

Julia Blyth

276 Old Wendell Rd.

Northfield, MA 01360

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Christina Halfpenny, Director, Energy Efficiency & EEAC Chair (to distribute to all councilors)

c/o Maggie McCarey

Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources

100 Cambridge Street, Suite 1020

Boston, MA 02114

--- SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY VIA maggie.mccarey@state.ma.us

Re: EEAC Public Comments

Dear Ms. Halfpenny and Members of the Energy Efficiency Advisory Council:

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this process. My name is Julia Blyth; I am a young homeowner in Northfield, MA. Immediately after purchasing our home last year, my husband and I scheduled an energy audit, replaced most of our lights with LEDs, and added a foot of insulation to our attic. This year, we plan to install solar panels, but consider our investment in efficiency to have been among the most important to our wallets and to our carbon footprint.

Additionally, we are active in opposing a pipeline that is slated to run through town; we suspect that along with other measures, increasing energy efficiency throughout the region will reduce demand sufficiently to render most new fossil fuel infrastructure unnecessary. In fact, this project is being

justified because the region “needs” the capacity; there are reasons that this “need” is likely overstated, including reduced demand due to EEAC programs. If the \$4 billion price tag of this pipeline project were applied toward energy efficiency measures (and perhaps renewable energy as well) the result would be a healthy, stable electricity grid that is less dependent on a single volatile commodity (natural gas). The incentives toward efficiency that we benefited from need to expand to allow more people and especially businesses to take advantage of them. The EEAC plan should include energy savings goals in line with the Clean Energy and Climate Plan for 2020 (CECP), and required by Massachusetts climate policies.

Energy efficiency is crucial to cut greenhouse gas emissions, and it is the cheapest way to do so. Along with many people, we have been hit with large electric rate increases this winter—\$0.14/ kwh as opposed to last year’s \$0.08. However, in part because of our investments in efficiency, we are using less electricity than we did last winter; these investments are already starting to pay off.

Massachusetts has shown wonderful leadership in energy (and climate) legislation, and thus has a statutory obligation to capture all cost-effective energy efficiency. The Green Communities Act requires that “...electric and natural gas resource needs shall first be met through all available efficiency and demand reduction resources that are cost effective or less expensive than supply.” I hope that we are working to make this law a reality. Further, Massachusetts passed the Global Warming Solutions Act; the CECP counts energy efficiency as a key strategy for reducing emissions, accounting for 7.1% of the 9.8% of estimated emissions reductions achievable in the Buildings sector. Let’s make this happen!

As in our home and so many others, energy efficiency gains in the residential sector are impressive and worthwhile, but I do not think that we can meet our state-mandated goals without a lot more efficiency applied in the commercial and industrial sector. The commercial and industrial sector is responsible for about twice the electricity load of the residential sector, and savings are even more cost-effective. This is the obvious way to go for additional efficiency savings. There is no way for MA to meet its clean energy and climate goals while consistently lagging year to year in the C&I sector. Failure to save energy in the C&I sector means either missing our GWSA goals or pushing us all towards higher cost methods of reducing carbon.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on this process. I applaud your work on energy efficiency, and ask that you make strides to increase energy efficiency in the commercial and industrial sectors to the levels seen in the residential sector.

Respectfully,

Julia Blyth