

Representative Stephen McCarter
PUC Testimony – June 9, 2020
Re: PECO Request for Default Supply Plan

I thank you this opportunity to provide testimony concerning PECO's proposed Default Service Program for the period June 1, 2021 through May 30, 2025.

My name is Stephen McCarter. I am the State Representative for the 154th District encompassing the townships of Cheltenham and Springfield and the Borough of Jenkintown in Eastern Montgomery County. I am also the Co-chair of the Bicameral and Bipartisan Climate Change Caucus of the Pennsylvania Legislature and an appointed member of the Pennsylvania Climate Change Advisory Committee.

I am here today, not as a critic of PECO or Exelon. In fact, over the past 7 plus years while I have been in the legislature, I've found them to be a responsive and eager partner in helping to resolve constituent issues. And I believe that largely accounts for the fact that 70% of rate payers in their coverage area have opted to stay with PECO for electrical supply instead of choosing an alternative supplier often with lower electric rates.

My comments today are, however, meant to encourage PECO to rethink their submitted plan and, if necessary, to have the Commissioners of the PUC facilitate PECO to change aspects of their plan to mirror the changing realities of electric supply and the increasing need to address the implications of Climate Change and Social Change challenging our way of life in Pennsylvania, the nation and the world.

Climate Change is real. Its impacts can be seen wherever one looks. The impacts in Pennsylvania are detailed in the last Climate Change Assessment Report of the PA Climate Change Advisory Committee and global impacts are documented in every respected scientific journal and international report over the last 20 years. However, it is also becoming clearer every single day that racial and social injustice must be part of the discussion as we move forward to confront Climate Change. Low income rate payers are disproportionately represented by Black and Brown families in Pennsylvania. And so, when you analyze the request of PECO concerning its Default Service Program, you must consider this request, not only as an energy plan, but also as a statement that will impact social injustices that will be increasingly aggravated by out of date policies to address Climate Change and Social Change.

PECO is a subsidiary of Exelon, the largest electric parent company by revenue in the United States. As such, PECO has a responsibility, to adequately and securely provide energy to consumers, but it also needs to be a leader in the growing movement to transform energy use and supply. Additionally, PECO must be a voice for tackling the imbedded social inequities that exacerbate the percentages of those that have, and those that do not. Consideration for PECO's low-income consumers must be a critical component in the analysis of any plan going forward. The impacts of COVID-19 and the ability of customers to pay for service in a time when people of color are impacted more severely than others, must be a prime consideration.

The proposal's stated level of solar energy commitment is limited to .5% of the energy mix in the DSP. This is totally out of step with future needs and is socially and frankly, economically, irresponsible on the part of PECO. The country is quickly changing to increase its alternative energy portfolio. And while Pennsylvania is so far, sadly, lagging behind the country, the future course is clear. The public strongly favors moving to alternative energy sources and ending our reliance on fossil fuels. Pennsylvania through Governor Wolf's actions has committed to address Climate Change as part of the US Climate

Alliance with 24 other Governors, committing to the Paris Accord guidelines. The Alliance calls upon all businesses to commit to reducing short-lived climate pollutants. The elimination of short-lived-pollutants, which include methane, hydrofluorocarbons and black carbon, will help minimize the risks of climate change and improve health conditions substantially.

The Bipartisan PA Climate Change Caucus will continue to call for changes to Pennsylvania's Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards in the coming year. These changes will include substantial increases in alternative energy commitments for the State to include at least a 10% minimum commitment for solar use by 2030. PECO would be wise to commit early to this goal and to incorporate it into its proposal instead of restricting itself to the current .5% commitment. In so doing, PECO will join with the growing number of companies across the country who are acting in concert with the US Climate Alliance and the best interests of our collective future, instead of positioning itself as an impediment.

It is fortuitous that the PA Legislature may actually consider a Community or Shared Solar piece of legislation this week. This legislation could allow even residents, who cannot afford or who can't place panels on their homes, to still benefit from shared solar panels at

other locations. So far nineteen states and the District of Columbia have enacted such policies and forty-two states have programs encouraging community solar installations. The legislation calls for policies that would allow low, and moderately-low income families, to partake in community or shared solar programs. It is estimated that increasing Pennsylvania's solar commitment to 10% by 2030 could add an additional sixty thousand or more jobs and substantial local economic benefits.

So, I again ask PECO to help lead on the most crucial issue facing mankind. If PECO cannot make this commitment, then I ask the PUC to help them see the light. PECO and the Public Utilities Commission have a responsibility not only to hear people's views, but like the Legislature, to act on them in a responsible and forward-looking manner. This is a week when that can happen.

Thank You