

From: Paul Schnitger <pschnitger@hotmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 8:50 AM

To: PUC - Clerk <PUC.Clerk@vermont.gov>

Subject: Comment - Case No. 25-0729-TF (Town of Hardwick Electric/tariff for 13.24% rate increase)

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I am writing in opposition to the Town of Hardwick Electric Department's (HED) request to raise its retail rate by 13.24%. While the testimony and exhibits filed by HED might provide support for the request, they do not adequately represent the qualitative issues that should be resolved by HED before it seeks a rate increase. Neighbors of mine and I, as customers of HED, have been frustrated by the quality of HED's operations for years. It has great employees but it has delivered suboptimal service. I believe these operational shortcomings may have directly led to an inefficient and excessive operating budget. Fortunately, only some months ago, a new and very capable general manager was appointed to lead HED. Providing a rate increase so soon after the appointment of the general manager would entrench the operational inefficiencies that may exist. It would be more fiducially responsible for the PUC to give the new general manager at least a year to perform a thorough assessment of HED's operations and expenses before considering a rate increase. At a minimum, such a delay would provide the customers of HED more comfort and certainty that the rate increase is necessary. Thank you for your consideration and attention to this matter.

Thanks,
Paul Schnitger
1288 West Hill Road
Wolcott, VT 05680