

STATE OF MICHIGAN
BEFORE THE MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the matter, on the Commission's own motion,)	
to review issues bearing on the deployment of smart)	Case No. U-17000
meters by regulated electric utilities in Michigan.)	
_____)	

At the January 12, 2012 meeting of the Michigan Public Service Commission in Lansing, Michigan.

PRESENT: Hon. John D. Quackenbush, Chairman
Hon. Orjiakor N. Isiogu, Commissioner
Hon. Greg R. White, Commissioner

ORDER OPENING DOCKET

In the past several months, the Commission has become aware of concern on the part of some individuals in this state and an increasing number of municipal officials regarding the deployment of smart meters by electric utilities operating in Michigan. During the Commission's annual consumer forums conducted at various locations during the fall of 2011, individual Commissioners on several occasions encountered vocal opponents to the deployment of smart meters in their communities. More recently, through direct submissions, media reports, and by other means, the Commission has learned that the elected governing bodies of at least nine local communities across Michigan have by resolution implored the Commission to either (1) make information about smart meters available to the public, (2) investigate the safety of the physical attachment of a smart meter to a residential dwelling house, (3) halt ongoing efforts by regulated electric utilities to deploy smart meters throughout their service territories, or (4) force these electric utilities to

allow concerned customers to “opt out” of having a smart meter attached to her or his own dwelling house.¹

In hopes of increasing the Commission’s and the public’s understanding of smart meters, the Commission opens this docket for the purpose of addressing these concerns to the degree possible in light of the limits of the Commission’s statutory authority and expertise.

Toward this end, the Commission directs all regulated electric utilities to submit information in this docket regarding the following topics: (1) The electric utility’s existing plans for the deployment of smart meters in its service territory; (2) The estimated cost of deploying smart meters throughout its service territory and any sources of funding; (3) An estimate of the savings to be achieved by the deployment of smart meters; (4) An explanation of any other non-monetary benefits that might be realized from the deployment of smart meters; (5) Any scientific information known to the electric utility that bears on the safety of the smart meters to be deployed by that utility; (6) An explanation of the type of information that will be gathered by the electric utility through the use of smart meters; (7) An explanation of the steps that the electric utility intends to take to safeguard the privacy of the customer information so gathered; (8) Whether the electric utility intends to allow customers to opt out of having a smart meter; and 9) How the electric utility intends to recover the cost of an opt out program if one will exist.

The electric utility comments required by this order shall be submitted through the Commission’s standard e-file system. Wherever possible, supplemental documentation may be referenced in the comments via the use of hyperlinks. All comments shall be submitted by 5:00 p.m. on March 16, 2012.

¹All such resolutions known to the Michigan Public Service Commission at this time are attached to this order.

After the submission of the information by the regulated electric utilities, all interested persons shall have until April 16, 2012 to examine those comments. Written and electronic comments by interested persons may be filed with the Commission, but must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on April 16, 2012. Written comments should be sent to: Executive Secretary, Michigan Public Service Commission, P.O. Box 30221, Lansing, Michigan 48909. Electronic comments may be emailed to: mpscedockets@michigan.gov. Any person requiring assistance prior to filing comments, may contact Commission Staff at (517) 241-6180. All comments should reference Case No. U-17000. Comments and other documents received in this proceeding will become public information, posted on the Commission's website, and subject to disclosure.

Following the deadline for the submission of comments by members of the general public, the Commission Staff (Staff) shall prepare a report for the Commission's consideration. The Staff's report shall be given to the Commission and filed in this docket by 5:00 p.m. on June 29, 2012. In its report, the Staff shall summarize the filings in this docket, independently review the literature regarding smart meters, and identify any developments in other jurisdictions pertinent to this investigation. At the end of its report, the Staff shall make its recommendations, including suggestions regarding how best for the Commission to implement the Staff's recommendations.

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED that:

A. The Commission's Executive Secretary shall serve a copy of this order on all regulated electric utilities in this state.

B. Alpena Power Company, Consumers Energy Company, The Detroit Edison Company, Indiana Michigan Power Company, Northern States Power Company-Wisconsin, Upper Peninsula Power Company, Wisconsin Electric Power Company, Wisconsin Public Service Corporation, Alger Delta Cooperative Electric Association, Cherryland Electric Cooperative, Cloverland

Electric Cooperative, Great Lakes Energy Cooperative, Midwest Energy Cooperative, Ontonagon County Rural Electrification Association, Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op, Thumb Electric Cooperative, and Tri-County Electric Cooperative shall file comments as described in this order by 5:00 p.m. on March 16, 2012.

C. Interested persons shall have until 5:00 p.m. on April 16, 2012 to file comments in this docket as described in this order.

D. The Commission Staff shall file a report and recommendations in this docket as described in this order by 5:00 p.m. on June 29, 2012.

The Commission reserves jurisdiction and may issue further orders as necessary.

MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

John D. Quackenbush, Chairman

Orjiakor N. Isiogu, Commissioner

Greg R. White, Commissioner

By its action of January 12, 2012.

Mary Jo Kunkle, Executive Secretary

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to review issues bearing on the deployment of smart)
meters by regulated electric utilities in Michigan.)
_____)

Case No. U-17000

Suggested Minute:

Case No. U-17000 is an investigation into the deployment of smart meters by regulated electric utilities in this state. The order before you commences the investigation and directs all regulated electric utilities to file comments by March 16, 2012.