

2018 -- S 2941

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2018

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A N A C T

RELATING TO PUBLIC UTILITIES AND CARRIERS

Introduced By: Senators Conley, Nesselbush, and Crowley

Date Introduced: May 31, 2018

Referred To: Senate Finance

(Lieutenant Governor)

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 39-1-27.7 of the General Laws in Chapter 39-1 entitled "Public
2 Utilities Commission" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **39-1-27.7. System reliability and least-cost procurement.**

4 Least-cost procurement shall comprise system reliability and energy efficiency and
5 conservation procurement as provided for in this section and supply procurement as provided for
6 in § 39-1-27.8, as complementary but distinct activities that have as common purpose meeting
7 electrical and natural gas energy needs in Rhode Island, in a manner that is optimally cost-
8 effective, reliable, prudent and environmentally responsible.

9 (a) The commission shall establish not later than June 1, 2008, standards for system
10 reliability and energy efficiency and conservation procurement, which shall include standards and
11 guidelines for:

12 (1) System reliability procurement, including but not limited to:

13 (i) Procurement of energy supply from diverse sources, including, but not limited to,
14 renewable energy resources as defined in chapter 26 of this title;

15 (ii) Distributed generation, including, but not limited to, renewable energy resources and
16 thermally leading combined heat and power systems, which is reliable and is cost-effective, with
17 measurable, net system benefits;

18 (iii) Demand response, including, but not limited to, distributed generation, back-up
19 generation and on-demand usage reduction, which shall be designed to facilitate electric customer

1 participation in regional demand response programs, including those administered by the
2 independent service operator of New England ("ISO-NE") and/or are designed to provide local
3 system reliability benefits through load control or using on-site generating capability;

4 (iv) To effectuate the purposes of this division, the commission may establish standards
5 and/or rates (A) for qualifying distributed generation, demand response, and renewable energy
6 resources; (B) for net-metering; (C) for back-up power and/or standby rates that reasonably
7 facilitate the development of distributed generation; and (D) for such other matters as the
8 commission may find necessary or appropriate.

9 (2) Least-cost procurement, which shall include procurement of energy efficiency and
10 energy conservation measures that are prudent and reliable and when such measures are lower
11 cost than acquisition of additional supply, including supply for periods of high demand.

12 (b) The standards and guidelines provided for by subsection (a) shall be subject to
13 periodic review and as appropriate amendment by the commission, which review will be
14 conducted not less frequently than every three (3) years after the adoption of the standards and
15 guidelines.

16 (c) To implement the provisions of this section:

17 (1) The commissioner of the office of energy resources and the energy efficiency and
18 resources management council, either or jointly or separately, shall provide the commission
19 findings and recommendations with regard to system reliability and energy efficiency and
20 conservation procurement on or before March 1, 2008, and triennially on or before March 1,
21 thereafter through March 1, 2024. The report shall be made public and be posted electronically on
22 the website to the office of energy resources.

23 (2) The commission shall issue standards not later than June 1, 2008, with regard to plans
24 for system reliability and energy efficiency and conservation procurement, which standards may
25 be amended or revised by the commission as necessary and/or appropriate.

26 (3) The energy efficiency and resources management council shall prepare by July 15,
27 2008, a reliability and efficiency procurement opportunity report which shall identify
28 opportunities to procure efficiency, distributed generation, demand response and renewables,
29 which report shall be submitted to the electrical distribution company, the commission, the office
30 of energy resources and the joint committee on energy.

31 (4) Each electrical and natural gas distribution company shall submit to the commission
32 on or before September 1, 2008, and triennially on or before September 1, thereafter through
33 September 1, 2024, a plan for system reliability and energy efficiency and conservation
34 procurement. In developing the plan, the distribution company may seek the advice of the

1 commissioner and the council. The plan shall include measurable goals and target percentages for
2 each energy resource, pursuant to standards established by the commission, including efficiency,
3 distributed generation, demand response, combined heat and power, and renewables. The plan
4 shall be made public and be posted electronically on the website to the office of energy resources,
5 and shall also be submitted to the general assembly.

6 (5) The commission shall issue an order approving all energy efficiency measures that are
7 cost effective and lower cost than acquisition of additional supply, with regard to the plan from
8 the electrical and natural gas distribution company, and reviewed and approved by the energy
9 efficiency and resources management council, and any related annual plans, and shall approve a
10 fully reconciling funding mechanism to fund investments in all efficiency measures that are cost
11 effective and lower cost than acquisition of additional supply, not greater than sixty (60) days
12 after it is filed with the commission.

13 (6) (i) Each electrical and natural gas distribution company shall provide a status report,
14 which shall be public, on the implementation of least cost procurement on or before December
15 15, 2008, and on or before February 1, 2009, to the commission, the division, the commissioner
16 of the office of energy resources and the energy efficiency and resources management council
17 which may provide the distribution company recommendations with regard to effective
18 implementation of least cost procurement. The report shall include the targets for each energy
19 resource included in the order approving the plan and the achieved percentage for energy
20 resource, including the achieved percentages for efficiency, distributed generation, demand
21 response, combined heat and power, and renewables as well as the current funding allocations for
22 each eligible energy resource and the businesses and vendors in Rhode Island participating in the
23 programs. The report shall be posted electronically on the website of the office of energy
24 resources.

25 (ii) Beginning on November 1, 2012 or before, each electric distribution company shall
26 support the installation and investment in clean and efficient combined heat and power
27 installations at commercial, institutional, municipal, and industrial facilities. This support shall be
28 documented annually in the electric distribution company's energy efficiency program plans. In
29 order to effectuate this provision, the energy efficiency and resource management council shall
30 seek input from the public, the gas and electric distribution company, the economic development
31 corporation, and commercial and industrial users, and make recommendations regarding services
32 to support the development of combined heat and power installations in the electric distribution
33 company's annual and triennial energy efficiency program plans.

34 (iii) The energy efficiency annual plan shall include, but not be limited to, a plan for

1 identifying and recruiting qualified combined heat and power projects, incentive levels, contract
2 terms and guidelines, and achievable megawatt targets for investments in combined heat and
3 power systems. In the development of the plan, the energy efficiency and resource management
4 council and the electric distribution company shall factor into the combined heat and power plan
5 and program, the following criteria: (A) Economic development benefits in Rhode Island,
6 including direct and indirect job creation and retention from investments in combined heat and
7 power systems; (B) Energy and cost savings for customers; (C) Energy supply costs; (D)
8 Greenhouse gas emissions standards and air quality benefits; and (E) System reliability benefits.

9 (iv) The energy efficiency and resource management council shall conduct at least one
10 public review meeting annually, to discuss and review the combined heat and power program,
11 with at least seven (7) business day's notice, prior to the electric and gas distribution utility
12 submitting the plan to the commission. The commission shall evaluate the submitted combined
13 heat and power program as part of the annual energy efficiency plan. The commission shall issue
14 an order approving the energy efficiency plan and programs within sixty (60) days of the filing.

15 (7) The energy efficiency and resource management council and the electric distribution
16 company shall reserve five percent (5%) of the total amount established within the energy
17 efficiency fund for the low-income home-energy assistance program ("LIHEAP") enhancement
18 plan under § 39-1-27.12 which funds shall be allocated, and distributed through the same process
19 as all LIHEAP funds, to assist residents who seek assistance with payment of electric bills but do
20 not meet the low-income eligibility guidelines and are not eligible for other assistance programs.

21 (d) If the commission shall determine that the implementation of system reliability and
22 energy efficiency and conservation procurement has caused or is likely to cause under or over-
23 recovery of overhead and fixed costs of the company implementing said procurement, the
24 commission may establish a mandatory rate adjustment clause for the company so affected in
25 order to provide for full recovery of reasonable and prudent overhead and fixed costs.

26 (e) The commission shall conduct a contested case proceeding to establish a performance
27 based incentive plan which allows for additional compensation for each electric distribution
28 company and each company providing gas to end-users and/or retail customers based on the level
29 of its success in mitigating the cost and variability of electric and gas services through
30 procurement portfolios.

31 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
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RELATING TO PUBLIC UTILITIES AND CARRIERS

1 This act would reserve five percent (5%) of the energy efficiency fund for the low-
2 income home-energy assistance program enhancement plan for residents who seek financial
3 assistance with electric bills but do not meet the low-income eligibility guidelines and are not
4 eligible for other assistance programs.

5 This act would take effect upon passage.

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