

September 30, 2022

**Via Electronic and Regular Mail**

Carmen D. Diaz, Acting Secretary  
New Jersey Board of Public Utilities  
44 S. Clinton Avenue, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
P.O. Box 350  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0350

**Re: Joint Comments of New Jersey's Electric Distribution Companies to Draft  
Minimum Filing Requirements for AMI Data Access Plans (Docket  
EO20110716)**

Dear Acting Secretary Diaz:

Pursuant to the June 29, 2022 Notice setting forth draft minimum filing requirements ("MFRs") for the New Jersey electric distribution companies' ("EDC") data access plans for advanced metering infrastructure ("AMI") data, I am submitting these joint comments on behalf of New Jersey's EDCs: Public Service Electric and Gas Company ("PSE&G"), Jersey Central Power and Light Company ("JCPL"), Atlantic City Electric Company ("ACE"), and Rockland Electric Company ("RECO") (collectively, "EDCs" or "Companies").

**Joint Comments of the EDCs**

The EDCs appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on the draft MFRs and to work cooperatively with New Jersey Board of Public Utilities ("BPU" or "Board") Staff and other interested stakeholders to bring benefits of AMI data directly to customers by enabling access to their energy usage data. Each of the EDCs is submitting its own comments regarding the proposed MFRs. However, through these joint comments, the EDCs provide helpful information to Staff on issues that have common impacts across the Companies. The EDCs stand ready to engage further with Board Staff and stakeholders on resolving issues for developing data access plans ("DAPs") with a common framework in order to provide reasonably timely data in a secure and cost effective manner.

**1. EDCs face common challenges regarding data privacy and cybersecurity**

The EDCs take very seriously their responsibilities to protect their operational systems and customer confidential and/or personally identifiable information ("PII") data. The Companies submit that cybersecurity issues implicated by the MFRs are inherently complex and require additional work to both identify potential risks and to develop appropriate solutions. The EDCs are specifically concerned about the cyber requirements imposed solely on the EDCs, while ignoring third parties accessing AMI data. This is plainly a suboptimal situation. Moreover, the need for additional work is particularly true for any new required functionality for AMI meters and networks that the MFRs contemplate that would require direct access to AMI meters, like on-

meter apps. This would be the case even where access is not via a direct connection but is wi-fi enabled. None of the EDCs currently offers on-meter apps. These issues are not insurmountable, but flexibility in the MFRs to permit time to address these issues is recommended.

**2. Meter data intervals and timing of data availability are complex because they impact various operational and customer systems differently for each EDC**

MFRs proposing to require changes to the meter data interval length to a 5-minute interval for residential customers and to require data to be made available in 48 hours are not simple changes for the EDCs that do not meet these standards currently. These types of changes impact the entire AMI solution (Meter – to – Head End), as well as numerous back-end systems processing the data for both the EDC and the third parties ingesting such data, and this will impact each EDC differently. These types of changes also were not considered in all of the AMI proceedings and may not be consistent with planned implementation. Again, flexibility is the order of the day to allow the EDCs to design DAPs that will deliver an end result to customers that is as uniform across Companies as is possible at reasonable costs. MFRs should refrain from mandated timeframes and overly-prescriptive requirements and should acknowledge that EDCs will be seeking cost recovery for implementation.

**3. Feasibility and costs to implement should be considered in context of the EDCs' BPU-approved AMI deployment plans**

The BPU has already approved each EDC's territory-wide AMI deployment plans. These plans are at various stages of implementation. RECO's implementation was completed in 2019. PSE&G has completed the installation of its AMI communications network and will have installed approximately 400,000 meters by the end of 2022, with expected completion in 2024. ACE began its network and mass meter deployment in the second and third quarters of 2022. ACE has already procured all its meters and ACE has installed over 15,000 meters; completion is expected by the end of 2024. JCP&L is ramping up to begin installations in 2023, and will complete mass deployment of meters and network equipment in 2025. Each of these programs includes millions of dollars in investments, and the costs of the programs are based on the types of networks and meters being installed. It is crucial, therefore, that the MFRs clearly state that nothing included therein is intended to revoke authority for these programs or to impose requirements to change the types of networks and meters installed. Of particular concern in light of existing programs is the MFR related to on-meter apps. None of the EDCs is installing AMI meters that can support these requirements at this time. The EDCs' AMI programs provide significant benefits in the next five or more years, but providing this specific capability should be considered over a longer term. Otherwise, the MFRs risk stranding undepreciated assets in the case where networks and meters are already in place, or significantly increasing costs and causing delay for programs that are in earlier stages. In short, the MFRs should be considered in the context of the programs that have already been approved and should leverage these programs to find efficiencies in developing DAPs rather than imposing new requirements that are not feasible with the assets being installed.

**4. Working groups are an appropriate mechanism for resolving issues**

The EDCs encourage Staff to prioritize core data sharing issues in the MFRs including data delivery platforms, formats, and customer consent processes, and to consider implementing AMI data sharing working groups to resolve other issues raised. Accelerated AMI deployment is a

transformational event. A similar transformational event took place in the 1990's in the form of industry restructuring, and at that time the Board established a stakeholder process using working groups, comprised of all interested parties including Board Staff and New Jersey Division of Rate Counsel ("Rate Counsel"), to address the many policy considerations involved with restructuring, as well as a separate working group to address the technical issues related to data transfer (*i.e.*, to enable implementation of the policy issues developed in the aforementioned working groups). These working groups met and thoroughly vetted the issues associated with the various subjects, which led to informed Board decisions that benefited from that dialogue. In the instant matter, the EDCs recommends that the Board follow a similar path and expand the proposed process to a broader working group process to address the full scope of policy considerations contained in the Straw Proposal. Working groups can be topical and, depending on the topic, could include EDCs, Staff, Rate Counsel, licensed Third Party Suppliers, non-licensed entities like AMI app developers and other energy services providers, AMI manufacturers, first responders, and academic institutions. We are just beginning the AMI journey. The MFRs can be streamlined to achieve the goal of beginning to provide data access in the shorter term, while continuing to consider the costs and benefits of additional functionality and evolving capabilities.

Very truly yours,

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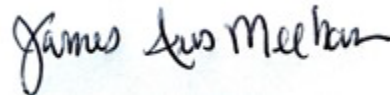
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