

8/31/2017

RE: Public Comments on Docket UE-160918

Honorable UTC Commissioners,

In late August 2017, Olympia, WA City Council passed a resolution regarding divestment of PSE's coal plants in Colstrip, Montana. Olympia recognizes the impact of continued operation of these coal plants on the health of the human population and the ecosystem as a whole.

In June, the Seattle City Council passed a similar resolution.

It is troubling that the City of Bellevue, home to PSE's headquarters, has not adopted a similar resolution. As the largest city that relies on PSE for electricity service, Bellevue has an opportunity to lead by example. Communities like Olympia and Seattle cannot solve this problem for us.

While the City of Bellevue has supported the K4C initiative to see coal plants closed by 2025, Bellevue Councilmember Lynne Robinson (Bellevue's K4C representative) has indicated that neither the City of Bellevue nor Bellevue City Council have taken a position on PSE's divestiture of their coal plants. No Bellevue City Council Members spoke at the WUTC's public hearing of PSE's rate case hearing in July. No Bellevue City Council Member has indicated a willingness to represent Bellevue at a second WUTC public hearing on August 31<sup>st</sup>. This is contrasted by other eastside cities – like Bothell, Kirkland, and others – that have City Council representatives speaking at these public hearings to call for the divestment of PSE's coal dependence.

Why is the City of Bellevue reluctant to take a public stand and unequivocally clarify their commitment to the K4C initiative via calling for the accelerated closure of Colstrip? Because of PSE's headquarters proximity to Bellevue City Hall, is PSE the tail that wags the dog? Citizens can't help but wonder.

Instead of supporting - or remaining mute - on the topic of additional PSE rate increases that do nothing to accelerate the closure of Colstrip, the City of Bellevue must lead the way to support smart energy solutions for the Puget Sound Eastside. These solutions – such as the combination of solar, grid battery storage, and micro-generation – solve both transmission and generation problems for PSE while being safer, more reliable, lower cost, and less environmentally damaging.

The Puget Sound Eastside is fully of technology entrepreneurialism as well as a love for the environment. Bellevue should lead the charge for solutions that support reliability, protect the environment, and creates job growth via local companies like UniEnergy Technologies and Itek Energy. The UTC can send a clear message to the City of Bellevue to support the K4C initiative and add Bellevue to the growing list of cities that seek to divest WA from dependence on coal-fired electricity while keeping customers' electricity rates affordable.

Sincerely,

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