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## *Site Evaluation Committee Denies Northern Pass Approval*

New Hampshire – Electric

The New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee issued a decision denying the application of Public Service Company of New Hampshire d/b/a Eversource Energy and Northern Pass Transmission, LLC for the Northern Pass Transmission Project – a \$1.6 billion project comprised of 192 miles of high-voltage transmission line from Pittsburg, NH to Deerfield, NH that would provide for 1,090 megawatts of hydro-electric power to be imported into the region. In order to approve the application, the committee would have to determine that the project met four thresholds. Subsequent to 70 days

of hearings and two days of deliberations, the committee concluded “...that the Applicant did not meet its burden in demonstrating that the Project would not unduly interfere with the orderly development of the region, we could not grant a Certificate even if the Subcommittee were to find in favor of the Applicant on the remaining three prongs. There is, therefore, no need to go further.” Eversource Energy has asked for the committee to reconsider and reevaluate its decision. There has been no further action to date.

## *Federal Energy Regulatory Commission: No Evidence of Anticompetitive Withholding of Natural Gas Pipeline Capacity*

National – Electric & Natural Gas

A Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) staff inquiry has revealed no evidence of anticompetitive withholding of natural gas pipeline capacity on the Algonquin Gas Transmission pipeline by New England shippers. This FERC staff inquiry arose out of allegations made by the Environmental Defense Fund in an August 2017 white paper, which asserted that local gas distribution companies in New England had

engaged in practices to withhold pipeline capacity on the Algonquin system in order to drive up natural gas and/or power prices in the region. FERC staff conducted a review and determined that the study was flawed and led to incorrect conclusions about the alleged withholding. The FERC staff found no evidence of capacity withholding and will take no further action on the matter.

## *Additional Community Choice Aggregation for Upstate New York*

New York – Electric

The New York Public Service Commission has approved its third community choice aggregation program for upstate New York. This program will serve the Central New York villages of Fayetteville

and Minoa, along with the Village of Coxsackie and the towns of Cairo and New Baltimore in the Capital District.

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## *Supplier Consolidated Billing*

Pennsylvania – Electric

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission is continuing to take measures to expand competition in energy markets in the Commonwealth. The Commission has issued an order denying NRG Energy, Inc.'s proposal for implementation of electric generation supplier consolidated billing (where the supplier bills for both generation charges and delivery charges); however, the Commission has noted this is due to a lack of detail and not in opposition of the

concept. In order to continue the consideration of supplier consolidated billing and other programs that can promote a competitive market and benefit customers, the Commission finds that it is necessary to seek further information, clarification, and comment regarding the implementation by conducting an informational hearing before the Commission.

## *ISO-New England: Operational Fuel Security Analysis*

Regional – Electric & Natural Gas

ISO-New England has completed a study on fuel security analysis with the goal of understanding trends affecting power system operations. This research finds, among other things, that: (1) New England's limited fuel infrastructure will eventually cause severe reliability issues if fuel security is not addressed. (2) ISO-New England has been publicly discussing the need for additional fuel supply infrastructure or measures that will significantly reduce the need for wholesale electricity production or natural gas supply during peak periods. Despite several attempts on a regional and individual state basis to find innovative ways to finance new natural

gas pipeline investment, it does not see that investment materializing in the near future. (3) The analysis finds that energy shortfalls due to inadequate fuel would occur with almost every fuel-mix scenario in winter 2024/2025, requiring frequent use of emergency actions to protect the grid. The study results suggest that New England could be headed for significant levels of emergency actions, particularly during major fuel or resource outages. (4) ISO-New England will continue to discuss the results of this operational fuel-security analysis with stakeholders, regulators, and policymakers throughout 2018.

## *Task Force for Current State of Customer Choice Programs*

Maryland – Electric

A task force charged with analyzing the current state of customer choice programs in Maryland has advised the Public Service Commission to commence a rulemaking proceeding through which to consider certain recommendations from the working group for augmenting competition within the state's retail energy markets. The task force reports that a critical impediment to the exercise of customer choice was

due to the administrative burdens associated with the enrollment process. Accordingly, one of the main recommendations is implementation of an '*instant connect*' or protocol for customers opting to take service from a competitive electric supplier. The group also suggested a new system of '*seamless moves*' in which a residential or small business customer could relocate within the same service

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territory without any disruption in their current supply arrangement would aid customer choice because current regulations require a customer that

## *Shopping For Energy Supply*

Ohio – Electric & Natural Gas

The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio issued a reminder to consumers that there are options when deciding about the energy supply that best suits your business or home. The ability to shop for alternative suppliers of electricity and natural gas gives you greater variety of pricing options and gives you the

is moving to be returned to utility default service and then reapply for a contract with an alternative supplier.

freedom to pick the option that is best for your business. The Commission suggests that when shopping make sure to read your current bill and contract to look for things like price-to-compare, usage, applicable termination fees and the contract's expiration date.

## *Legislative Efforts to Enhance Electric Retail Competition*

Virginia – Electric

Virginia legislators have introduced legislative initiatives in both the Senate and the House (*Senate Bill 837 & House Bill 1528*) aimed at enhancing electric retail competition. The proposed legislation reduces the amount of demand of an investor-owned electric utility's customer that makes the customer eligible to purchase electric power from any licensed supplier from five megawatts down to one megawatt. In addition, it shortens the period that a utility's customer who switches from an investor-owned electric utility to a competing supplier is barred from

returning as a customer of its utility from five years to three months. Lastly, it revises the methodology for calculating certain costs for customers of an investor-owned electric utility that receive an exemption from the lockout period. The legislation (1) allows customers of an investor-owned electric utility to purchase 100 percent renewable energy from any licensed supplier and (2) eliminates the condition that permits such purchases only if the incumbent investor-owned electric utility does not offer a tariff for 100 percent renewable energy.

## *Strengthening Consumer Protection Requirements*

Illinois – Electric

The Illinois Commerce Commission has adopted amendments to Part 412 of its rules, to strengthen consumer protection requirements in order to ensure that there is transparency in the transactions taking place between consumers and Retail Electric Suppliers (RES) and that the market functions as intended. A sharp increase in public complaints regarding a spike in electricity prices during the *polar*

*vortex* winter of 2013-2014, led the Commission to investigate the marketing practices of RESs and prompted the rule changes. In March 2018, the Commission hosted a policy session to examine the new sales and marketing regulatory rules imposed on RES and to provide helpful tips for consumers when engaging with RES.

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