



Regulators Reject MGE Proposal to Overhaul Residential Solar Energy Policy

Climate Advocates Applaud Decision, Calling it a Win for Climate Justice in Wisconsin

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MADISON, WI—At a meeting of the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC) today, regulators rejected a proposal by Madison Gas & Electric (MGE) to overhaul net metering, a process that allows rooftop solar owners to be compensated for excess energy generated and returned to the grid.

[350 Wisconsin](#), a nonprofit organization focused on climate and environmental justice, applauded the PSC's decision, calling it a win for climate justice. As an intervenor in the case, 350 Wisconsin submitted detailed testimony in opposition to MGE's proposal. According to [Midwest Environmental Advocates \(MEA\)](#), the nonprofit law firm that represents 350 Wisconsin, MGE's proposal would have increased the amount of time it takes to recoup the cost of solar panel installation. As a result, the proposal would have exacerbated climate inequity by putting rooftop solar further out of reach for low- and middle-income Wisconsinites.

"Affordable rooftop solar has an important role to play in accelerating the transition from dirty fossil fuels to clean, renewable sources of energy and ensuring that the transition is just and equitable," said MEA Senior Staff Attorney Dan Gustafson.

The PSC's rejection of the proposal to end net metering preserves rooftop solar as a viable economic option just as new tax credits and rebates available through the Federal Inflation Reduction Act are expected to make the installation of rooftop solar more affordable.

"The PSC's decision to preserve net metering couldn't have come at a better time. Mitigating the worst impacts of climate change requires us to dramatically scale up alternatives to fossil fuels as quickly as possible and at every level," said Stephanie Robinson, Co-Executive Director of 350 Wisconsin.

MGE's proposal drew significant criticism from members of the public at a public hearing in September. All those who testified at the hearing asked the PSC to reject the proposal, with no one speaking in support.

At the September hearing, Madison resident Mark Putman told the commission, "The proposed changes to the net metering policy will be a major setback. I am strongly against them because they are going to set us back in our goal to transition to clean energy." Putman also said, "People who put solar panels on their rooftops are doing a service for the rest of the community. They are reducing pollution in air and water, [which] protects public health and reduces the impacts on our medical system, and it saves us all money."

At today's meeting, Commissioner Tyler Huebner thanked all of those who participated in the case, including 17 intervenors, 16 members of the public who testified at the public hearings, and over 700 who submitted written comments. He noted that "the intervenors contributed to [the PSC] having a robust and complete record," in particular on the issues of net metering and affordability.

At today's meeting, the PSC also took action to reduce MGE's authorized return on equity, which will reduce the overall rate increase for MGE customers. MEA submitted detailed testimony on behalf of 350 Wisconsin outlining how MGE's request to increase rates would have exacerbated the energy burden on low-income families.

"While we wish the PSC had gone even further, we are pleased that the commission took some action to address inequitable energy burdens by limiting shareholder profits," said Robinson. "We expect Wisconsin's utilities to be true leaders in an equitable transition to clean energy. They should be working to solve the crisis, not profit from it."

MGE is not the only Wisconsin utility asking the Public Service Commission for permission to make major changes. Wisconsin Power & Light (Alliant Energy) is also seeking approval to raise rates and make changes to its net metering policies. The PSC is expected to act on Alliant's proposal at a meeting on Thursday, November 9.

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350 Wisconsin is a grassroots nonprofit that mobilizes grassroots power to change hearts and minds, laws and policies, and humanity's massive systems to make transformational progress toward environmental justice and solving the climate crisis by 2030. Learn more at www.350wisconsin.org.

Midwest Environmental Advocates is a nonprofit law center that combines the power of law with the resolve of communities facing environmental injustice to secure and protect the rights of all people to healthy water, land, and air. Learn more at www.midwestadvocates.org or www.facebook.com/midwestadvocates.