

Sheffield-Highgate Export Interface

Presentation to House Committee on Energy and Technology

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The Committee's Questions:

- What is the Sheffield-Highgate Export Interface (“SHEI”)?
- What is the Public Utility Commission’s role?

What is the SHEI?

- A constraint on the high-voltage electric grid in northern Vermont that limits the amount of electricity generated in the area that can be transmitted to other parts of the state and region
- ISO New England is the independent regional transmission operator, responsible for functional control of New England high-voltage electric grid
- ISO New England demarcated the SHEI in 2013 to address reliability concerns

Effect on Vermonters

- In the SHEI, local electricity generation often exceeds local electricity demand
- At such times, the high-voltage electric transmission grid in the SHEI cannot export all of the excess electricity without effects on grid reliability
- To ensure grid reliability, ISO New England sends signals to large, existing generators located in the SHEI to curtail operations
- When this happens, Vermont utilities and ratepayers can be financially harmed

PUC Responsibilities

- Infrastructure siting and construction (projects proposed by electric and gas utilities, merchant generators, net-metering applicants)
- Implementation of policy directives (for example, energy efficiency programs, net-metering rules, standard-offer program, Renewable Energy Standard)
- Traditional economic regulation, such as rates, quality of service, overall management of utilities (electric, gas, energy efficiency, telecommunications, water, and certain aspects of cable television)

SHEI Issues Come Before the PUC

- When an applicant seeks a CPG to construct a new generation project or new transmission infrastructure in the SHEI (30 V.S.A. § 248)
- When a utility seeks to recover SHEI-related power costs or infrastructure investments (30 V.S.A. § 225)
- When an affected utility presents its Least-Cost Integrated Plan (30 V.S.A. § 218c)
- When the PUC implements statewide energy programs (e.g., standard-offer program, energy efficiency programs)

Questions?

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