dragged their feet and then came up with a deal that didn't work.

So I think the idea of, "Well, Pepco tried that and wasn't able to do it" is basically putting Pepco in the driver's seat. And I think more aggressive regulation is needed, and there needs to be

punishments on Pepco when they fail to do things like carry out your directive on the PPAs. They need to have financial penalties; right?

They're an investor-owned utility. If you start hitting them where it hurts, you start fining them, you know, penalizing them financially for not doing this stuff, then maybe they will be more responsive than they have been.

As of right now, there's no reason for them not to keep going around doing the various things they're doing to make sure these PPAs don't happen.

MR. VIATOR: Can I weigh in? Sorry. I thought we were going to go into the PPA discussion. I think there are a couple things we can think about. Like, we've got a problem with the price of energy from the sole place we can buy it from, which is PJM.

So we're having, in part, a conversation about how we avoid our exposure to that; right? We've had the panel before us was talking about all of our sort of homegrown solar energy storage as one way to sort of avoid that, at least at a customer level, not really at a system level.

And the study that you're referencing, which sounds really pretty interesting to me of like one idea of a hedge is we can go out and go see how much energy we could procure through a PPA. I think that's one approach that you could do within the methodology of SOS. Like, Pepco could go out and figure that out as a pathway.

There's another option that kind of exists out there. And I don't think it exists entirely under current law, but it's not -- it wouldn't require a whole lot of variance, which is if there were actually like utility-owned battery systems for example, or whatever you did within a microgrid system.

Anytime you do anything like that, what you're doing is you're really creating a hedge against your exposure within the PJM marketplace.

The problem with the PPA from a rate-making perspective over like the whole time and arc in history -- and this is kind of my thing; I study it in all 50 states -- is that you're essentially paying for 20 years or 10 years to just

get the output. You're not paying for the underlying asset itself.

And so there's a point in time at which, like, you want to engage in a PPA because you need to procure power over a period of time.

But if you're paying all of that money for all of the power that is coming out of that system, it also makes some sense to consider actually owning the asset itself because you've paid for that asset and you've essentially just paid somebody else rent within it.

So the reason that, like, PPA always doesn't work over a -- in every circumstance is because the concept of rate-making has to be broken up into little bits of in blocks so that you can kind of mitigate your exposure. So I think it's, like, a very reasonable thing to be considering, but it's not a panacea by any means.

And I think that, like, the sort of moment that we're in right now with the chaos and in PJM is we just kind of need to explore what those other hedging mechanisms might be.

THE CHAIRMAN: Commissioner Beverly?

MR. YIM: And if I may just chime in really quickly, the virtual power plants, non-wire alternatives on the distribution side that many witnesses have spoken to are those -- part of those larger hedging portfolios to this wholesale market risks.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: Just had a brief question for Mr. Yim. With regard to the District's ability to generate on its own, we've been talking about different things, but we haven't talked about microgrids, not specifically.

Could you just, you know, opine a little on what you think we could do with that, where we are now, where we might be able to go?

MR. YIM: Yes. I mean, I do think that the possibility of essentially creating a community- or neighborhood-scale microgrids in D.C. is better than other places in large because the demand -- because we have so many high-performing buildings with high energy efficiency performing buildings and appliances in D.C., that those loads

would be easier to manage and control.

For that reason, when I was with DOEE -- and I'm sure the colleagues at DOEE are continuing this work -- for that reason, I think they explored the possibility of creating net zero energy districts, which is to say what neighborhoods especially that can particularly benefit from affordability reliefs in terms of their energy prices?

Which neighborhoods are in a good position to deploy solar generation and battery, certainly including on the rooftops but maybe using some public right of ways and some community properties?

Which neighborhoods could deploy solar and battery and have them be aggregated and then have the islanding capability added to it so that it can function as a microgrid for that community? That type of studies were being done some years ago. Again, I'm not sure what the current status is.

But my experience during that time was that we identified at least few opportunities, and certainly the aspiration was that we could identify

one such neighborhood for each ward that can really serve as this net zero energy district for every neighborhood.

Again, I don't know what the data shows now, but I still think that possibilities are ripe.

COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: Thank you.

MS. LEVINSON: -- may I ask a question? Is the PPA that Pepco entered into in January 2025 with a confidential company for 20, 25 years that isn't going to produce anything for the SOS load until December 2027, it seems that that cost is somehow being included in the SOS rate.

Are you able to speak to that and confirm whether that's true or not?

THE CHAIRMAN: It's my understanding that it's not because we are not procuring energy from it yet, but subject to check.

Do you have any final questions, Mr. -- I'm sorry -- Commissioner Trabue?

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to say that I thank the panel for their comments today and for their thoughts.

I'll be on a panel with Dr. Yim tomorrow. I look forward to seeing you tomorrow.

And, you know, thank you so much for coming in and sharing your thoughts with us. Appreciate it.

MS. LEVINSON: If I may, I would just like to finally say that Pepco is actually relying on the anti-islanding feature of smart meters to interconnect people before electrical inspections -- has done 10,000 inspections for D.C., knew that my system was energized. And Pepco could even confirmed that energy was being sent back to the grid.

But part of the reason why I have been stuck in this nightmare for two years is because Pepco is blaming me. And it was on, but I have a line-side tap and I didn't even know that or know what that was. But I have no control over these things.

And so at the end of the day, the people who are in the CREF programs and solar customers, just, their billing from Pepco is just not catching up with all of the other, you know, policy goals that the other panelists have been talking about

today.

Thank you for your time.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

On behalf of the commission, I want to extend a very sincere appreciation to all who attended and participated in today's hearing. Your time, thoughtful engagement, and substantive concerns are very important to these matters and are duly recognized and valued.

The commission will continue to review our standard offer service procurement process and a lot of the other topics that were discussed today. A recording of today's presentation will be available on the commission's website. For more information on these issues and upcoming proceedings, we encourage you to visit our website.

And at this time, this meeting is adjourned. Thank you.

(Whereupon, at 3:43 p.m., the proceeding was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

I, ALEXZANDAR NICHOLI FULLERTON, the officer before whom the foregoing proceedings were taken, do hereby certify that any witness(es) in the foregoing proceedings, prior to testifying, were duly sworn; that the proceedings were recorded by me and thereafter reduced to typewriting by a qualified transcriptionist; that said digital audio recording of said proceedings are a true and accurate record to the best of my knowledge, skills, and ability; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which this was taken; and, further, that I am not a relative or employee of any counsel or attorney employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

ALEXZANDAR NICHOLI FULLERTON
Notary Public in and for the
State of District of Columbia

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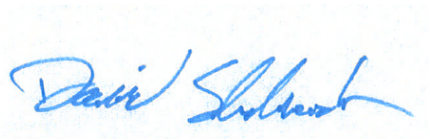

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