

E-01461A-15-0363

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Arizona Corporation Commission
Utilities Complaint Form

Investigator: Michael Buck Phone: <<< REDACTED >>> Opinion Date: 4/25/2016
 Opinion Number: 2016 - 130306 Priority: Respond within 5 business days
 Opinion Codes: Rate Case Items - Opposed Closed Date: 4/25/2016 3:45 PM

First Name: M. Elizabeth Last Name: Henley Account Name: M. Elizabeth Henley
 Address: <<< REDACTED >>>
 City: Tucson State: AZ Zip Code: 85739

Company: Trico Electric Cooperative, Inc. Division: Electric

Nature Of Opinion

Docket Number: E-01461A-15-0363

April 22, 2016

Dear Commissioners:

Arizona Corporation Commission

DOCKETED

APR 29 2016

DOCKETED BY *KG*

Docket Position: Against

ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION
DOCKET CONTROL

2016 APR 29 P 2:00

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I would like to think that we can all agree that any installations of solar and other alternative energy sources are a good thing. These installations reduce carbon emissions, which makes our air cleaner and healthier to breathe and they help to reduce climate change, which is a major global issue.

I am opposed to most of the proposal submitted by TRICO for several reasons:

- The process, including the proposal submitted on Feb 28, has been less than open and clear
- I am opposed to retroactive rate increases of any kind
- Net metering on a yearly basis is fair, but net metering on a monthly basis is definitely not
- The monthly charge of \$15 plus other charges is enough

I signed a contract on February 13, 2015 to have solar panels installed on my roof. I was caught in the debacle of the first rate proposal submitted by TRICO on Feb 28 with a March 1 effective date. I immediately put my system on hold and renegotiated my contract. When this rate proposal was withdrawn, I received a notice from TRICO saying that it would be submitted again before the end of the year with the same effective date and the goal of getting approval by the end of 2016.

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After listening to a clip from your meeting on Aug 18, I concluded that it was unlikely that you would approve a retroactive date for the proposal and that if I waited to find out, the Federal and state credits would likely have expired. I'm a big believer in the use of solar energy, but I also need for my system to pay for itself in a reasonable length of time, and the credits help in that regard. I gave the go-ahead for my system, and it was hooked up to the grid in December, eight-nine months after it would have been had the process of the first proposal been more open.

I think that retroactive dating of any rate increase is unfair to all customers, and I urge you to pass some kind of ruling that the ACC will not do that and that public utilities are prohibited from advertising them. I would also urge you to include in that ruling provisions that require utilities to give notice to all customers of proposed rate increases and the details of those rate increases in everyday English to customers at least 30 days prior to submittal to the ACC.

As you undoubtedly know, solar panels produce more energy in the spring than they do in the summer when a lot more energy is needed to run air conditioning, a necessity in the desert. The residential rate for energy is 3.3x more than TRICO pays for energy. If the ACC approves TRICO's request for monthly net metering, then sizing a system is going to be very difficult. Either one buys a lot of energy in the summer, or during some times of the year, one will be producing a lot more than one is using with payment reduction of more than three times what it is now. I consider this to be BAD policy and certainly not a way to encourage solar installations. Individual home owners put out a substantial capital investment to get solar, and the large majority of us needs to recoup those investments in a reasonable time. Monthly net metering is not the way to go!

My system was sized to provide the power that I use for an entire year. Under the current rate structure, I was told to expect it to pay for itself in nine-ten years. At age 74, I hope that I can live independently in my home that long. And, I think that a lot more time than that will be very discouraging to others who are considering such installations.

Finally, I want to comment on the fixed monthly rate. I am currently paying a fixed fee of \$15 plus a net metering charge of \$3.38 plus sales tax of \$1.23 for a total of \$19.61. That is roughly 1/3 of what my normal electricity bill ran during months when I wasn't using my A/C. That is enough! I will say, however, that I consider raising the fixed fee fairer than monthly net metering, and it will also hit the snowbirds, who also have instant access to electricity without using much, if any, for up to six months of the year.

I understand that TRICO and other utilities must be able to charge enough to meet their costs, but I also believe very strongly that we need to encourage as much solar use as possible, and that the owners of solar installations must also be able to recoup their costs in a reasonable time frame.

As a quasi-government entity, the manner that TRICO has made rate increase proposals has been appalling to me. Again, I urge you to pass rulings to change this process. I, for one, had a lot of uncertainty and

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anxiety in 2015 and continuing into 2016 over proposed increases, and I don't think anyone should have to go through that. I deeply regret the delay in getting my system, which was caused by their sneakiness. I am trusting that the economics upon which my system is based will remain intact for me and others who already have systems installed or are in the planning stages.

And, I hope that whatever decisions you make will make more economic sense than monthly net metering.

Very truly yours,

M. Elizabeth Henley

Investigation			
Date:	Analyst:	Submitted By:	Type:
4/25/2016	Michael Buck	Telephone	Investigation
Entered for the record and docketed. Closed.			
