

Subject: comments on MassSave

To DOER folks,

Thanks for taking comments from the public regarding the upcoming three-year energy efficiency plan.

I write as a local activist in Berkshire County who has long been involved in environmental issues here in our County, and also as a member of ener-G-save, a project in Pioneer Valley funded by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, dedicated to increasing the numbers of people who take advantage of free energy audits for their home. I offer comments wearing each of these two hats.

First, in the Berkshires, we need more contractors. CET based here only services gas customers, and the rest of the homeowners here report too often long waits for calls to be returned, and long waits to get their audit, and then their work from contractors whose bases are many miles away. I know from my own experience that there ARE times when things flow smoothly from a call to the MassSave number to work done, but I've heard too many stories of people who get frustrated and stop the process before it even begins.

My work in Pioneer Valley helps people connect directly to MassSave contractors and the process is greatly simplified. We are currently working with over 500 customers, about half of whom have never had an audit before. Our work has been hard to assess because of MassSave regulations upon contractors. I would like to see them have more leverage to help homeowners get maximum CO2 savings. Contractors also feel limited in their capacity to report back to our operations, limiting our capacity for us to evaluate our work and serve people always more.

There are some great incentives available now to homeowners, but they are not widely known. It would be very helpful for consistent messages to be broadly put out, and for contractors to be able to advertise their work and those incentives with the MassSave program.

I am often questioned by people I speak with about why the utility companies are in charge of the energy efficiency programs. They don't understand why those companies whose success depends on selling a *lot* of fuel would be in charge of programs that endeavor to use LESS fuel. There needs to be far better messaging, including the fact that people have already paid into the fund that makes the audits free, that it's their due to receive these audits at no cost.

While MassSave has in many ways served Massachusetts well, far more needs to happen to create the levels of energy efficiency we need now. I hope some

of these comments will be helpful in improving the program. I am happy to speak with anyone at any time to explain further.

Thank you,
Susan Olshuff
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