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Statewide

PUCO to Hold Workshops on the Future of Energy Efficiency Programs (Case Nos. 16-574-EL-POR, et al.)

Summary: On Feb. 24, 2021, the PUCO confirmed that the electric distribution utilities (EDUs) met the statewide collective energy efficiency (EE) benchmark of 17.5% – with roughly 19.8% cumulative energy savings achieved – and terminated the EE riders pursuant to HB 6. With the termination of the EE mandates, the PUCO stated that it will solicit the views of stakeholders on whether cost-effective EE programs are appropriate to manage electric generation costs in Ohio. The PUCO will hold a series of workshops on the scope and nature of future EE programs and how such programs fit into a competitive retail electric service market. The format and schedule for such workshops will be announced at a later date.

FirstEnergy

FirstEnergy Agrees to Disclose Certain Political Spending

Summary: FirstEnergy Corp. announced that it has reached an [agreement](#) with the New York State Common Retirement Fund (NYSCRF), a shareholder of the company and the third-largest public pension fund in the United States. Under the deal, FirstEnergy will publicly disclose all spending on political parties, candidates, and ballot measures semi-annually through May 2024. Additionally, FirstEnergy agreed to disclose all political contributions over \$25,000 to any trade association or organization that drafts or endorses model legislation.

FirstEnergy stated it will post the disclosures on the company's website 12 months before its annual shareholder meeting. However, the agreement states that FirstEnergy's disclosures will "not encompass lobbying spending" and appears to only apply to the company's political spending going forward. In exchange for the increased disclosure, NYSCRF will withdraw five shareholder proposals seeking the release of FirstEnergy's political and lobbying spending.

PUCO Solicits Comments on FirstEnergy Energy Efficiency Rider (Case No. 16-743-EL-POR)

Summary: In a prior order, the PUCO accepted revised tariffs for FirstEnergy's Demand Side Management and Energy Efficiency Rider 1 (Rider DSE1) and tariffs setting FirstEnergy's Rider DSE2 to zero. Rider DSE1 charges customers for FirstEnergy's Economic Load Response Program, while Rider DSE2 charges customers for the then-existing EE mandates.

The Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel (OCC) requested reconsideration of the decision, arguing that customers should not still be charged for the ELR Program because the PUCO already determined that HB 6 required the termination of EE/PDR cost recovery riders once the utilities met the cumulative savings caps on Dec. 31, 2020. In light of OCC's arguments, the PUCO directed stakeholders to file comments on whether charges through Rider DSE1 must terminate.