



State of Vermont
Department of Public Service
112 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620-2601
<http://public.service.vermont.gov>

[phone] 802-828-2811
[fax] 802-828-2342
[tdd] 800-734-8390

November 15, 2019

Ms. Judith Whitney, Clerk
Vermont Public Utility Commission
112 State Street, Floor 4
Montpelier, Vermont 05620

Re: Case No. 18-0126-PET
Assessment of GMP's Energy Assistance Program – Final Report from Consultant

Dear Ms. Whitney:

On October 21, the Public Utility Commission (Commission) issued a memorandum requesting that the Department of Public Service (Department) provide a status update on the completion of an independent assessment of Green Mountain Power's (GMP) Energy Assistance Program (EAP). I write to advise the Commission that the Department received a final report from an independent contractor on Wednesday, November 13, 2019. A copy of the final report, which was prepared by a team of consultants at GDS Associates, Inc. is attached to this letter. The report will also be posted to the Department's website.

The Department, through its Consumer Affairs and Public Information Division (CAPI), issued an initial request for proposals (RFP) for an independent expert to assess GMP's EAP program on July 31, 2018. The Department did not receive bids from any qualified respondents in response to the initial RFP. Therefore, on November 20, 2018, the Department issued a revised version of the RFP. The re-issued RFP was provided directly to a much broader pool of potential respondents and the Department ultimately received bids from two qualified respondents. The Department interviewed both qualified bidders, and after consultation with GMP, selected GDS Associates, Inc. (GDS) to conduct the assessment. The Department received all necessary approvals for a contract with GDS during April, 2019, and GDS commenced the assessment immediately thereafter.

The attached report details the process and methodology used by GDS to conduct the EAP assessment, which was comprehensive. The consultants at GDS reviewed relevant literature, assessed low-income programs from other jurisdictions, conducted interviews with staff at GMP, the Department, the Vermont Department for Children and Families (DCF), and regulators from several other jurisdictions. GDS, with assistance from CAPI and GMP, also conducted a workshop that brought together a wide array of representatives from GMP, state agencies, and various non-profits and community action organizations that assist low-income consumers in navigating various benefit programs offered in Vermont.

The Department has already provided a copy of this final report to GMP. The report will be disseminated to all participants in the workshop process and will establish a foundation for

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possible revisions to the GMP's EAP program. The Department plans to continue its ongoing consultation with GMP and other interested parties and will keep the Commission advised as to any future process for potential revisions to GMP's EAP program now that the independent assessment has been completed. However, please let me know if the Commission has any immediate questions regarding the assessment or needs any additional information from the Department at this time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. C. Burke', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Daniel C. Burke,
Special Counsel

Encl.

cc: Case No. 18-0126-PET Service List (by ePUC)
Carol Flint, CAPI Director (by email)
Mary Morris, GMP (by email)
Philene Taormina (by email)