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To: [PSC - Commission Secretary \(PSC\)](#)
Subject: Pepco's Multiyear Rate Case
Date: Friday, December 18, 2020 4:24:50 PM

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Public Service Commission,

Dear Chairman Phillips, Commissioner Beverly, and Ms. Westbrook-Sedgwick,

I'm writing to oppose FC 1156—Pepco's request for a massive price hike.

Pepco wants to raise prices by nearly \$136 million as Washingtonians struggle to make ends meet during an historic economic, health, and climate crisis. Under one of Pepco's plans, the average residential bill could increase by more than \$100 in the first year, according to the Office of the People's Counsel. None of this would fund community priorities like clean energy deployment.

Commissioner Beverly made an important point in his recent statement: "A question we must consider is whether the proponent of an alternative form of regulation has demonstrated whether and how its proposal aligns with and advances the District of Columbia's climate and energy goals." He accurately concluded: "Quite frankly, Pepco's [proposal] is underwhelming in this regard."

Pepco's plan does nothing to advance DC's ambitious and necessary climate plans. When the OPC asked Pepco if the price hike would fund clean energy deployment, Pepco said no. Pepco currently derives only about 6 percent of its energy source fuel mix from renewables, and its construction plan budget features no provisions for clean energy technologies such as distributed solar or battery storage. Instead of approving this unnecessary price hike, the PSC should embrace its climate mandate and pressure Pepco to comply with DC's environmental priorities.

Washingtonians are suffering from the economic crisis and cannot afford higher energy bills. Even prior to COVID-19, a quarter of DC residents qualified for energy assistance, but only about 40 percent of those eligible got help. The recession has only exacerbated energy poverty: At the end of August, Pepco reported that over 50,000 customers—one in six customers in the District—have fallen into debt with Pepco during the pandemic. By contrast, Pepco Holdings made \$220 million worth of profits in the third quarter, up from \$209 million last year.

The September 29 PSC hearing revealed deep community opposition to Pepco's unnecessary and destructive price hike. More than 100 people signed up to testify, with about 70 percent of speakers urging the PSC to reject FC 1156, including pastors, union workers, climate

advocates, senior citizens, community leaders, and ordinary Washingtonians. The striking degree of community participation shows that Pepco's plan is out of step with public priorities.

It is a well-documented fact that Pepco, like other for-profit utilities, exploits its financial muscle to create the false veneer of popular support. Many of those who spoke in favor of FC 1156 have open financial and professional ties to Pepco. Representatives of the Greater Washington Board of Trade and United Way backed Pepco's price hike—but these organizations receive donations from Pepco and have Pepco's CEO on their boards of directors. SRB Communications, JPM Group, and Ideal Electric, whose representatives supported FC 1156, list Pepco or Exelon as clients on their websites.

Pepco has provided false data and submitted a series of last-minute changes and additions to its proposal, creating a massive drain on public resources. The OPC, DC government, and Pepco workers' union were correct to demand that FC 1156 be dismissed due to these procedural irregularities.

Pepco's proposal is not in the public interest. Please reject FC 1156 in full.

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