Massachusetts Energy Efficiency Advisory Council 2017 Priorities

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In 2017, the Energy Efficiency Advisory Council ("Council") will continue to monitor the implementation of the 2016-2018 Plan and will turn its attention to some of the key issues that must be addressed for the 2019-2021 Plan. The Council has set specific priorities for 2017 that support its overarching interest that Massachusetts' energy efficiency and demand reduction goals continue to be aggressive, broad, and deep, as well as met equitably and cost-efficiently in the current and future plans.

Additional priorities and focus areas may arise throughout the year, but the Council has set five key priorities for 2017. The Council requests that the PAs provide four updates in 2017—tied to the quarterly reports—which will detail the progress made toward each of the following five goals:

1. 2016-2018 Plan: Monitor progress and provide input into priority commitments and new program initiatives included in the October 26, 2015 Council Resolution and the 2016-2018 Three-Year Plan.

The Council recognizes that the 2016-2018 Plan calls for continuation of—and improvement upon—existing offerings, as well as new initiatives and program delivery strategies, several of which were highlighted in the October 26, 2015 Council resolution. To ensure that these programs meet or exceed their goals and to learn from the experiences of the Program Administrators ("PAs"), the Council requests that the PAs share regular updates with the Council about successes, challenges, barriers, and lessons learned from the design and implementation of those initiatives, including:

- Demand savings and peak demand reduction initiatives to augment peak demand reductions delivered successfully through traditional energy efficiency;
- Evolution of the Home Energy Services ("HES") program, including the renter initiative and the moderate income initiative;
- Initiatives targeting multifamily buildings;
- The low-income sector, particularly any program changes arising from evolution in how cost-effectiveness is quantified; and
- Commercial and Industrial ("C&I") program approaches for Combined Heat and Power ("CHP") installation, segment-specific approaches (especially for small and mid-size commercial), LED streetlight conversions, multifamily performance-based retrofit products, and strategic energy management.

2. 2019-2021 planning: Identify key factors affecting the programs' ability to maintain high goals and cost-efficient program delivery and explore possible impacts on the 2019-2021 Three Year Plan.

For the 2019-2021 Plan, some changes in the source of savings and benefits are expected. Most prominently:

- Attributable savings from common residential lighting measures are expected to decline significantly due to national standards that go into effect in 2020, so residential electric programs must consider new measures/approaches;
- New non-energy impacts are expected to add cost-effective measures in the low income sector; and
- C&I attributable savings goals may need to increase in light of reductions in savings from residential lighting.

In 2017, the Council will work with the PAs to assess opportunities for program evolution to account for these and other expected impacts on the next Plan, and begin to chart a path forward.

3. Equitable customer participation: Ensure equal access to energy efficiency programs through enhanced delivery models.

The Council recognizes that some customers are harder to reach than others, and that the PAs have developed effective strategies over the years for bringing the benefits of energy efficiency to many of these customers. The Council will work with the PAs to ensure that programs continue to prioritize equitable access among customers, including but not limited to:

- Initiatives targeting renters and moderate income homeowners;
- Programs and initiatives targeting the multifamily sector;
- Segment-specific approaches for small business and mid-size commercial customers; and
- Potential new strategies for reaching and incentivizing the hard-to-reach segments.

4. Data transparency: Advance transparency, availability and effectiveness of data and information to assess and improve energy efficiency programs.

The Council again confirms the importance of a comprehensive statewide database on the PAs' energy efficiency programs. The Council will work with the PAs to ensure that complete, transparent, publicly available data on the implementation of the Three-Year Plan can be used to support continuous program improvement. In 2017, the Council will focus on:

- Specific metrics as called out in the October 26, 2015 Council resolution needed to assess new program offerings, including initiative participant counts;
- The forthcoming release of the online Technical Resource Library;
- Metrics specific to the low-income sector;
- Complementary reporting of data and evaluation factors in the various PA reports and TRL, including consistent accounting for all participant incentives at the measure level, LED streetlight conversion data, and C&I reporting that includes consistent measure names;
- The format and content of the Quarterly Reports and presentations provided by the PAs, to ensure that the report is presented concisely and is useful for the PAs and Council;
- EM&V studies and how study feedback is feeding back into program implementation efforts.
- Requesting a joint presentation from the PAs and Council Consultants examining how the Mass Save Data platform meets the goals put forth by the Database Subcommittee.

5. Identify opportunities for advancing an integrated approach to demand side management for the 2019-2021 Plan, including peak load reduction, integration of distributed resources and planning in a manner that decreases costs, increases resilience and reliability, supports innovation, and improves both the environment and the economy.

The Council will, within its statutory mandate, assess the ways in which energy efficiency is impacted by larger energy systems issues, some of which are currently being addressed in other forums. In 2017, the Council will support the PAs as they build on peak demand reduction demonstration projects to develop a robust suite of cost-effective peak demand reduction programs. Areas which the Council might potentially seek to address include:

- The intersection of energy efficiency and other customer-side grid resources, such as distributed generation and energy storage, and related challenges/opportunities for energy efficiency planning;
- The impacts of “grid modernization” components, such as microgrids, advanced metering infrastructure, and the value of the timing of energy use and capacity on energy efficiency;
- The potential for geographically-targeted deployment of efficiency and other customer-side resources, including how this can lead to system benefits and avoided costs; and
- Optimizing Massachusetts’ grid and energy system through integrated energy efficiency and peak demand reduction.