



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

PUBLIC UTILITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY
TEN FRANKLIN SQUARE
NEW BRITAIN, CT 06051

DOCKET NO. 23-08-02

ANNUAL RESIDENTIAL RENEWABLE ENERGY
SOLUTIONS PROGRAM REVIEW – YEAR 3

November 1, 2023

By the following Commissioners:

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DECISION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION	1
A.	SUMMARY	1
B.	BACKGROUND OF THE PROCEEDING.....	1
C.	CONDUCT OF THE PROCEEDING	2
D.	PARTICIPANTS.....	2
II.	LEGAL AUTHORITY.....	2
III.	PROGRAM OBJECTIVES.....	3
IV.	AUTHORITY ANALYSIS.....	4
A.	PROGRAM OVERVIEW	4
B.	RATE SETTING.....	6
1.	Stakeholder Comments	6
2.	Rate Setting Calculations	7
3.	Summary – 2024 Compensation Rates.....	11
C.	OTHER LOW-INCOME AND DISTRESSED MUNICIPALITY ADDER TOPICS.....	12
1.	Form Reduction and Simplification	12
2.	Adder Definition Expansion	13
3.	Distressed Municipality Adder Grace Period Allowance	17
4.	Adder Awareness	18
5.	Minimum Threshold for Eligibility	19
6.	New EDC Underserved Reporting Requirements	21
D.	ENSURING PARTICIPANT BENEFITS	22
1.	Introduction.....	22
2.	Stakeholder Comments	22
3.	Authority Analysis.....	24
E.	STATE AND FEDERAL INCENTIVE ELIGIBILITY	28
F.	MULTIFAMILY AFFORDABLE HOUSING	33
1.	Master-Metered and Sub-Metered Participation	33
2.	Financial Benefit Sharing Requirement Updates	36
3.	Percentage of Benefit to Tenants	37
4.	Meter Sockets	38
5.	Eligible Affordable Housing Facilities Reporting.....	39
G.	PROPOSED APPLICATION FEES	40
H.	IMPROVED RRES APPLICATION	41
I.	ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES	42
J.	CANCELLATION PERIOD.....	43
K.	COST DATA REPORTING	44
1.	Roof Repairs	46
L.	RRES DATA PORTALS	47
M.	SYSTEM EXPANSION UNDER NETTING TARIFF	48
1.	Non-Bypassable Charge for Netting System Expansions	48
N.	OVERSIZING ALLOWANCE FOR SYSTEMS.....	50
O.	SOLAR PANEL RECYCLING.....	51
P.	SOLAR PLUS STORAGE ADDER.....	52
Q.	OMBUDSPERSON	54

R.	TRANSFORMER COST SOCIALIZATION	54
S.	PROPOSED PROGRAMMATIC CHANGES	54
1.	Wiring Diagrams	54
2.	Production Meter Ownership and Non-Bypass Meter Sockets.....	58
3.	Program Manual.....	58
V.	CONCLUSION AND ORDERS	58
A.	CONCLUSION.....	58
T.	EXISTING AND NEW ORDERS.....	59
1.	Standing Orders to be filed in RRES Annual Review Dockets.....	59
2.	New Orders.....	63

DECISION

I. INTRODUCTION

A. SUMMARY

In this Decision, the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (Authority or PURA) approves updates to the Residential Renewable Energy Solutions Program (RRES Program or Program), administered by The Connecticut Light and Power Company d/b/a Eversource Energy (Eversource) and The United Illuminating Company (UI; collectively, with Eversource, the electric distribution companies or EDCs). The approved changes are intended to better align the RRES Program with the program objectives. The Decision also sets the RRES Program Tariff rates for project applications received in calendar year 2024.

B. BACKGROUND OF THE PROCEEDING

On February 10, 2021, the Authority issued an Interim Decision in Docket No. 20-07-01, PURA Implementation of Section 3 of Public Act 19-35, Renewable Energy Tariffs and Procurement Plans (Residential Tariff Decision), establishing renewable energy tariffs for residential customers of each EDC effective January 1, 2022, through December 31, 2027, pursuant to § 16-244z subsections (b), (d), (e) and portions of subsection (c) of the General Statutes of Connecticut (Conn. Gen. Stat.). The approved tariff program was subsequently named the RRES Program. The Authority initiates a docket annually to review key RRES Program metrics, including deployed megawatts (MW) and low- and moderate-income customer participation, and to ensure the Program is “on track to at least maintain historical deployment levels and to deliver a carbon free grid by 2040.” Residential Tariff Decision, p. 40.

Further, the Authority utilizes the annual proceeding to “set the [RRES Program] Tariff rates, any separate [renewable energy certificate (REC)] payments, and any fully, non-bypassable charges for Program applications received during the following calendar year.” *Id.* The Authority additionally uses the docket to evaluate the key data inputs, in addition to MW deployed, necessary to establish the annual RRES Program Tariff rates. *Id.* Thus, the above-captioned proceeding was initiated pursuant to the Residential Tariff Decision and in order to ensure the continued successful implementation of the RRES Program.

The Authority conducted the first annual RRES Program review in Docket No. 21-08-02, Annual Residential Renewable Energy Tariff Program Review and Rate Setting, issuing Decisions on October 6, 2021 (Year 1 Decision), January 5, 2022, and June 8, 2022. The Decisions respectively finalized the Program Manual and set the RRES Program Tariff rates for project applications received in calendar year 2022, provided limited modification and clarifications of the RRES Program Manual, and established eligibility and participation guidance for affordable housing in the RRES Program.

The Authority conducted the second annual RRES Program review in Docket No. 22-08-02, Annual Residential Renewable Energy Solutions Program Review – Year 2, issuing Decisions on November 2, 2022 (Year 2 Decision) and February 8, 2023. The

Decisions respectively finalized the Year 2 Program Manual, established RRES Program tariff rates for project applications received in calendar year 2023, and authorized several changes to the application process to better align the Program with the Program Objectives.

C. CONDUCT OF THE PROCEEDING

On April 27, 2023, the Authority issued the Notice of Proceeding in the above-captioned proceeding.

On May 15, 2023, the Authority issued a Notice of Request for Written Comments on the following topics: rate setting; Distressed Municipality adder expansion and grace period allowance; low-income and Distressed Municipality adder values, form reduction, and incentive socialization; system oversizing allowance; an improved UI application; RRES data portals; and subsidizing roof repairs with investment tax credit (ITC) funds. On or before June 23, 2023, the Authority received seven sets of written comments from interested stakeholders.

On June 21, 2023, the Authority held a Technical Meeting to discuss the topics outlined in the May 15, 2023, Notice of Request for Written Comments.

On July 18, 2023, the Authority issued a second Notice of Request for Written Comments on the following topics: adder auto-enrollment; a minimum threshold for Income Eligible (IE) and Distressed Municipality (DM) deployment; income eligibility data; adder form reduction; increased solar plus storage deployment amongst underserved customers; a cancellation period and handling application discrepancies; electronic signatures; solar panel recycling; multifamily affordable housing meter sockets; multifamily affordable housing eligibility; a non-bypassable charge for Netting system expansions; the percentage of benefit to tenants; DC-coupling wiring options; proposed application fees; standardized data reporting; ensuring participant benefits; and proposed programmatic changes. On August 15, 2023, the Authority received ten sets of written comments from Program stakeholders.

On September 6, 2023, the Authority held a second Technical Meeting to discuss the topics outlined in the July 18, 2023 Notice of Request for Written Comments.

On September 8, 2023, the Authority issued a Notice of Request for Briefs with specific briefing prompts. The Authority received seven Briefs on September 20, 2023, in response.

The Authority issued a Proposed Final Decision on October 12, 2023, and provided an opportunity for Participants to file Written Exceptions.

D. PARTICIPANTS

A listing of all Participants to this proceeding is appended hereto as Appendix A.

II. LEGAL AUTHORITY

The RRES Program was established pursuant to subsections (b), (d), and (e) and portions of subsection (c) of section 3 of the Public Act 19-35, An Act Concerning a Green

Economy and Environmental Protection, now codified in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 16-244z. Conn. Gen. Stat. § 16-244z(b)(1) required the Authority to establish tariffs for each EDC to purchase from residential customers Class I renewable energy from projects located on a residential customer's own premises as well as rates for such tariffs. Additionally, Conn. Gen. Stat. § 16-244z(b)(1) permits the Authority to modify the tariff rates based on changed circumstances.

As previously stated, the Authority indicated in the Residential Tariff Decision that it will initiate an annual docket to review key RRES Program metrics, including, but not limited to, deployed MW and low- and moderate-income customer participation, and to ensure the Program is "on track to at least maintain historical deployment levels and to deliver a carbon free grid by 2040." Residential Tariff Decision, p. 40.

Herein, the Authority reviews the RRES Program design documents and Program Manual, relevant compliance filings, and current tariff rates to determine if and how the RRES Program can and should be modified to better align with the direction provided in the Residential Tariff Decision.

III. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

In the Residential Tariff Decision, the Authority established the following five objectives to guide the development, implementation, and administration of the RRES Program (Program Objectives).

1. The sustained, orderly development of the state's solar industry, ensuring at a minimum that Connecticut's annual historical deployment of residential solar is maintained (i.e., approximately 50-60 MW per year);
2. Achieve a 100% zero carbon electric grid by 2040, including by promoting additional annual deployment of residential renewable energy as needed;
3. Balance participant costs and benefits with non-participant costs and benefits and electric system costs and benefits;
4. Ensure program accessibility for customers, by providing customer protections both explicitly through resources and disclosure forms, and also through simplified program and tariff designs;
5. Encourage increased inclusivity overall, as well as program participation by low- and moderate-income (LMI) customers and customers in environmental justice communities.

Residential Tariff Decision, p. 7.

Accordingly, the Authority relied on the Program Objectives in evaluating the current RRES Program design and assessing any possible changes to be ordered in this proceeding and Decision with the objective of better aligning the RRES Program with the Program Objectives and the direction provided in the Residential Tariff Decision. Relatedly, the Authority reaffirms that the Program Objectives shall guide the Program Administrators in their administration of the RRES Program, particularly in instances (1) not explicitly addressed through the approved RRES Program documents or through Authority direction in prior Decisions or motion rulings and (2) where the EDCs are empowered to make administrative changes without PURA approval (See Section IV.N. of the Year 2 Decision). Finally, the Authority reaffirms that the fifth Program Objective, encourage increased inclusivity overall, shall be explicitly guided by a goal of 40% deployment amongst low-income populations or in Distressed Municipalities, in line with the Justice 40 goal set in the Residential Tariff Decision. Residential Tariff Decision, p. 40.

IV. AUTHORITY ANALYSIS

A. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

In the Residential Tariff Decision, the Authority established a statewide, six-year residential solar program to be administered by the EDCs in their respective service territories. Pursuant to Public Act 19-35, the RRES Program was created to ensure the continued growth of the residential renewable energy market upon the conclusion of the prior Residential Solar Investment Program (RSIP) and the sunseting of traditional net metering on December 31, 2021.

The RRES Program gives residential customers the opportunity to sell energy and renewable energy certificates (RECs) from an eligible project, such as a solar photovoltaic (PV) system, for a 20-year term under one of two tariff rate structures: (1) Buy-All; or (2) Netting. Under the Buy-All tariff, the solar project is provided fixed compensation for all energy and RECs produced over the 20-year term. Alternatively, under the Netting tariff, the qualified project is currently compensated for the energy produced at the retail electric rate at the time of generation and for the RECs at a fixed rate over the 20-year term. Under the Buy-All tariff, compensation is provided to customers in the form of monetary on-bill credits, with the potential for an annual cash out of credits in excess of their utility bill. Under the Netting tariff, a customer's energy consumption, and monthly energy bill, is reduced by the energy produced and used on site. Further, under the Netting tariff, for any energy exported to the electric grid by the eligible project and not consumed on site, the EDCs provide customers with monetary on-bill credits. Last, under the Netting tariff, all REC payments are made on a quarterly basis.

Table 1, below, provides a summary of the RRES Program Tariff rates for project applications received in calendar year 2023.

Table 1: 2023 RRES Tariff Rates

2023 Residential Tariff Rates		
	Buy-All Rate (\$/kWh)	Netting REC Rate (\$/kWh)
Eversource	0.2943	0.0318
UI	0.2943	0.0000
Low-Income Adder	0.030	0.025
Distressed Municipality Adder	0.0175	0.0125

See Year 2 Decision, p. 9.

Table 2 includes a summary of application data for Years 1 (2022) and 2 (2023) of the RRES Program provided in the EDCs' January and October 2023 monthly compliance filings in Docket No. 22-08-02. From January 2022 through September 2023, 234,846 kilowatts (kW), or roughly 235 MW, have been approved for the Program.

Table 2: RRES Program Applications to Date

RRES Application Data: January 2022-September 2023				
	Total Applications	Total Application kW	Approved Applications	Approved kW
Eversource	25,289	200,924	25,433	202,699
UI	4,949	34,739	4,608	32,147

See Eversource Order No. 12 Compliance, Oct. 13, 2023;
Eversource Order No. 12 Compliance, Jan. 13, 2023;
UI Order No. 12 Compliance, Jan. 17, 2023;
UI Order No. 12 Compliance, Oct. 13, 2023.

Table 3 includes a summary of project deployment for Years 1 (2022) and 2 (2023) of the RRES Program provided in the EDCs' January and October 2023 monthly compliance filings. From January 2022 through September 2023, 152,710 kilowatts (kW), or roughly 153 MW, of approved projects have been deployed through the Program.

Table 3: RRES Program Deployments to Date

RRES Deployment: January 2022-September 2023		
	Total Deployment	Total Deployment kW
Eversource	16,767	135,336
UI	2,478	17,374

See Eversource Order No. 12 Compliance, Oct. 13, 2023;
UI Order No. 12 Compliance, Jan. 17, 2023;
UI Order No. 12 Compliance, Oct. 16, 2023.

B. RATE SETTING

In setting tariff rates for future Program years, the Authority is guided by the three rate-setting objectives outlined in the Residential Tariff Decision. First, the Authority seeks to foster the sustained, orderly development of the state's solar industry. Residential Tariff Decision, p. 37. Second, the Authority seeks to deploy residential renewable energy systems through the RRES Program to help achieve a 100% zero carbon grid by 2040. *Id.* Third, the Authority seeks to balance RRES Program participant costs and benefits with the costs and benefits to non-participating ratepayers and the electric system as a whole. *Id.* Ultimately, the Authority weighs all three objectives in establishing RRES Program Tariff rates, but errs on the side of setting such rates no higher than necessary to achieve these objectives. Year 1 Decision, p. 5.

When authorizing the Program, the Authority relied on analysis from the CGB to determine the appropriate rate of return needed to meet the rate-setting objectives. Residential Tariff Decision, p. 38. Based on the CGB data and stakeholder testimony, the Authority subsequently determined that the rate of return that was necessary to achieve these objectives was 9 – 11%. *Id.* Finally, to calculate the ratepayer support necessary to achieve this rate of return, the Authority found the following values necessary to consider: “1) Average upfront installed system cost; 2) the federal Investment Tax Credit (ITC); 3) Ongoing operations and maintenance (O&M) costs; 4) System performance (e.g., capacity factor); 5) Retail electricity rates, including an assumed escalation factor; and 6) the unlevered [internal rate of return (IRR)] for each tariff (i.e., the buy-all and netting tariffs).” Year 1 Decision, p. 6.

1. Stakeholder Comments

The EDCs stated that average installed costs reported by installers have generally increased since the start of the program and exceed those reflected in the Residential Tariff Model. EDC Comments, June 1, 2023, p. 2. However, the EDCs noted that these costs likely reflect prices paid by retail customers and “may not exclusively reflect increases in labor or materials costs”, as higher electricity supply costs and increased customer demand may have increased short-term system pricing. *Id.* Considering that current residential solar installations have substantially exceeded the historical rate of deployment despite higher reported costs, the EDCs suggested that the Authority “may reasonably elect to discount the application of reported pricing data when setting RRES rates for Year 3.” *Id.* While the EDCs do not collect data on actual or estimated O&M costs, they do not believe O&M costs are a significant barrier to solar deployment and concur with the methodology used to estimate O&M costs, as well as the 13% residential PV capacity factor assumption, used in the Residential Tariff Model adopted in the Year 1 Decision. *Id.* In addition, the EDCs noted that the availability of a 30% ITC pursuant to the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), as well as bonus credits for certain qualified systems, will likely increase rates of return for some solar system owners. *Id.* CGB also stated that the 30% credit is now available to more entities, including business taxpayers and not-for-profits. CGB Comments, June 1, 2023, p. 2.

PosiGen noted that installed costs increased by 8% nationally throughout 2022 but appear to be leveling off, which is consistent with price relief in the module market and slowing inflation. PosiGen Comments, June 1, 2023, p. 2. PosiGen also stated that although data provided by the EDCs indicates average system capacity factor ranges

between approximately 11.1% and 12.5%, the 13% capacity factor assumption used in the Residential Tariff Model “is a reasonable approximation of a well-performing system in Connecticut.” *Id.* ConnSSA noted that national data indicates higher year-over-year installed costs, and that labor shortages and higher interest rates likely result in weaker economic value for residential solar ownership. ConnSSA Comments, June 1, 2023, p. 1.

2. Rate Setting Calculations

There are two steps to setting prospective RRES compensation rates to ensure achievement of the three rate-setting objectives listed above. The first step is to review and update, if and when necessary, the retrospective IRR analysis utilized to set RRES compensation rates. In other words, the first step entails reviewing the analysis used to determine that the rate of return that was necessary to achieve the rate-setting objectives was 9 – 11% based on any new information available to the Authority. This step is particularly important in this year’s proceeding as it represents the first opportunity for the Authority to assess historical deployment within the RRES Program as the Authority had insufficient data to do so last year. The second step is to set the prospective compensation rates by utilizing and updating, if and when necessary, the Residential Tariff Model adopted in the Year 1 Decision. The Authority may also make out-of-model adjustments to the compensation rate based on known or knowable future changes (e.g., the January 1, 2024 implementation of a low-income discount rate) and other factors to ensure the Program Objectives are achieved. All out-of-model adjustments must be documented and explained to ensure transparency.

a. Step 1

The Authority previously stated that the rate-setting review in this Decision would be “guided by the Program application and deployment numbers from January 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023, as well as the six values surrounding project costs outlined ... in the Year 1 Decision.” Year 2 Decision, p. 8. The Authority applied this guidance by developing a novel time-series model that predicts RRES deployment based on the following inputs: monthly historical solar kW deployment in Connecticut, aggregated by approval to energize date; the average annual project IRR;¹ and historical electricity rates.

The deployment data utilized in the time-series model is from both the RSIP and RRES Programs and extends from 2012 through June 2023, consistent with the above-cited Year 2 Decision guidance. CGB Interrog. Resp. CAE-6; UI Interrog. Resp. CAE-14, Att. 4 Public; Eversource Interrog. Resp. CAE-14; Eversource Compliance, Aug. 22, 2023, Att. 1.²

¹ The “six values surrounding project costs” are incorporated by way of the IRR calculations.

² The data utilized in the time-series model is limited to the projects deployed through the RSIP and RRES Programs provided in this proceeding through the cited interrogatory responses. While the Authority recognizes that solar projects have been deployed outside of RSIP and RRES Programs, particularly in 2021, it is unclear that the addition of such projects would significantly change the results of the time-series model. Further, the Authority is not aware of any data source for the production or REC revenue data for such projects. The Authority will consider the incorporation of such data in setting RRES rates for future program years (i.e., Year 3 or later) if such data is provided in the record of the relevant proceeding.

The Authority calculated the historical IRR of the RRES and RSIP projects using production data provided by the CGB and EDCs, and using the same incentives and other relevant cash flow data utilized in the Residential Tariff Model – 2024 appended to this Decision as Appendix B. CGB Interrog. Resp. CAE-6; UI Interrog. Resp. CAE-14, Att. 4 Public; Eversource Interrog. Resp. CAE-14; Eversource Compliance, Aug. 22, 2023, Att. 1. Notably, the Authority applied accelerated depreciation in its calculations for historical IRR for third-party owned (TPO) systems, which represents a change from the prior analysis used to determine the target IRR.

The historical electricity rate data used in the model is an 80-20 split between Eversource and UI using Rate 1 and Rate R data, respectively. The model is fit with annual average delivery rate data that is lagged by one year. However, due to the impact of increased supply rates on solar deployment, the model uses the higher of the two supply rates, which is typically the rate effective January through June.³ The model also does not lag supply rates due to their volatility. However, as the supply rates for the first half of 2024 were not available at the time the modeling exercise was conducted this year, the Authority ran various scenarios for 2024 supply rates to project deployment, including escalating 2022 rates by the median annual percent supply rate increase squared (i.e., escalating based on the median annual increase for two years from 2022 to 2024) and averaging 2022 and 2023 winter supply rates.⁴ These scenarios showed that an IRR of 10% will, on average, result in annual deployment of 91 MW and 115 MW, respectively. Moreover, the Authority's analysis results in a confidence interval of 95% that deployment will be between 56 MW and 150 MW.

While deployment of 91 MW to 115 MW is significantly above the target range of 50-60 MW, 106 MW have been deployed through the RRES program from January 2023 through the end of September 2023, putting the program on pace to deploy roughly 140 MW in calendar year 2023. Eversource Order No. 12 Compliance, Oct. 13, 2023; UI Order No. 12 Compliance, Oct. 16, 2023.

b. Step 2

As noted above, an updated version of the Residential Tariff Model adopted in the Year 1 Decision is appended to this Decision as Appendix B, Residential Tariff Model – 2024. The Authority updated the following inputs in the model since it was last approved in the Year 1 Decision: (1) the retail electric rates and historical escalation factor; (2) the average installed cost, using a simple average of the 2022 and 2023 RRES project cost data based on stakeholder comments that 2023 cost data may be inflated, and that cost trends do not necessarily support the notion that costs have significantly risen from 2022 to 2023; and (3) the federal investment tax credit rates. The Authority also added functionality to apply accelerated depreciation in proportion to the market share of TPO

³ Since 2012, residential supply rates have always been higher in January through June for UI. UI Interrog. Resp. CAE-15. Over the same time, residential supply has been higher in the second half of a calendar year three times, in 2014, 2017, and 2022, with an average increase of only 4.95% for Eversource. Eversource Interrog. Resp. CAE-15.

⁴ The median annual rate increase was calculated using electricity rate data from 2012 through 2013. Eversource Interrog. Resp. CAE-15; UI Interrog. Resp. CAE-15.

systems and applied this approach in its compensation rate calculations, consistent with the approach taken this year in calculating the target IRR in step 1.⁵

Incorporating the above updates to the Residential Tariff Model – 2024 allows for the calculation of Buy-All tariff and Netting tariff REC or non-bypassable charge rates. Again, for reference, the Authority previously set an IRR target of 10% for the Buy-All tariff and an IRR range of 9-11% for the Netting tariffs the Residential Tariff Decision.

Applying an IRR of 10%, the Residential Tariff Model – 2024 returns a compensation rate of \$0.3189/kWh for the Buy-All tariff. \$0.3189/kWh represents an increase over the current rate of \$0.2943/kWh, which is driven by the underlying increase in the installed system costs in Connecticut. For the Netting tariff, the underlying retail rate provides the starting point for calculating RRES project compensation as all projects receive monetary credits equivalent to the retail rate for exported production (and, effectively, for on-site consumption as well). Accordingly, only the Netting REC and non-bypassable charge are being considered and set in this Decision; a Netting REC if the Residential Tariff Model – 2024 shows that the retail rate is insufficient to achieve the target IRR and a non-bypassable charge if the model shows the retail rate is more than sufficient to achieve the target IRR. Applying an IRR of 10%, the Residential Tariff Model – 2024 returns a non-bypassable charge of \$0.0256/kWh for Eversource and \$0.0476/kWh for UI. This would effectively be a decrease in the current compensation level of \$0.0574/kWh for Eversource and \$0.0476/kWh for UI (i.e., the current Netting REC of \$0.0318/kWh and \$0.0000/kWh for Eversource and UI, respectively, minus the calculated non-bypassable charges). Applying an IRR of 11%, the Residential Tariff Model – 2024 returns a non-bypassable charge of \$0.0018/kWh for Eversource and \$0.0236/kWh for UI. Notably, if the 2023 installed cost of \$4.40/W is substituted for the average installed costs for 2022 and 2023 of \$4.19/W, and an IRR of 11% is maintained, the Residential Tariff Model – 2024 returns a non-bypassable charge of \$0.0065/kWh for UI.

The principle of gradualism is vitally important in achieving Program Objective One to ensure the sustained and orderly deployment of the state's solar industry. Thus, while the Authority is confident in its time-series modeling that an IRR of 10% would result in RRES program deployment above the 50-60 MW target, all else being equal, and likely near 100 MW, the Authority finds that a decrease in the current compensation rates by approximately \$0.0476-0.0574/kWh does not achieve gradualism and could send a negative market signal regarding the long-term stability of the RRES Program. Thus, the Authority finds it appropriate to apply the necessary adjustments to move towards a 10% IRR over multiple years, starting by decreasing the current Netting REC rate in Eversource territory to \$0.00/kWh for systems that apply under the Netting tariff in 2024. As noted above, this Netting REC rate in Eversource territory is consistent with the Residential Tariff Model – 2024 output applying an IRR of 11%.

For UI, deployment under the RRES Program has historically lagged deployment in Eversource, with only 12% of the MW deployment under the RRES Program in 2023 through the end of August in UI's territory. UI's total annual load is roughly one-fourth

⁵ The Authority received Written Exceptions providing suggested areas of improvements for the Residential Tariff Model. See, e.g., Earthlight Exceptions, p. 2; PosiGen Exceptions, pp. 3-7; OCC Exceptions, pp. 1-2. The Authority has noted these comments and will take them under advisement for the next annual RRES review proceeding, Docket No. 24-08-02.

that of Eversource's, which indicates that deployment in UI's service territory should be closer to 20% of the Program total. Therefore, the Authority does not find it necessary or appropriate to change the Netting REC rate in UI territory at this time for systems that apply under the Netting tariff in 2024, which is consistent with the Residential Tariff Model – 2024 output for UI applying an IRR of 11% and 2023 average installed project costs.

The above-authorized Netting REC rates for both service territories of \$0.00/kWh is consistent with the original target IRR range of 9-11%. However, again, for clarity, the Authority is committed to moving towards, and potentially beyond, an IRR of 10% for all tariff offerings under the RRES Program in future years based on its time-series modeling, but in furtherance of the objective of gradualism will do so over multiple years. This will very likely necessitate the adoption of non-bypassable charges under the Netting tariff in both EDC service territories for 2025.

Last, the Authority finds that a compensation rate of \$0.3189/kWh, utilizing the Residential Tariff Model – 2024 updates and an IRR of 10%, is appropriate for systems that apply under the Buy-All tariff in both UI and Eversource service territory in 2024.

i. Adder Values

The Authority requested stakeholder input on the current Low-Income and Distressed Municipality adders in the RRES Program. Notice, May 15, 2023, pp. 3-4. In response, PosiGen flagged that the implementation of a Low-Income Discount Rate (LIDR), which will provide a tier 1 discount of 10% to all customer at or below 60% of State Median Income and a tier 2 discount of 50% for all customers at or below 160% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines,⁶ will make the RRES Program less attractive for low-income customers because the potential savings will decrease under the Netting tariff with the application of low-income bill discounts. PosiGen Comments, June 1, 2023, pp. 5-6. Consequently, PosiGen advocated for an increased low-income Netting tariff adder for customers enrolled in LIDR, approximated to current customer outcomes. Id. PosiGen noted that the Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target (SMART) Program offers a similar adder to LIDR customers. Id. Further, LIDR has the potential to increase low-income Program enrollment by making low-income customers more easily identifiable for installers earlier in the process. Id.

In its comments, the EDCs highlighted the relative deployment with low-income customers and in Distressed Municipalities in the RRES program. Specifically, the EDCs provided data showing that approximately 24% of all RRES systems receive one of the two adders. EDC Comments, June 1, 2023, p. 5. Further, the EDCs note that roughly 30% of RRES projects receive one of the two adders or are located in an environmental justice community. Id.

⁶ See Decision, Docket No. 17-12-03RE11, Oct. 19, 2022.

The RRES program has made good progress towards its Justice 40 targets to date. However, the above data indicates that the program has further to go to meet those goals, particularly amongst low-income customers who only represent 4.3% of RRES program participation. Id. Paired with the potential negative impact of the LIDR on low-income RRES Program deployment as highlighted by PosiGen, the Authority is concerned that the RRES Program may not meet its Justice 40 goals in 2024. Thus, the Authority determines that it is appropriate to raise adder values for both low-income and Distressed Municipalities. Specifically, the Authority determines that it is appropriate to raise the low-income adder for Netting tariff customers to \$0.035/kWh, which represents the decrease in the overall Netting tariff compensation in Eversource's territory authorized in this Decision (\$0.0318/kWh) plus an additional 10% to offset the tier 1 LIDR discount of 10%.

Moreover, the Buy-All tariff will become increasingly important to the deployment of RRES projects amongst low-income customers in the future as it is unimpacted by the LIDR, and thus will be the best financial option for customers receiving the tier 2 LIDR discount of 50% and is applicable to multifamily affordable housing for which little deployment has occurred to date. Accordingly, the Authority determines that it is appropriate to raise the low-income adder for the Buy-All tariff such that it is financially equivalent to the Netting tariff plus the adder authorized above. Utilizing the Residential Tariff Model – 2024, the Authority finds that the Buy-All tariff provides compensation roughly \$0.02/kWh lower than the Netting tariff on a levelized basis; thus, PURA authorizes a low-income adder for Buy-All systems of \$0.055/kWh (i.e., \$0.02/kWh above the low-income adder for the Netting tariff).

The Authority takes additional steps to bolster underserved participation in the RRES program throughout this Decision which, when paired with the increased incentives authorized above, PURA is confident will help ensure equitable outcomes. Ultimately, the Authority will continue to monitor underserved enrollment in the RRES Program and will adjust the low-income and/or Distressed Municipality adders as needed to support the Program's 40% underserved enrollment target in future annual review proceedings. The Authority will pay special attention to LIDR customer enrollment. Consequently, the Authority directs the EDCs to report the number and percentage of LIDR customers enrolled in the RRES Program, broken out by both LIDR tier and RRES tariff, by August 1 annually.

3. Summary – 2024 Compensation Rates

Retail electric rates have increased significantly since RRES compensation rates were last set in 2021 (i.e., approximately ~\$0.06-0.07/kWh between the date of this Decision and this time in 2021). That increase more than offsets the downward adjustments to Netting compensation rates authorized in this Decision. Moreover, the modeling conducted by the Authority shows that the IRRs that the approved compensation rates enable, i.e., 10-11%, are still more than sufficient to exceed the annual deployment goal of 50-60 MW, and will likely result in deployment closer to or above 90-115 MW. Further, as discussed in greater detail above, both the Buy-All tariff and the low-income and Distressed Municipality adders have been increased. The Authority is hopeful that the increase in the Buy-All tariff rate will aid the success of the RRES Program in meeting its Justice 40 goals, even with the implementation of a LIDR, and increase the current Buy-All Program share of 0.24% as of June 30, 2023. UI

Interrog. Resp. CAE-14, Att. 4; Eversource Compliance, Aug. 22, 2023, Att. 1. Additionally, as discussed in Section IV.E., State and Federal Incentive Eligibility, significant opportunities exist to increase project returns through the currently-available ITC adders of 10-30%. Thus, the Authority concludes that the authorized tariff compensation rates represent a measured adjustment that accomplishes Program Objective One to ensure the sustained, orderly development of the solar industry, while also achieving Program Objective Three, to balance participant costs and benefits with non-participant costs and benefits and electric system costs and benefits.

A summary of the RRES Year 3 compensation rates is available in Table 4 below.

Table 4: 2024 RRES Tariff Rates

2024 Residential Tariff Rates		
	Buy-All Rate (\$/kWh)	Netting REC Rate (\$/kWh)
Eversource	0.3189	0.000
UI	0.3189	0.000
Low-Income Adder	0.055	0.035
Distressed Municipality Adder	0.0275	0.0175

C. OTHER LOW-INCOME AND DISTRESSED MUNICIPALITY ADDER TOPICS

1. Form Reduction and Simplification

In the Year 2 Decision, the Authority directed the EDCs to file an evaluation of the documents required for automatic enrollment in the low-income and Distressed Municipality adders, to determine whether the application process could be better streamlined, in support of the Program Objectives. Year 2 Decision, p. 30. In its document evaluation, the EDCs stated that payment beneficiaries who automatically qualify for either adder by participating in an income-eligible hardship program or by residing in a Distressed Municipality require no additional qualification documents. EDC Order No. 17 Compliance, June 1, 2023, Docket No. 22-08-02, p. 1. To receive direct adder payments, however, both EDCs require a W-9 form, in accordance with Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requirements. *Id.*, pp. 1-2. If the adders were applied on-bill for the customer of record, the EDCs would not require a W-9 unless the customer cashed out excess on-bill credits in an amount greater than \$600. *Id.*, p. 3. Moreover, UI has simplified the documents utilized for adder enrollment by requiring one single vendor certification form in lieu of several required forms (i.e., business classification form, ACH/wire authorization form, and voided check or bank information). *Id.*, p. 2. When applicable, UI also provides a vendor certification form and a blank W-9 directly in PowerClerk, so that applicants can easily access the required forms for adder payment. *Id.* Additionally, both EDCs consolidated the payment beneficiary form with the tariff application by the end of July 2023. *Id.*; UI Exceptions, Oct. 24, 2023, p. 4.

The Authority requested written comments from stakeholders on the EDCs' evaluation of the documents required for automatic adder enrollment, including whether

additional improvements could be made to further streamline the adder enrollment process. Notice, July 18, 2023, p. 3. In response, PosiGen stated that it appreciates the enrollment improvements the EDCs made and does “not have any additional specific recommendations to further simplify the process and increase enrollment for the adders.” PosiGen Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, pp. 7-8. OCC stated that it favors “a streamlined, simple, and accessible application process”, but similarly did not identify any specific recommendations for changes at this time. OCC Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 9.

The Authority appreciates the adder enrollment improvements made to date and does not require additional changes at this time. The Authority finds that the consolidation of application forms and requirements furthers the Program Objectives by increasing Program accessibility, aiding customer inclusivity, and reducing application completion timelines. The Authority therefore strongly encourages the EDCs to consider additional consolidation and simplification of required application documents wherever possible, so long as the Program Objectives are not adversely impacted.

2. Adder Definition Expansion

In support of the fifth Program Objective of increased inclusivity in the RRES Program, the Authority sought stakeholder feedback on a potential expansion of the Distressed Municipality adder to include projects located in environmental justice census block groups. Notice, May 15, 2023, p. 2. The Authority noted that Conn. Gen. Stat. § 22a-20a defines environmental justice communities as including both Distressed Municipalities and environmental justice census block groups where 30% or more of the population of both communities lives below 200% of the Federal poverty level. *Id.* Ultimately, the Authority stated that it was specifically interested in whether the benefits of the adder expansion outweigh potential customer confusion and increased programmatic costs. *Id.*

In written comments, the city of New Haven supported the proposed expansion because it would aid programmatic low- and moderate-income (LMI) targets while aligning the RRES Distressed Municipality adder with the statutory definition of environmental justice communities. New Haven Comments, May 31, 2023, pp. 2-3. Moreover, ConnSSA had no objection to the proposed expansion of the Distressed Municipality adder qualification. ConnSSA Comments, June 1, 2023, p. 1.

PosiGen noted that while it was not opposed to an expansion of the Distressed Municipality adder definition, the proposed change would add complexity for customers since it would provide an adder “at a more granular level than is typical for solar programs.” PosiGen Comments, June 1, 2023, p. 4. Further, some environmental justice census block groups “are more isolated or not large enough on their own to warrant” the same level of attention by developers as an entire Distressed Municipality. *Id.* CGB also recommended an expansion of the eligibility for the Distressed Municipality adder to include not just environmental justice communities, but also Community Reinvestment Act communities. CGB Comments, June 1, 2023, pp. 3-5. Additionally, DEEP argued that the RRES low-income adder should be aligned with the definition used in the Inflation Reduction Act (i.e., less than 80% of Area Median Income). *Id.*

While OCC stated support for increased inclusivity in the RRES Program, OCC noted that it cannot weigh the benefits of the proposed change without understanding its

true costs. OCC Comments, June 1, 2023, pp. 1-2. Additionally, the EDCs agreed that the criteria for environmental justice communities is similar to the criteria for Distressed Municipalities. EDC Comments, June 1, 2023, p. 4. Nevertheless, the EDCs stated that the Authority should consider how an expansion of the Distressed Municipality adder would impact the costs of the RRES Program. *Id.*, p. 5. Additionally, the EDCs could not confirm that the proposed change would increase environmental justice participation beyond current enrollment levels, since over 700 customers in environmental justice census block groups are already participating in the RRES Program without an adder. *Id.*, p. 6.

a. Distressed Municipality Definition Determination

The Authority declines to expand customer eligibility for the Distressed Municipality adder in the RRES Program at this time. The inclusion of environmental justice census block groups in the Distressed Municipality adder could negatively impact the fourth Program Objective, accessibility for customers through simplified Program and tariff designs, by adding unneeded complexity to the Distressed Municipality adder. An expanded definition for the Distressed Municipality adder may also negatively impact the third Program Objective, balancing participant costs and benefits, by increasing programmatic costs through increased adder enrollment, including for projects in environmental justice census block groups that may be deployed without an adder.

Ultimately, 19.4% of RRES customers are currently enrolled in the Distressed Municipality adder, a figure that is significantly higher than the 4.3% customer enrollment in the low-income adder. EDC Comments, June 1, 2023, p. 5. Consequently, unlike low-income enrollment, Distressed Municipality customer enrollment appears to be better positioned to reach the Authority's 40% underserved enrollment target, especially when considering upward underserved enrollment trends in the RRES Program. See Year 2 Decision, p. 8.

However, as discussed further in Section IV.C.6, New EDC Underserved Reporting Requirements, below, the Authority will require the EDCs to track Program enrollment in environmental justice census block groups to enable the Authority and stakeholders to evaluate the relative deployment in EJ communities and Distressed Municipalities moving forward and to inform discussions on related programmatic changes in future RRES annual review proceedings.

Additionally, as discussed further in Section IV.E., State and Federal Incentive Eligibility, the Authority authorizes additional measures to ensure that developers have the necessary resources to determine the geography-based federal and state incentive eligibility of RRES projects. The resources identified in that section, paired with the statewide incentive eligibility tool being spearheaded by DEEP, which the Authority strongly supports, will ensure that the state optimizes the available federal funds.⁷

b. Low-Income Definition Determination

⁷ For more information on DEEP's incentive eligibility tool, see DEEP Corresp., Sept. 13, 2023, Docket No. 23-08-01. Additionally, the Authority's comments on DEEP's incentive eligibility tool may be found here: PURA Corresp., Sept. 21, 2023, Docket No. 23-08-01.

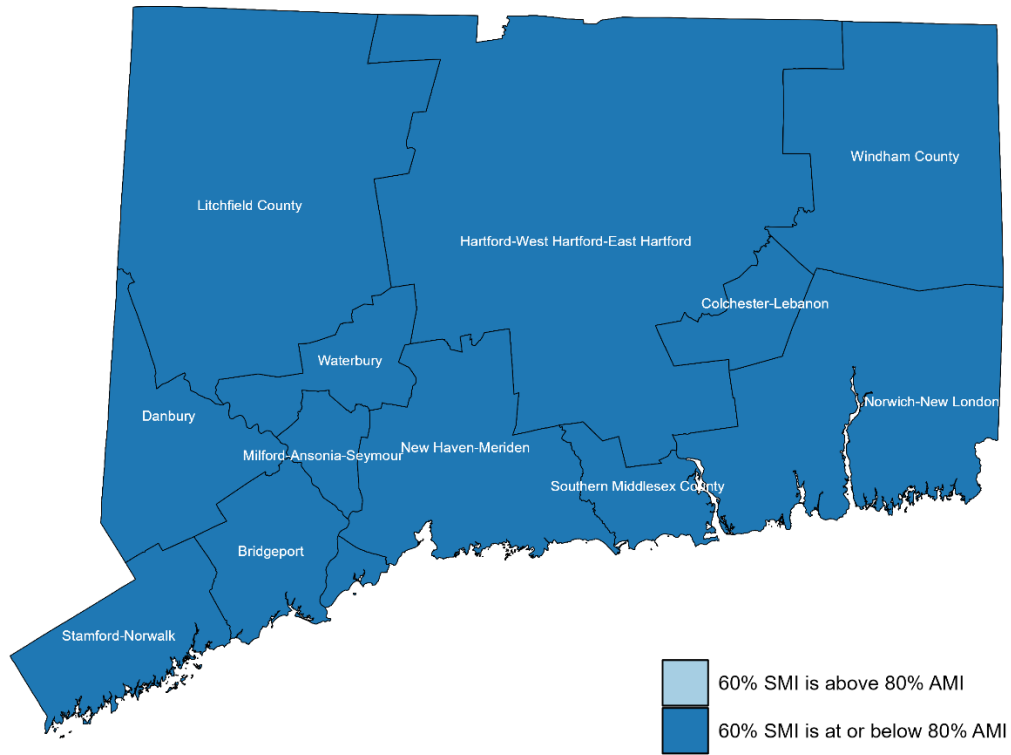
The Authority is not persuaded, at this time, that it is necessary to expand incentive eligibility to enable projects to take advantage of the ITC adders for two primary reasons. First, and most importantly, the Authority and other stakeholders have worked to consistently use 60% of State Median Income (SMI) as the low-income eligibility threshold for all of the programs under its purview for the last four years. The Authority has pursued the objective of standardizing income-eligibility for all programs using this 60% of SMI based on consistent feedback from low-income advocates that 60% of SMI is the most appropriate and accessible threshold for their constituents because it is the criteria that customers experience the most frequently as it is used in the Connecticut Energy Assistance Program, utility arrearage forgiveness programs, and now the LIDR.⁸

Second, the expansion of any eligibility must be carefully balanced with the pros and cons and costs and benefits of doing so. In this case, as noted in Section IV.E., State and Federal Incentive Eligibility, RRES projects are not eligible for the ITC adder that utilizes income-eligibility. Additionally, there is no data to suggest that an additional state incentive, either income or geography-based, is required to unlock federal funding from ITC adders, as a 10-30% tax credit represents a substantial financial incentive. Indeed, in the case that the ITC adders are sufficient to encourage deployment amongst eligible customers, any expansion to the state eligibility criteria represents an unnecessary additional cost that diminishes the net value of the federal incentives to Connecticut ratepayers (i.e., ideally, Connecticut would optimize the amount of federal funding received, while minimizing the amount of Connecticut ratepayer funding used). Further, as shown in Figure 1 below, all low-income eligible customers (i.e., customers with income at or below 60% of SMI) also meet the definition of 80% of Area Median Income for the relevant U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development geographic areas. Thus, the existing eligibility criteria already allow for easy identification of eligibility with the ITC adders on an income basis (although, as noted above, ITC income-based adders are irrelevant to the RRES program). Moreover, comments have been provided in past annual reviews asserting that the collection of any additional income information represents a substantial barrier to deployment in underserved communities.⁹ As such, the Authority is not inclined to require such data collection for the RRES Program, particularly if existing information, such as LIDR eligibility, can be leveraged.

⁸ See, e.g., Docket No. 17-12-03RE01, Operation Fuel/CT Legal Services Comments, Dec. 4, 2019, p. 3; see also, Docket No. 17-12-03RE11, Operation Fuel Comments, June 15 and July 15, 2022; see also, Docket No. 17-12-03RE11, Center for Children's Advocacy Comments, July 21, 2022.

⁹ See, e.g., Tr. Docket No. 22-08-02, Hr'g Tr. Aug. 26, 2022, 130:21-131:22.

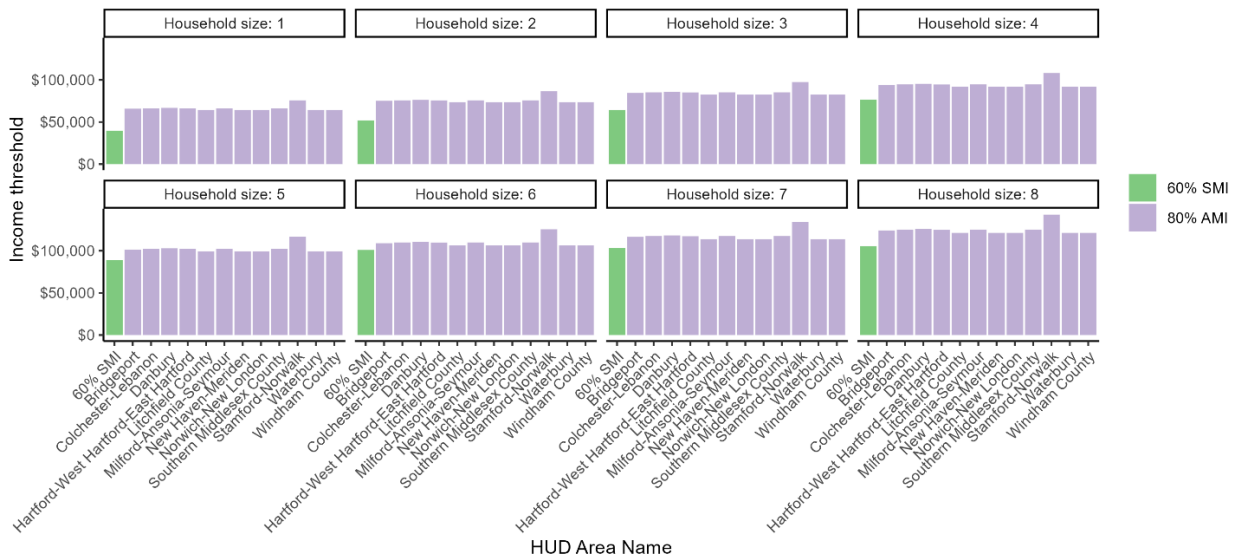
Figure 1: Geographic Areas Where 80% AMI Exceeds 60% SMI



Households eligible for state incentives are also eligible for federal ITC adders in all counties and for all household sizes.

Note: 80% AMI exceeds 200% Federal Poverty Guideline (FPG) in all cases, so 200% FPG comparison not shown.

Figure 2: Comparison of 60% SMI and 80% AMI Income Thresholds



3. Distressed Municipality Adder Grace Period Allowance

In a Notice of Request for Written Comments, the Authority requested stakeholder feedback on solutions for circumstances where a RRES project eligible for the Distressed Municipality adder becomes ineligible after the Distressed Municipality list is updated, potentially making the project financially unviable. Notice, May 15, 2023, p. 2.

In response, DEEP asserted that the current statutory definition of Distressed Municipalities already has a five-year grace period:

Any municipality which, at any time subsequent to July 1, 1978, has met such thresholds but which at any time thereafter fails to meet such thresholds, according to said department, shall be deemed to be a distressed municipality for a period of five years subsequent to the date of the determination that such municipality fails to meet such thresholds, unless such municipality elects to terminate its designation.

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 32-9p(b); DEEP Comments, June 23, 2023, pp. 2-3.

Therefore, DEEP argued that the five-year grace period is appropriate for programs relying on the Distressed Municipality designation. *Id.*, p. 3. Additionally, DEEP noted that a five-year grace period provides sufficient notice to developers and Distressed Municipalities of pending changes. *Id.* Similarly, the city of New Haven advocated in favor of the statutory definition for the NRES Program and noted that the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) currently uses the statutory definition. New Haven Comments, May 31, 2023, pp. 1-2. In written comments, PosiGen stated it was unaware of projects becoming unviable because of a change in Distressed Municipality status. PosiGen Comments, June 1, 2023, p. 4. PosiGen also advocated for consistency between the RRES definition of a Distressed Municipality and the latest list on DECD's website and noted that the most recent Program Manual excludes eight municipalities on the current DECD list. *Id.*, p. 5. Ultimately, PosiGen believed that a five-year grace period was the simplest solution to the problem described in the Notice of Request for Written Comments and would ensure that municipalities receive sustained support from the RRES Program. *Id.* CGB, conversely, argued that “[f]or efficiency and simplicity's sake in program operation ... eligibility for the distressed municipality adder [should] apply to a system at the time of development with no changes in the adder in future years.” CGB Comments, June 1, 2023, p. 5.

The Authority determines that the current statutory definition of a Distressed Municipality, with a five-year grace period, provides sufficient notice to solar developers of future changes to project eligibility for the Distressed Municipality adder, thereby supporting the first, fourth, and fifth Program Objectives. Notably, DECD follows the statutory definition when publishing the Distressed Municipality list on its website, which is then used by the EDCs to determine project eligibility for the Distressed Municipality adder.¹⁰ EDC Compliance to Order No. 13, Dec. 15, 2023, Docket No. 22-08-05, Att. 2, p. 11. Finally, the Authority clarifies that a project will be eligible for the Distressed

¹⁰ The most recent DECD-published Distressed Municipality list may be found here: [Distressed Municipalities \(ct.gov\)](#). For example, using the statutory definition of a Distressed Municipality, projects installed in Groton will remain eligible for the underserved adder until October 4, 2028.

Municipality adder provided the project's municipality is on the Distressed Municipality list when the project's application is approved by the EDCs.

4. Adder Awareness

The Authority is interested in ways to improve RRES applicant awareness of the underserved adders and the additional incentives they provide, including by “emphasizing and placing adder incentive and eligibility criteria in a prominent location on the application document.” Notice, July 18, 2023, pp. 1-2. In response to the July 18, 2023 Notice of Request for Written Comments, CGB stated support for any action that would increase RRES adder awareness. CGB Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 1. Further, CGB believes that the Authority should require developers to “inform participating customers of their eligibility for federal investment tax credit [ITC] adders,” so that ITC benefits can flow directly to underserved communities and participating customers. *Id.*, p. 2. Moreover, ConnSSA stated that installers have no objections to placing adder incentive criteria in the top half of the first application page. ConnSSA Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 1. DEEP also noted that it strongly supports increased customer awareness of the RRES underserved adders, including a requirement that adder eligibility criteria be placed in a prominent location on the RRES application. DEEP Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, pp. 1-2.

While OCC supported a requirement to place adder eligibility requirements in a more prominent location on the RRES application, OCC also highlighted a need to “expand outreach to customers” eligible for the underserved adders. OCC Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 2. PosiGen further noted a belief that increased customer education, when combined with the implementation of Low-Income Discount Rates, “will better assist installers in identifying qualifying customers as they review a customer’s utility bill.” PosiGen Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 2. PosiGen ultimately noted support for the inclusion of RRES adder eligibility criteria in the RRES customer disclosure form, since this is likely the first RRES document encountered by customers. *Id.*, pp. 2-3. Moreover, Trinity Solar noted “that applicants should be well-informed about benefits and additional incentives” and consequently stated support for the inclusion of such information in a prominent and visible location in the application process. Trinity Solar, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 1. Finally, the EDCs stated that they are “not opposed to making changes to the Program application to display information about RRES adders and eligibility criteria more prominently.” EDC Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 2. Nevertheless, the EDCs believe that such a change would not increase the number of customers who directly receive the underserved adder because the sales contract has often already been signed by the time the customer reviews the RRES application. *Id.* Consequently, the EDCs suggested additional trainings and webinars with solar contractors to help them better understand which customers may qualify for an underserved adder before a contract is developed by the installer. *Id.*, pp. 2-3.

The Authority determines that changes are warranted to the RRES application and administration of the RRES Program to ensure that customers are adequately informed of the RRES underserved adders and their eligibility requirements. The Authority therefore directs the EDCs to amend the RRES customer disclosure form to include the following information: (1) definitions of each RRES adder; (2) adder amounts; (3) a list of programs whose participation would qualify a customer for the low-income adder (e.g., Home Energy Solutions – Income Eligible [HES-IE]); (4) a link to the Distressed

Municipality webpage of the Department of Economic and Community Department (DECD)¹¹; and (5) a link to a webpage with the latest guidance on state median income percentiles, broken out by family size.¹² Further, the above information shall be displayed in a prominent location and fashion on the customer disclosure form to ensure customers are aware of the RRES adders.¹³ Additionally, the Authority directs the EDCs to include such information on the RRES Program website by January 1, 2024. Finally, to help inform developers of the underserved adder eligibility criteria, in addition to other Program requirements and information, and in line with the recommendation provided by the EDCs, the Authority directs the EDCs to hold at least one webinar with solar developers by February 1 of each year. At least 30 days' notice shall be provided to Program stakeholders prior to the date of the webinar on the Program website, with a compliance filing made in the relevant RRES docket at least 21 days prior to the webinar with information on the date, time, and location of such webinar. Further, during the webinar to be held by February 1, 2024, the EDCs shall update Program installers on the implementation of LIDR and provide information and examples of how installers can identify LIDR-enrolled customers, to ensure that LIDR customers are receiving bill savings from participation in the RRES Program. The Authority concludes that these changes will increase underserved adder awareness among Program developers and customers, thereby supporting the fourth and fifth Program Objectives, to ensure program accessibility through increased customer protections and disclosures and encourage increased inclusivity overall, especially amongst underserved communities.

5. Minimum Threshold for Eligibility

The Authority requested stakeholder input on additional RRES Program requirements to increase underserved Program enrollment, including: “(1) establishing a minimum threshold of deployment to participants who are eligible for the IE or DM adders (e.g., 5%) for each developer; and (2) establishing an additional incentive for customers of developers who achieve a high percentage of deployment amongst customers who are eligible for either the IE or DM adders (e.g., 50%).” Notice, July 18, 2023, p. 2. In response, CGB stated support for requiring the EDCs to make publicly available the number of underserved projects for each developer enrolled in the Program. CGB Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 2. Consequently, CGB advocated for “data collection and transparency” instead of a minimum underserved threshold for each Program developer. *Id.*, pp. 2-3. Further, OCC stated that a 5% underserved deployment requirement for each developer would not support full underserved Program deployment. OCC Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 3. Moreover, OCC stated that of the 39% of Connecticut residents eligible for the underserved adders, only 50% reside in owner-occupied homes, thereby highlighting a need for developers to target renters for inclusion in the RRES Program. *Id.*, pp. 3-5.

¹¹ DECD's Distressed Municipality webpage may be found here: https://portal.ct.gov/DECD/Content/About_DECD/Research-and-Publications/02_Review_Publications/Distressed-Municipalities.

¹² For example, the latest Connecticut state median income numbers, broken out by percentile and family size, may be found here: <https://uwc.211ct.org/connecticut-state-median-income-2013/>.

¹³ Eversource proposed conducting user research during 2024 to suggest modifications to the customer disclosure form in the next annual program review. Eversource Exceptions, Oct. 24, 2023, p. 4. If Eversource, or any other stakeholder, submits compelling, data-driven evidence outlining why further changes are needed to the customer disclosure form in comments submitted in the next annual review proceeding, the Authority may consider additional changes to the customer disclosure form.

Additionally, PosiGen argued that the new requirements proposed by the Authority would “add a new layer of significant complexity” to the RRES Program. PosiGen Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 3. For example, customers may become confused by varying incentives between different installers, the EDCs may be unable to make differentiated installer payments, and threshold methodologies could become contentious. Id. Therefore, PosiGen does “not believe that a minimum or bonus threshold would be beneficial for the program.” Id. Increasing adder amounts, PosiGen noted, may also increase underserved participation. Id., pp. 3-4. PosiGen further stated that it would be difficult to establish a minimum underserved deployment threshold and noted that specialized installers offering more complex systems (e.g., ground mount solar), and smaller installers marketing to specific geographic locations, would have a difficult time meeting any mandated underserved threshold. Id., pp. 4, 6. While PosiGen noted that it does not recommend a bonus incentive for developers who exceed an underserved threshold established by the Authority, if such incentive were established, PosiGen recommends that it be set between \$0.005-\$0.0075/kWh if 30% underserved deployment was achieved by an installer in the prior Program year. Id., pp. 4-6.

While Trinity Solar noted support for the participation of underserved communities in the RRES Program, Trinity Solar opposed penalties for developers who do not reach a certain underserved enrollment threshold, because penalties would “significantly harm the industry.” Trinity Solar Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 1. Trinity Solar instead encouraged the state and the EDCs to develop outreach programs targeting underserved communities. Id. Similarly, ConnSSA opposed underserved deployment mandates because they could lead to “the wrong kind of sales tactics.” ConnSSA Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 2. ConnSSA noted that installers have difficulty working in Distressed Municipalities, because higher system costs make “jobs less desirable.” Id. ConnSSA ultimately supported new outreach efforts as a way to increase underserved RRES enrollment. Id. Last, the EDCs stated that they do not support minimum underserved deployment requirements, because such requirements “could lead to bad actors in the market selling products that may have an adverse financial impact on vulnerable customers.” EDC Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 3. Further, the EDCs noted that a minimum underserved deployment mandate would “require strong oversight and consumer protection guardrails.” Id.

The Authority declines to establish a minimum underserved enrollment threshold for RRES contractors for the coming Program year. The Authority concludes that an underserved enrollment mandate requires additional discussion, including on the required underserved enrollment percentage and potential exemptions for RRES contractors specializing in niche technologies or serving smaller geographic areas, to ensure that RRES deployment is not unnecessarily harmed. Nevertheless, the Authority remains committed to encouraging Program inclusivity and the achievement of the Program’s 40% underserved enrollment target. The Authority will therefore require that the EDCs compile the following information on each RRES developer: (1) number and percentage of systems by type of housing (e.g., single family, 2-4 unit multifamily, or multifamily affordable housing); and (2) number and percentage of total approved RRES applications that are eligible for the low-income or Distressed Municipality adder(s). The EDCs shall file such information as compliance with the Authority by August 1 annually for every developer participating in the RRES Program. Should underserved RRES enrollment

continue to lag behind the goals of the Program, the Authority may institute an underserved enrollment minimum threshold in a future annual Program review.

6. New EDC Underserved Reporting Requirements

Finally, in order for the Authority and other stakeholders to better track underserved enrollment in the RRES Program, the Authority directs the EDCs to begin including breakouts for the total number of low-income customers and customers located in Distressed Municipalities, and associated project capacity, which do not receive either adder in the Order No. 12 data filings, in addition to the existing breakouts for customers enrolled in the low-income and Distressed Municipality adders. The Authority also directs the EDCs to include a breakout for the number of customers who reside in environmental justice communities as defined by Conn. Gen. Stat. § 22a-20a, and associated project capacity, in the Order No. 12 filings. Specifically, the EDCs shall track and report the number of customers and total capacity enrolled by environmental justice census block groups broken out by customers that qualify for the low-income and Distressed Municipality adders and those who do not. Further, the Authority also directs the EDCs to include the number of RRES customers who qualify for the federal Justice 40 disadvantaged communities definition in the Order No. 12 filings, and associated project capacity, so that the Authority and Program stakeholders may better understand how well the RRES Program is incentivizing deployment according to federal underserved definitions.¹⁴

Last, to ensure timely and actionable underserved deployment data, the Authority finds it necessary to extend RRES enrollment data reporting requirements through the entirety of the RRES Program on a quarterly basis. Consequently, the Authority extends the end date for Order No. 12 from January 1, 2024, to the termination of the RRES Program. The Program Administrators shall also include underserved enrollment percentages, broken out by both low-income¹⁵ and Distressed Municipality status, regardless of whether the customers are receiving adders or not, with the information published on the EDCs' respective RRES websites, in addition to any existing data reporting requirements, by April 1, 2024. The Authority acknowledges the low-income enrollment value will likely be an undercount, as income verification may not be performed for each customer in the RRES Program.

¹⁴ For more information see: <https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2023-07/DOE%20Justice40%20General%20Guidance%2072523.pdf>.

¹⁵ The Authority acknowledges the low-income enrollment value will likely be an undercount, as income verification may not be performed for each customer in the RRES Program.

D. ENSURING PARTICIPANT BENEFITS

1. Introduction

The income-based and Distressed Municipality adders are meant to incentivize project deployment in underserved areas to ensure all residents, and LMI customers in particular, benefit from the RRES Program, thereby furthering the fifth Program Objective. The related topic of whether and how the adder values are passed onto eligible customers has been raised and discussed at various points in past RRES annual review proceedings. See Solar Energy and Storage Association, Inc. Exceptions, Dec. 24, 2021, Docket No. 21-08-02, p. 1. Accordingly, the Authority requested written comments from stakeholders to understand how the adder funds are utilized, including whether the adders are reflected in pricing offered to underserved customers, or whether the adders are socialized across all projects. Notice, May 15, 2023, p. 4. The Authority also expressed interest in programmatic requirements to ensure the adders were being reflected in the pricing information given to customers. Id.

Additionally, during the June 21, 2023 Technical Meeting, stakeholders stated that in Massachusetts, customers on discounted rates have signed long-term power purchase agreements after having been marketed solar installations, which assumed full retail rates, only to see their total energy costs go up. Hr'g Tr. June 21, 2023, 54:7-16. As a result, the Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target (SMART) Program issued warnings to some installers and suspended others who failed to meet minimum customer savings requirements. Tr., 54:17-24. Accordingly, the Authority requested written comments from stakeholders on "recommendations to improve verification and enforcement regarding passing savings to customers," including minimum savings thresholds to be passed on to customers. Notice, July 18, 2023, p. 7.

2. Stakeholder Comments

PosiGen advocated for a new Program requirement to ensure low-income customers "actually receive the value of an increased adder in the form of lower solar payments and the corresponding savings," by ensuring the adder is either paid directly to the customer, "or if paid to a third party that there is a corresponding reduction in the purchase price of the solar system" with a lease or Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) rate that is lower than the annual utility rate at the time of the sales contract's signing. Posigen Comments, June 1, 2023, pp. 5-6. PosiGen noted that the Authority's Office of Education, Outreach, and Enforcement (EOE) could enforce these new requirements "through an audit of a sample of [low-income discount rate (LIDR)] customers on a regular basis." Id.

PosiGen also supported ensuring participant savings for customers on discounted utility rates. PosiGen Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 12. PosiGen noted that to enforce participant benefits, the RRES Program could adopt the SMART program requirement that the rate for power purchase agreements or leases be less than the average utility rate for discount rate customers. Id., p. 13. Alternatively, PosiGen stated that the Authority could require a minimum 10% savings for RRES customers. Id. PosiGen cautioned, however, that this second approach could limit installations or product types. Id. Regardless of which approach is used, PosiGen conveyed its belief that any savings rate calculation methodology needs to have clear guidance and be replicable across

installers. Id., p. 14. PosiGen stated that the EDCs or EOE could conduct regular audits of sales contracts for discount rate customers to verify compliance. Id. Last, PosiGen noted that participant savings should not be mandated for customers on standard utility rates to preserve consumer choice, including for solar systems that do not meet a minimum savings requirement, but instead provide additional environmental or resilience benefits. Id., p. 12.

PosiGen further stated that the Distressed Municipality adder encourages Program inclusivity by lowering barriers to project deployment in Distressed Municipalities, including by encouraging third-party owners to focus on underserved customers. PosiGen Comments, June 1, 2023, p. 9. Additionally, PosiGen stated that while it costs more on average to deploy projects in Distressed Municipalities than other communities, PosiGen socializes these higher costs across all projects and does not charge Distressed Municipality customers more. Id. PosiGen asserted that projects in Distressed Municipalities are more costly for a variety of reasons, “including older housing stock, smaller system sizes, increased financing costs and risks, difficulty in reaching customers, higher cancellation rates, and challenging installations including more frequent electrical upgrades.” Id., p. 10. PosiGen also provided data showing that customers in Distressed Municipalities had a lower average system size and FICO credit score and a higher delinquency percentage. PosiGen Comments, June 1, 2023, p. 10. Consequently, the Distressed Municipality adder helps PosiGen offset higher Distressed Municipality operating costs. Id., p. 11. PosiGen asserted that enforcement of “differentiated pricing for distressed municipalities would be challenging.” Id. PosiGen therefore argued that programmatic changes regarding how the Distressed Municipality adder is reflected in customer pricing would disincentivize investment in those communities, while also forcing developers to pass on higher development costs to Distressed Municipality customers instead of socializing those higher costs across all customers. Id., p. 12.

The EDCs noted their support for Program inclusivity and their belief that the current underserved enrollment percentage does not accurately reflect total underserved enrollment in the Program because not all customers that qualify for the underserved adders necessarily receive them, particularly if the customers do not participate in the low-income programs considered for auto-enrollment in the low-income adder. EDC Comments, June 1, 2023, pp. 7-8. The EDCs also remarked that they are unable to determine whether the adders are reflected in the pricing given to customers by installers. Id., p. 8. Further, for Eversource, 57% of projects with adders are third-party owned, and, of these projects, 97% direct payments to a tariff payment beneficiary that is not the customer of record. Id. Likewise, for UI, 80% of projects with adders are third-party owned, and, of these projects, 73% direct payments to someone other than the customer of record. Id., p. 9.

Ultimately, the EDCs expressed concern over the auto-enrollment of customers in the underserved adders because the EDCs have no expectation “that such adders are reflected in customer pricing when installers decline to apply for them, and when commercial terms between a customer and installer are set prior to submitting an RRES application.” EDC Comments, June 1, 2023, p. 9. Consequently, according to the EDCs, auto-enrollment of adders to third-party payment beneficiaries can reasonably be assumed to be “a windfall to the system owner” with no benefit to the customer of record. Id. To better ensure underserved customers are benefiting from the adders, the EDCs

recommended limiting the adders to projects that (1) apply for the adder in the initial application, or (2) are auto-enrolled and have the customer of record as the tariff payment beneficiary. *Id.* Finally, the EDCs noted that they do not currently collect contracts for all RRES applications. EDC Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 10. The EDCs argued that it would be “administratively burdensome” to collect and review every contract to ensure savings are passed on to customers. *Id.* The EDCs consequently recommended that EOE be responsible for verification of customer savings for RRES customers, as this approach is similar to the one used in Massachusetts. *Id.*

CGB stated that it was a “proponent of data collection and transparency” to ensure customer savings from the RRES Program. CGB Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, pp. 11-13. Additionally, CGB stated that the Authority should focus on savings verification for the following two groups: (1) single family customers with third-party owned financing; and (2) affordable housing. *Id.*, pp. 12-13. Last, OCC agreed that “proactive action should be taken to ensure participant benefits are verified and enforced,” possibly through a third-party administrator who can protect customers from misleading solar contracts. OCC Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 16.

3. Authority Analysis

The Authority determines that changes are needed to the RRES Program to track whether and how much participants financially benefit from Program participation and to empower EOE to take appropriate action, if and when necessary, to apply the “four-tier” or “four strike” enforcement system established in the Residential Tariff Decision for suspending or banning the noncompliant developers. Residential Tariff Decision, p. 27. More specifically, the Authority determines that the following changes are needed: (1) new compliance requirements for contractors and associated EOE auditing direction; (2) EOE auditing of contractor marketing scripts and training materials; and (3) changes to the adder auto-enrollment process.

a. Financial Benefits Compliance

First, the Authority determines that requiring developers to provide information via an annual compliance filing (Financial Benefits Compliance) related to the financial benefits calculations *already provided to RRES Program participants* will advance the Program Objectives, particularly the fourth Program Objective, program accessibility through customer protections and disclosures, by protecting all customers through increased data transparency. The Financial Benefits Compliance will better inform the Authority and relevant stakeholders, as appropriate, as to the benefits received by RRES Program participants, including LMI customers. Notably, under the current Program requirements, if a low-income adder is sent to a tariff payment beneficiary that is not the customer of record, it is unclear whether the customer is benefiting from the adder as intended. Accordingly, the new reporting requirements will provide clarity to the Authority as to whether low-income customers are financially benefiting from the RRES Program. The required information will also assist EOE in its annual audit of RRES customer disclosure forms. See Residential Tariff Decision, p. 27; Year 1 Decision, p. 21.

To aid in implementation, the Financial Benefits Compliance builds off the information already required in the customer disclosure form; thus, the incremental requirements of this new compliance are largely in aggregating and explaining information that is already provided to customers, as developers already track and have established calculation methodologies for the customer disclosure forms. Specifically, the Authority directs each developer participating in the RRES Program to annually file the following with the Authority for all RRES projects deployed in the previous calendar year:

1. All customer disclosure forms;
2. An unlocked Excel file summarizing key information from the customer disclosure forms, as well as other information provided to customers such as contracts and promotional materials, for each project as detailed below (Financial Benefits Summary Sheet); and
3. A narrative explanation of any calculation methodologies included in the Financial Benefits Summary Sheet (Sheet Narrative).

The Financial Benefits Summary Sheet shall include one row each for every project deployed by the developer under the RRES program in the previous calendar year. For each project, the following information shall be provided (i.e., each of the following should be a column in the Financial Benefits Summary Sheet): (1) site address;¹⁶ (2) utility account number associated with the project; (3) annual contract rate increase amount;¹⁷ (4) estimated year one production (kWh) as a percentage of estimated annual utility customer usage (kWh);¹⁸ (5) estimated year one customer net savings;¹⁹ (6) starting utility rate used to estimate net year one savings;²⁰ (7) estimated net savings over the RRES tariff term (i.e., 20 years) if provided by the developer to customers in a contract or promotional materials, or if it can be easily extrapolated from the customer disclosure data;²¹ and (8) utility rate used to estimate net savings over the RRES tariff term (i.e., 20 years) if provided by the developer to customers in a contract or promotional materials, or if it can be easily extrapolated from the customer disclosure data.²²

The Sheet Narrative may be a simple summary document (e.g., as brief as a couple of pages) outlining the methodology used to calculate the above required information to be included in the Financial Benefits Summary Sheet, as applicable, along with a general list of the documents needed for such calculations (e.g., a customer's electric bill and sales contract are needed to verify the methodology for the fourth requirement, etc.). Developers should retain all documents listed in the Sheet Narrative at least through the end of the calendar year following the deployment of the system (i.e., for systems deployed in 2023, relevant documents should be maintained until December

¹⁶ Information already required in the customer disclosure form.

¹⁷ Information already required in the customer disclosure form for third-party owned systems. If the rate increase is another increment other than annual, provide an estimate of the annual amount. If a direct ownership customer, simply state "direct ownership".

¹⁸ Estimated year one production is already required in the customer disclosure form, if the percentage of customer load is not.

¹⁹ Information already required in the customer disclosure form. For direct ownership customers, convert the calculated monthly savings into an annual amount. Developers should use whichever methodology they are currently using to calculate annual or monthly savings as required for the disclosure form.

²⁰ Information already required in the customer disclosure form. For direct ownership customers, provide the starting utility rate used to estimate net average monthly savings.

²¹ Developers can mark this column "N/A" if this information is not provided to customers.

²² Developers can mark this column "N/A" if this information is not provided to customers.

31, 2024), as they may be requested by the Authority or EOE in reviewing such annual filings.

The Financial Benefits Compliance (e.g., customer disclosure forms, Financial Benefits Summary Sheet, and Sheet Narrative) shall be filed annually by all Program developers with the Authority as compliance in the reopener to the annual Program review docket for contractor education and enforcement (e.g., Docket No. 23-08-02RE01 for the 2024 filing, etc.). To give developers enough time to adjust to the new reporting requirements, the first annual filing will be due no later than June 1, 2024. All subsequent filings shall be due by April 1 annually (i.e., the 2025 compliance filing will be due on April 1, 2025).

The Authority also recognizes that each contractor's annual financial benefit tracking filing may contain sensitive customer information not suitable for public disclosure. All confidential material, unless otherwise directed by the Authority, must be provided in accordance with the instructions outlined in the annual docket's Notice of Proceeding. Currently, such instructions require the materials to be emailed to the Authority's Executive Secretary, Jeff.Gaudiosi@ct.gov, contemporaneously with the motion. The email's subject line shall state in all capital letters "CONFIDENTIAL MATERIAL - NOT FOR PUBLIC DISCLOSURE." Each page of any electronic confidential information shall also contain a header "CONFIDENTIAL – NOT FOR PUBLIC DISCLOSURE." Consequently, the Authority clarifies that contractors may file a Motion for Protective Order requesting that portions of their annual filing be protected. The Motion and accompanying affidavit shall be filed publicly along with the redacted version of the submission.²³ Last, the Authority clarifies that each contractor may file one Motion for Protective Order for their entire annual filing.

As discussed in prior annual RRES review docket Decisions, EOE annually audits customer disclosure forms. See Residential Tariff Decision, p. 27 ("an annual audit of a subset of customer disclosure forms, with at least one from each renewable energy contractor"); see also Year 1 Decision, pp. 21-22. Moving forward, the Authority directs EOE to annually audit a representative sample of the customer disclosure forms (e.g., a random selection of 5% of the forms for each developer) through the annual Program review docket for contractor education and enforcement (e.g., Docket No. 23-08-02RE01 for the 2024 filing, etc.). Additionally, EOE may audit a contractor's Financial Benefits Summary Sheet and Sheet Narrative and can request additional documentation or evidence as needed to verify a contractor's Financial Benefits Summary Sheet calculations, particularly for low-income customers to support the fifth Program Objective, increased inclusivity overall.

The Authority intends to evaluate the implementation of a minimum customer savings threshold for low-income customers in next year's annual RRES Program review proceeding, Docket No. 24-08-02. Additionally, the Authority will require that all RRES projects that receive money from Connecticut's Project SunBridge, which would be funded through the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund Solar for All competition if selected,

²³ For reference on how to write a Motion for Protective Order, contractors may consult protective orders filed in other dockets. Importantly, contractors are not required to hire an attorney to file or write a Motion for Protective Order, so long as the Motion for Protective Order contains specific legal arguments with reference to state or federal law describing with supporting facts as to why the information should be kept confidential, as well as an affidavit subscribed and sworn before a public notary.

demonstrate 20% household savings consistent with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) definition starting on January 1, 2025.²⁴

Last, the Authority recognizes that contractors may use different methodologies to calculate the net savings of their project installations, even if currently required to be included in the customer disclosure form. Consequently, the Authority may request written comments from all stakeholders in the next annual review proceeding on the utility of establishing a consistent methodology to calculate the net savings for all RRES project applications moving forward, and if so, what such methodology should be.

b. Auditing of Marketing Materials

Additionally, the Authority concludes that the continued expansion of the Program increases the need for monitoring of marketing information conveyed to customers, in support of the first Program Objective, the sustained and orderly development of the state's solar industry, and the fourth Program Objective, accessibility for customers by providing customer protections. Accordingly, the Authority directs EOE to review a sample of marketing materials for at least 25% of all RRES contractors by August 1 annually.²⁵ More specifically, EOE shall review contractor marketing materials for clearly deceptive or misleading marketing practices, as determined by EOE. Notably, EOE's review of contractor marketing materials supports the auditing process first laid out in the Residential Tariff Decision, where EOE reviews contractor breaches of the Program Manual, including misleading marketing of the RRES Program. Residential Tariff Decision, p. 27. EOE shall then file a written summary of any marketing materials filed by Program developers in the previous calendar year that are deemed to be clearly deceptive or misleading to Program customers, as determined by EOE, in the appropriate reopener to the annual Program review docket for contractor education and enforcement (e.g., Docket No. 23-08-02RE01, etc.) and consistent with the "four strike" system authorized in the Residential Tariff Decision.²⁶ More specifically, the summary should be provided directly to the developers in question and filed as correspondence if only representing one "strike" and filed as a motion if representing two or more "strikes".

To facilitate EOE's review, contractors participating in the RRES Program shall annually file their marketing scripts and training materials generated for or provided to anyone engaging with a customer.²⁷ Such filings shall be made in the reopener to the annual Program review docket for contractor education and enforcement by April 1 each year with the first filing due on June 1, 2024, consistent with the financial benefits compliance outlined in the above section. For clarity, contractors shall file one copy of

²⁴ See U.S. EPA, Revised Request for Applications, Aug. 31, 2023, available at: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=348957>.

²⁵ EOE shall also continue its current annual review of at least one customer disclosure form per renewable energy contractor. See Residential Tariff Decision, p. 27.

²⁶ The penalties for developer non-compliance with any new tracking or marketing requirements set forth in this Decision, including the use of marketing practices that may be deemed deceptive pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. § 42-100b, include removal from the RRES Program, if recommended to the Authority by EOE. Ultimately, EOE shall follow the "four-tier" or "four strike" enforcement system established in the Residential Tariff Decision for recommending the suspension or banning of the noncompliant developer. Residential Tariff Decision, p. 27. EOE may, however, recommend the assessment of multiple strikes for a single audit if multiple violations are identified, particularly if they are severe.

²⁷ Marketing materials and scripts are not confidential, and providers should file them publicly.

each discreet marketing script and training material.²⁸ Further, the Authority clarifies that the collection and review of marketing materials shall be administered and enforced by EOE.

c. Auto-enrollment Process Changes

The Authority determines that changes are warranted to the auto-enrollment process for the low-income or Distressed Municipality adders. The Authority agrees with the EDCs' assessment that, absent a requirement that the adder value be reflected in a customer's solar pricing agreement, the after-the-fact application of the adders results in windfall profits to developers. Thus, the Authority directs the adder value to only be applied automatically by the EDCs to qualifying customers if the tariff payment beneficiary is the customer of record, or if the applicant applied for an adder in their original RRES application. This change will further the fifth Program Objective by helping to ensure that underserved customers are benefiting from the adders, since the adders will either be identified to the customer at the outset of the RRES application process, which requires the customer's review via the signing of several forms,²⁹ or be paid directly to the customer. Further, the Authority concludes that this change will not disincentivize developers such as PosiGen, who socialize the higher deployment costs of Distressed Municipalities across all projects, from focusing on underserved communities, since such developers may still collect the underserved adder provided that they apply for it in the original RRES application. Further, if an underserved customer qualifying for either Program adder is not (auto)enrolled by the Program Administrators for not meeting the new requirements outlined in this Decision, the Program Administrators shall still track such enrollment so that it may be counted toward the Program's 40% deployment target in underserved communities.

E. STATE AND FEDERAL INCENTIVE ELIGIBILITY

The Authority requested written comments from stakeholders on the usefulness of a mapping tool depicting areas with the most residents eligible for the low-income RRES adder, aggregated at the census block level, to aid RRES project deployment in underserved communities. Notice, July 18, 2023, p. 2. The Authority also requested stakeholder feedback on the usefulness of a mapping tool depicting census block areas where residents are eligible for both the low-income RRES adder (i.e., 60% or less of state median income) and the qualified low-income economic benefit project investment tax credit (low-income economic benefit ITC) adder (i.e., 80% or less of area median income). Id.

The CGB noted that, based on federal guidance, the low-income economic benefit ITC adder is intended for front-of-the-meter (FTM) projects with at least 50% of the facility's total output serving low-income households. Id., p. 4. Nevertheless, CGB believed that a single tool on a website like EnergizeCT would be helpful for other ITC adders, particularly the low-income community 10 percentage point ITC adder, which is based on geographic location. Id. PosiGen noted that increased low-income RRES

²⁸ For example, if a contractor provides the same marketing script to multiple entities, then it may file one copy and note the entities to which it provides the script.

²⁹ In addition to the sales, lease, or power purchase agreement, the customer of record must sign the Tariff Terms and Conditions, a Customer Disclosure Form, and a Payment Beneficiary Form. EDC Compliance to Order No. 13, Dec. 15, 2022, Docket No. 22-08-02, Att. 2, pp. 22, 27, 40.

enrollment would “require further education and familiarity with both prospective customers and installers.” PosiGen Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 6. Therefore, PosiGen believed that the creation of new public identification tools, such as a census-level map using Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) data, would be helpful. *Id.*, p. 7. PosiGen, however, did not support the creation of a new mapping tool for the low-income economic benefit ITC adder because the Department of Energy already has a mapping tool for the low-income communities 10 percentage point bonus credit and, as identified by CGB, because the low-income economic benefit ITC adder is better suited for the Shared Clean Energy Facilities (SCEF) Program. *Id.*

OCC agreed “that a tool to identify income eligibility would be useful in identifying physical overlaps in target populations,” particularly for residents located in Distressed Municipalities, income-eligible communities, and environmental justice census block groups. OCC Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 6. OCC consequently recommended the use of maps that include all three populations, to support outreach to underserved communities, and provided copies of such maps for stakeholder review. *Id.*, pp. 6-8. Moreover, ConnSSA stated that its members would use a LIHEAP mapping tool when determining customer ITC adder eligibility. ConnSSA Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 2.

The Authority concludes that the inclusion of a mapping “tool” on the RRES Program website will help developers better target underserved communities, thereby aiding the Program Objectives, particularly the fourth Program Objective, enhanced Program accessibility, and the fifth Program Objective, increased inclusivity overall. The Authority therefore directs the EDCs to include a link to Connecticut’s environmental justice mapping tool on the RRES Program webpage(s) by January 1, 2024, along with a brief summary of the tool and how installers can use it.³⁰ Notably, in addition to highlighting Distressed Municipalities and environmental justice census block groups, the map contains a socioeconomic layering tool, which may be used to target areas of high poverty.

The Authority notes that qualified RRES projects located in some underserved communities are eligible for a 10-percentage point increase in the ITC under Category 1 of the Low-Income Communities Bonus Credit Program. Low-income communities are defined according to the New Markets Tax Credits (NMTC) section of the Internal Revenue Code as a census tract where (1) the poverty rate is at least 20%; or (2) in the case of a tract not located in a metropolitan area, the median family income does not exceed 80% of statewide median family income; or 3) in the case of a tract located in a metropolitan area, the median family income does not exceed 80% of the greater of statewide median family income or the metropolitan area median family income.³¹ Further, projects within each category may receive priority for an allocation if they meet at least one of two additional selection criteria (ASC) based on ownership and geographic location, and at least 50% of the capacity of each category will be reserved for projects that meet ASC. A facility will meet the Ownership Criteria if it is owned by a Tribal enterprise, an Alaska Native Corporation, a renewable energy cooperative, a qualified

³⁰ Connecticut’s environmental justice mapping tool may be found here: <https://connecticut.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=85bf095c8fc043edaa15ca5f78299fe3>.

³¹ Eligibility criteria and additional guidance on the Low-Income Communities Bonus Credit Program is provided at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/08/15/2023-17078/additional-guidance-on-low-income-communities-bonus-credit-program>.

renewable energy company meeting certain characteristics, or a qualified tax-exempt entity. To meet the Geographic Criteria, a facility must be located in (1) a Persistent Poverty County (PPC), or (2) a census tract designated in the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) as disadvantaged based on whether the tract is either (a) greater than or equal to the 90th percentile for energy burden and is greater than or equal to the 65th percentile for low income, or (b) greater than or equal to the 90th percentile for particulate matter (PM) 2.5 exposure and greater than or equal to the 65th percentile for low income.

RRES projects located in some underserved communities are also eligible for the Energy Community Tax Credit Bonus, which provides a 10 percentage point adder for qualified projects located in energy communities. The IRA defines energy communities as (1) brownfield sites; (2) metropolitan or non-metropolitan statistical areas that have, or had at any time since 2009, a) a 0.17% or greater direct employment or 25% or greater local tax revenues related to the extraction, processing, transport, or storage of coal, oil, or natural gas, and b) an unemployment rate at or above the national average unemployment rate for the previous year; and (3) a census tract or directly adjoining census tract that has had a coal mine closure after 1999 or coal-fired electric generating unit retired after 2009.³²

The map below displays the geographic overlap between Connecticut's Distressed Municipality list; census tracts designated as Low-Income Communities eligible for the ITC adder under Category 1 of the Low-Income Communities Bonus Credit Program³³, including the additional Geographic Criteria;³⁴ and areas eligible for the ITC adder under the Energy Community Tax Credit Bonus (excluding brownfield sites).³⁵ The Authority also provides below a list of census tracts both located in Distressed Municipalities and eligible for the ITC Category 1 Bonus Credit as Low-Income Communities.³⁶ The Authority directs the EDCs to include the attached map and table, and additional, similar resources identifying areas where RRES projects may be eligible for both state and federal incentives, on the RRES Program webpage(s), along with a brief description of federal incentive eligibility by January 1, 2024. Ultimately, the information shall be relocated to the PURA Data Dashboard when the dashboard is expanded to include Clean Energy Program data. At a minimum, the Authority will update the static map and list of census tracts annually, in order to help identify communities eligible for additional federal incentives and aid deployment among low-income and underserved communities in furtherance of the Program Objectives.

³² Additional information on the Energy Community Tax Credit Bonus and a mapping tool is available at <https://energycommunities.gov/energy-community-tax-credit-bonus/>.

³³ Low-Income Communities as designated by the NMTC can be downloaded at https://www.cdfifund.gov/sites/cdfi/files/2023-08/NMTC_2016-2020_ACS_LIC_Sept1_2023.xlsb. The maps and data provided here utilize NMTC low-income community data based on the 2016-2020 American Community Survey, released in September 2023. For one year following the release of updated data, either the 2011–2015 ACS low-income community data or the updated data can be used to determine the poverty rate for a population census tract.

³⁴ CEJST data is available at <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/downloads>.

³⁵ Energy Communities geographic eligibility data is available at <https://edx.netl.doe.gov/dataset/ira-energy-community-data-layers>.

³⁶ RRES projects in parts of Stamford, Danbury, and Bridgeport appear to be eligible for an ITC of up to 60%. RRES projects in Bridgeport are also eligible for the Distressed Municipality adder.

Additionally, the Authority notes that Category 3 of the Low-Income Communities Bonus Credit Program provides a 20 percentage point bonus to Qualified Low-Income Residential Building Projects that serve affordable housing customers, which are not constrained by geographic location.³⁷ As discussed in section IV.F.2, RRES multifamily affordable housing projects at covered housing facilities would be eligible to receive the additional ITC adder based on tenant benefit sharing requirements. For additional considerations related to multifamily affordable housing participation in the RRES Program, the Authority refers stakeholders to the ongoing work of DEEP, CGB, the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA), the Connecticut Department of Housing (DOH), EOE, the EDCs, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the CT Fair Housing Center as part of the Multifamily Housing Working Group, established in the Year 1 annual review proceeding. Decision, June 8, 2022, Docket No. 21-08-02, pp. 1, 4-6; DEEP Correspondence, Sep. 1, 2023, pp. 13-16.

³⁷ A list of eligible covered housing programs for Category 3 is provided at <https://www.energy.gov/media/302641>.

Figure 3: Geographic Eligibility for the Low-Income Communities Bonus Credit, Energy Community Tax Credit Bonus, and Distressed Municipalities

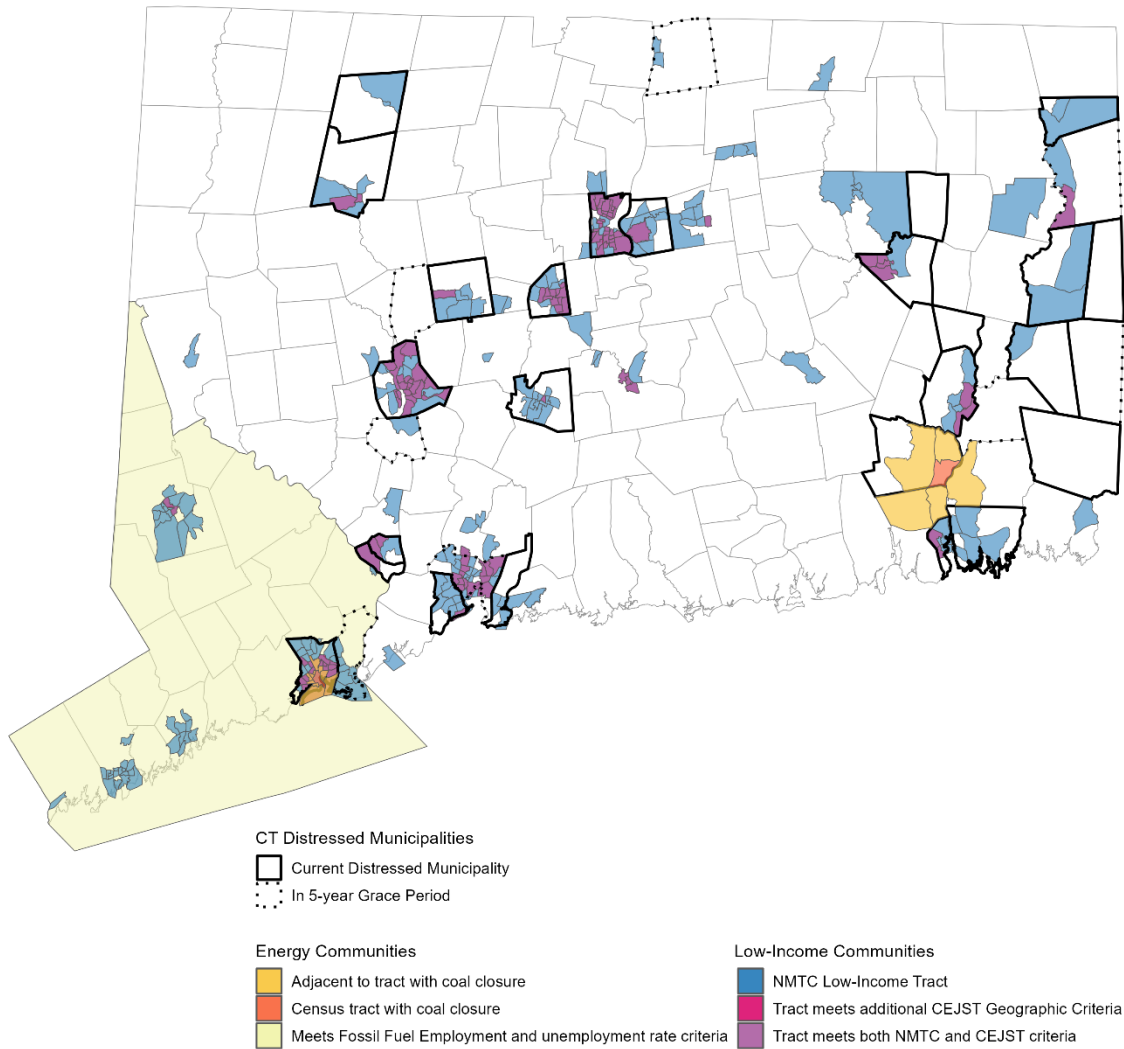


Table 5: NMTC Low-Income Census Tracts FIPS within Current Distressed Municipalities

9009350400	9009171100	9015903102	9011696500	9003501200	9003501300	9001072100
9009350500	9009352300	9015800501	9003405600	9011702500	9003501500	9003503700
9009352701	9005320101	9011870300	9003510200	9011702700	9011696401	9003503800
9009352702	9005320102	9011690800	9003510400	9011709200	9011696701	9003503900
9009352800	9009170600	9011696800	9003510300	9001073600	9009361500	9003504000
9009351100	9009170700	9011697000	9003415300	9003502700	9003500900	9003503500
9009350800	9009170800	9011702300	9003510700	9003503102	9003503300	9003504200
9009351800	9009171000	9001071000	9003510800	9003503101	9003510500	9003504300
9009351000	9015800300	9001071100	9003502300	9009120200	9003511200	9003504500
9009351200	9015800400	9001071200	9003415500	9011870200	9003501700	9003504100
9009351300	9015800600	9001071300	9003415600	9011690300	9003415400	9003504900

9009351400	9003500500	9001071400	9003415800	9011690400	9003416500	9003405700
9009350900	9009350101	9001071600	9003415900	9011690500	9003405500	9003502800
9009352200	9009180102	9001071900	9003416000	9011690700	9003500100	9003502900
9009352500	9009154102	9001072000	9003416100	9009154200	9003501800	9003502500
9009352600	9009154101	9001072200	9003502400	9009154500	9003510600	9003503000
9009352100	9009351601	9001072300	9003416200	9009154600	9003405100	9003502600
9015907200	9009351500	9001072400	9003416300	9009154900	9003406100	
9003524501	9009171300	9001072500	9003416600	9009155100	9003501400	
9009352400	9009171400	9001072600	9003416700	9015800700	9001073900	
9009351602	9009171500	9001072700	9003416800	9001072900	9001073100	
9009170900	9011696100	9001072800	9003417100	9001074000	9009180300	
9009155000	9011702800	9001073200	9003417500	9015907300	9009180200	
9009125200	9003417200	9001073300	9003504800	9015903200	9009350200	
9005310803	9003417300	9001073400	9003500200	9001070300	9009350300	
9005310804	9001257200	9001073500	9003500300	9001070400	9009170200	
9009351700	9003405402	9001073700	9009125300	9001070500	9009170300	
9009170100	9003524700	9001073800	9009125400	9001070600	9009170400	
9005310300	9003524400	9001074300	9003511300	9001070900	9005310100	
9005310801	9003524600	9001074400	9003500400	9001070200	9005310200	

Table 6: NMTC Low-Income Census Tracts FIPS within Distressed Municipalities in Five-Year Grace Period

9009345100	9009140102	9009141500	9001080500	9009140600	9003480700	9009142500
9009142000	9009141301	9009141600	9001080600	9009140700	9001081000	9009142601
9009140900	9009140101	9009141800	9009140200	9009361402	9001080400	
9009141200	9009142604	9009142100	9009140300	9015904400	9009141400	
9015904500	9009361401	9001080100	9009140400	9009140800	9009142300	
9009142605	9009142700	9001080200	9009140500	9003480600	9009142400	

F. MULTIFAMILY AFFORDABLE HOUSING

1. Master-Metered and Sub-Metered Participation

The Authority established a Multifamily Housing Working Group (MFH WG) in the Year 1 annual review proceeding to investigate outstanding issues surrounding multifamily housing participation in the RRES Program. Decision, June 8, 2022, Docket No. 21-08-02, Annual Residential Renewable Energy Tariff Program Review and Rate Setting (MFH Decision), pp. 1, 4-6. Currently, only individually metered multifamily affordable housing is eligible for the RRES Program, provided such housing agrees to distribute at least 20% of the financial benefit of the RRES tariff to tenants. EDC Compliance to Order No. 13, Dec. 15, 2022, Docket No. 22-08-02, Att. 2, pp. 41-45. The Authority later announced its intention in the Year 2 Decision to allow master-metered multifamily affordable housing to participate in the RRES Program by January 1, 2024,

after the MFH WG submitted benefit sharing recommendations for such properties. Year 2 Decision, p. 8.

The MFH WG recommended that master-metered multifamily affordable housing be eligible for the RRES Program if the system owner uses 20% of the net present value of the RRES tariff to complete pre-approved building upgrades, such as energy efficient windows, heat pumps, broadband access, etc., which would benefit tenants. MFH WG Compliance, June 1, 2023, Docket No. 21-08-02, pp. 1-3. Additionally, CGB stated a willingness to provide the upfront capital necessary for building improvements under the MFH WG's proposal. *Id.*, p. 2. The MFH WG also proposed that any master-metered project be subjected to an audit by the Authority to ensure compliance. *Id.* Accordingly, the Authority requested written comments from stakeholders on the MFH WG's proposal for master-metered multifamily housing inclusion in the RRES Program. Notice, July 18, 2023, pp. 4-5. The Authority further requested stakeholder feedback on a framework to pass a master-metered multifamily affordable housing project's RRES benefit directly to tenants via direct payment or through on-bill or rent credits. *Id.*, p. 5.

OCC agreed that the financial benefits of the RRES Program should be passed on to tenants. OCC Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 12. However, OCC noted that renters do not necessarily accrue the same benefits as the landlord when building improvements are made (e.g., increased property values). *Id.* OCC believes that passing RRES financial benefits on to tenants would require regulation to prevent "unintended consequences for renters such as higher rents, higher energy bills, and increased displacement." *Id.*, pp. 12-13. OCC further highlighted that Connecticut statutes does not protect renters "from assuming an unreasonable amount of the costs from energy efficiency upgrades." *Id.*, p. 13. The EDCs deferred to the MFH WG's recommendation on master-metered participation in the RRES Program. EDC Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 6.

In written comments, the MFH WG argued that the Authority should establish a "building-enhancement" definition for master-metered projects, if the MFH WG's proposal were accepted. MFH WG Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 2. Additionally, the MFH WG believes that additional requirements for sub-metered units would "be burdensome and impractical for implementation, given the diverse array" of sub-metered systems. *Id.* The MFH WG noted that its proposal for passing RRES benefits on to tenants in master-metered properties would not harm tenants' eligibility for assistance programs. *Id.*, p. 3. Conversely, after consulting with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the MFH WG concluded that rent credits would "adversely affect tenants' eligibility for HUD assistance." *Id.* The MFH WG therefore did not recommend that the Authority adopt rent credits for master-metered properties participating in the RRES Program.

The Authority thanks the MFH WG for their thoughtful consideration of how to include master-metered multifamily affordable housing projects in the RRES Program and accepts with modification the proposal submitted. First, as stated above, the Authority requires that "at least 20% of the total financial benefit [of the RRES tariff] be directed to tenants" (emphasis added) for individually metered housing projects participating in the RRES Program. Year 2 Decision, pp. 13-14. While tenants may benefit from the building upgrades described in the MFH WG's compliance filing, the landlord would also financially benefit from building upgrades via increased property values. Further, if long-term tenant

rental agreements include building energy costs, upgrades to increase a building's energy efficiency would solely benefit the landlord if tenant rents were not adjusted downwards accordingly. Thus, the Authority concludes that if 20% of the net present value of the RRES tariff went to building upgrades, some percentage of that value would be provided to landlords, potentially to the detriment of tenants. Said another way, the Authority is concerned that allowing 20% of the net present value of the RRES tariff to be used on building upgrades would not result in 20% of the project value being distributed to building tenants. Consequently, the Authority requires that at least 25% of the net present value of the RRES tariff be spent on building upgrades, which would benefit the tenants of the master-metered multifamily affordable housing project. The MFH WG may submit a recommendation to the Authority requesting that this threshold be revised, so long as clear and quantitative analysis is provided to the Authority showing that this number would not allow master-metered multifamily affordable housing projects to be financially viable.

Furthermore, the Authority concludes that only certain building upgrades that provide the greatest value to either tenants or the electric grid may be used when determining master-metered multifamily affordable housing project qualification in the RRES Program. More specifically, the Authority determines that only the following upgrades will qualify for the arrangement described: (1) energy efficient windows or doors; (2) insulation; (3) energy efficient appliances; (4) heat pumps; (5) energy storage (if such storage enrolls in the Energy Storage Solutions Program); (6) broadband internet access (if such internet access is provided freely to tenants); (7) lead remediation or removal of environmental hazards such as asbestos necessary to enable energy efficiency upgrades; and 8) energy efficient lighting. The MFH WG may submit a recommendation to amend this list, provided sufficient justification is given to the Authority demonstrating tangible tenant financial benefits of any building upgrade additions.

Additionally, the EDCs shall require that developers of master-metered housing projects submit: (1) documentation outlining the net present value of the project's RRES tariff and how the developer reached such determination; (2) a detailed plan for the expenditure of 25% of the net present value of the project's RRES tariff on approved building upgrades; (3) a description of how the upgrades will financially benefit tenants (e.g., energy efficient lighting upgrades when utilities are included in rent will not by itself result in benefits passed to tenants, and thus may be deemed an ineligible upgrade in certain circumstances); (4) upon project approval, receipts and invoices for each approved building upgrade expenditure; and (5) photographic evidence of completed building upgrades, available upon request.

The Authority respectfully requests that the MFH WG develop and submit a plan for: (1) a member or members of the MFH WG to conduct eligibility screenings for project adherence with the above requirements prior to the start of construction; (2) at least annual audits of completed project's adherence with the above requirements; and (3) suggested remedies if projects later fail to adhere to the above requirements after receiving approval to proceed. The Authority's preference is for DEEP to work in conjunction with the EDCs to audit and verify the compliance documents outlined above; however, the Authority is open to alternative recommendations from the MFH WG regarding compliance auditing, provided that such recommendations are accompanied by a detailed justification.

Finally, before master-metered affordable housing projects can be approved for inclusion in the RRES Program, the Authority concludes that rental protections need to be considered by the MFH WG. As property values increase upon the completion of approved building upgrades, landlords could raise rents to levels unaffordable for low-income tenants, thereby hindering the fifth Program Objective, increased inclusivity overall. Accordingly, the Authority directs the MFH WG to submit proposed protections from eviction and renter protections for master-metered multifamily affordable housing that identify enforcement mechanisms for ensuring that tenants are not harmed via increased rents that are tied to the Authority's jurisdiction (e.g., including RRES compensation clawback provisions, etc.). The proposed protections shall also include a plan to determine eligibility of building upgrades whereby the landlord demonstrates that benefits will be passed to tenants (e.g., documentation demonstrating free broadband access will be provided) and, where appropriate, will result in financial benefits for tenants. Stated another way, the proposal must provide a clear plan for how tenants will financially benefit from all eligible building upgrades.

The Authority directs the MFH WG to provide a comprehensive proposal for master-metered housing projects' participation in the RRES program incorporating the above direction for review and approval by April 10. The MFH WG may propose updates to any of the Authority's conclusions outlined in this section, or to any recommendations previously made by the MFH WG, to ensure that the proposal most effectively advances the Program Objectives, so long as sufficient explanation and justification is provided. Last, the Authority clarifies that master-metered housing projects will not be eligible for the Program until the updated compliance is filed and an Authority ruling is issued.

2. Financial Benefit Sharing Requirement Updates

At the September 6, 2023 Technical Meeting, the MFH WG noted that the requirements for the federal Low-Income Communities Bonus Credit Program (Low-Income Bonus Credit), which increases a project's ITC between 10-20% above normal levels, are not aligned with the RRES Program's tenant benefit sharing requirement. MFH WG Corresp., Sept. 1, 2023, pp. 12-15. For example, the Low-Income Bonus Credit requires that at least 12.5% of a project's financial benefits be equitably distributed to low-income tenants, while the RRES Program requires that 20% of a project's financial benefits be distributed equally amongst all tenants (emphasis added). Id., p. 15. Consequently, without a change to the RRES requirements, multifamily housing projects participating in the Program will not be eligible for the Low-Income Bonus Credit and will lose out on approximately \$127,200 of Federal funds. Id.

The Authority concludes that revisions to the RRES multifamily affordable housing requirements are needed to ensure that projects can benefit from the Low-Income Bonus Credit. Accordingly, the Authority will allow a minimum of 12.5% of the value of the RRES tariff to be equally shared with low-income tenants residing at a multifamily affordable housing project site, so long as the project is pursuing the Low-Income Bonus Credit. In such case, the remainder of the financial benefit to be shared with tenants (e.g., 7.5% of the value of the RRES tariff) shall be distributed equally amongst all non-low-income tenants residing at the project site, to maintain the 20% minimum benefit sharing requirement used in the Program currently. However, the average per unit financial benefit for non-low-income tenants cannot exceed the average per unit financial benefit for low-income tenants. Thus, for example, if dividing 7.5% of the financial benefit

amongst non-low-income tenants would result in a larger payment to those tenants than the payment to low-income tenants, the total financial value of the RRES tariff shared with tenants shall be distributed equally across all tenants. The Authority notes that the 12.5% low-income benefit sharing requirement will still be met in such circumstances, as this would effectively result in low-income tenants receiving more than 12.5% of the financial benefits. The Authority concludes that this change will further the first Program Objective, the sustained and orderly development of the state's solar industry, by opening up new revenue streams for multifamily affordable housing projects. Additionally, low-income tenants may receive greater total financial benefits with this programmatic change, thereby advancing the fifth Program Objective, increased inclusivity overall, particularly for low- and moderate-income customers. The Authority looks forward to the participation of multifamily affordable housing projects in the RRES Program as new revenue opportunities are unlocked.

3. Percentage of Benefit to Tenants

Pursuant to Authority direction, the MFH WG filed a recommendation that at least 20% of the total financial benefit of the RRES tariff be provided to tenants in multifamily affordable housing projects. MFH WG Compliance, Sept. 30, 2022, Docket No. 21-08-02, p. 1. In making its recommendation, the MFH WG concluded that, on average, approximately 60% of the RRES tariff value was needed to cover system costs. *Id.* Consequently, the MFH WG believed that splitting the remaining financial benefit equally between tenants and system owners was the most equitable solution to ensure that tenants were financially benefiting from solar projects located at their place of residence. *Id.* The MFH WG further noted that additional incentives from the IRA may change the MFH WG's system benefit calculation once federal guidance was released. *Id.*, pp. 2-3. In the Year 2 Decision, the Authority approved the MFH WG's recommendation to require at least 20% of the total financial benefit of the RRES tariff to be split equally between all tenants of multifamily affordable housing sites. Year 2 Decision, pp. 13-14. Further, the Authority requested that the MFH WG file updated financial benefit sharing recommendations in the current proceeding. *Id.*, p. 14. In response, the MFH WG stated that it did "not have any additional recommendations to make at this time." DEEP Compliance, Aug. 1, 2023, p. 1.

Accordingly, the Authority requested written comments from stakeholders on whether system owners should be required to share a different percentage of the RRES tariff benefit with tenants of multifamily affordable housing sites. Notice, July 18, 2023, p. 6. The Authority specifically requested stakeholder consideration of whether system owners should be required to share some percentage of the net system benefit (instead of the total financial benefit) of the RRES tariff, since the percentage of the RRES tariff needed to cover system costs can vary from the 60% figure used in the MFH WG's calculations. *Id.* OCC responded to the Authority's request for written comments by stating its support for a modest increase in the total financial benefits sent to tenants, provided project viability was not jeopardized by such increase. OCC Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 14. The EDCs and CGB deferred to the comments submitted by the MFH WG. EDC Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 8; CGB Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 8. Last, the MFH WG believes that since the RRES Program was still new, data is lacking "to substantiate recommendations for modifying the tenant benefit percentage." *Id.* The MFH WG also noted that system owners still had the flexibility to provide a greater

percentage of benefits to tenants than what is required by the Program Manual. *Id.*, pp. 5-6.

The Authority concludes that changes are not warranted to the total percentage of the RRES tariff required to be shared with tenants (i.e., 20%) at this time, because evaluation of the impact of federal incentives on RRES project economics is still ongoing, and because the Authority lacks RRES multifamily housing project data to validate any changes. Nevertheless, should the MFH WG recommend additional changes to the current tenant benefit sharing requirements in the future, the Authority will consider such recommendations, to ensure that tenants receive appropriate benefits for solar projects located at their place of residence. The Authority ultimately remains committed to the fifth Program Objective, increased inclusivity overall, and, as such, the Authority will adjust Program requirements as needed to ensure Program equity at multifamily affordable housing sites.

4. Meter Sockets

At the June 21, 2023 Technical Meeting, developers noted difficulties in obtaining multi-gang meter sockets, which are frequently used in solar configurations for multifamily homes. *Tr.*, June 21, 2023, 93:17-94:4. Further, a stakeholder argued that trough-type connections with single meters next to each other could be used in lieu of multi-gang meter sockets for Netting projects. *Tr.*, 94:5-14. Therefore, the Authority requested written comments on any difficulties obtaining multi-gang meter sockets, particularly for multifamily affordable housing, and on recommendations for allowing alternatives to multi-gang meters for use in the RRES Program, including trough-type connections with single meters next to each other. Notice, July 18, 2023, p. 4.

While the EDCs acknowledged installer difficulties in obtaining multi-gang meter sockets, the EDCs did not support changing current metering requirements because the current requirements “maintain safety standards and avoid inherent risks of alternatives such as high maintenance costs and higher ease of tampering.” EDC Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 6. Conversely, Trinity Solar supported the use of trough-type connections with single meters installed side by side, because Trinity Solar believed this solution could “be easily implemented should this be safe and compliant with standards.” Trinity Solar Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 2. Trinity Solar also highlighted delays in obtaining multi-gang meter sockets among multiple manufacturers. *Id.* Similarly, ConnSSA noted manufacturer multi-gang meter socket delays, including an open purchase order dating back to March 2022. ConnSSA Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 4. ConnSSA asserted that trough-type connections with tamper-resistant or security screws would be one possible alternative to multi-gang meter sockets. *Id.* Further, OCC supported alternatives to multi-gang meter sockets, should such alternatives be “safe and technically viable,” to increase affordable housing participation in the Program. OCC Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, pp. 11-12.

The Authority does not authorize the use of trough-type connections with side-by-side meter installations for use in the RRES Program at this time as additional research must first be conducted to determine solutions to any safety or tampering risks that may be associated with such metering configurations. Nevertheless, it is clear to the Authority that the allowance of trough-type connections with side-by-side meter installations would aid the deployment of solar installations at multifamily affordable housing sites, which

have thus far been hindered through an acute manufacturer shortage of multi-gang meter sockets. Moreover, the allowance of such metering configurations would further the Program Objectives, particularly the first and fifth Program Objectives, by supporting the sustained and orderly development of the state's solar industry and by increasing inclusivity overall. Consequently, the Authority intends to reconsider trough-type connections with side-by-side meter installations for use in the RRES Program next year in Docket No. 24-08-02, after the appropriate safety review has been completed by the EDCs.

Accordingly, by March 15, 2024, the EDCs shall develop and submit for review and approval a plan to alleviate any potential safety or tampering risks associated with trough-type connections with side-by-side meter installations. Such plan shall include implementation costs and expected timelines for allowing such metering configurations for use in the RRES Program. Additionally, when developing the proposal, the EDCs shall research any steps taken by other jurisdictions to allow trough-type connections with side-by-side meter installations at multifamily housing sites, to determine if such steps can be replicated in Connecticut. Finally, the EDCs shall consult with the Interconnection Working Group, established in the Decision dated November 25, 2020, in Docket No. 17-12-03RE06, PURA Investigation into Distribution System Planning of the Electric Distribution Companies – Interconnection Standards and Practices, when developing the proposal. Ultimately, the Authority determines that the benefits of allowing trough-type connections with side-by-side meter installations, via increased underserved Program enrollment and multifamily affordable housing participation, may warrant their inclusion in the RRES Program once the EDCs develop a proposal to alleviate the potential risks associated with such metering configurations.

5. Eligible Affordable Housing Facilities Reporting

The Authority refers the Agencies (i.e., DEEP, CGB, DOH, and CHFA) to Order Nos. 4 and 6 of the MFH Decision issued in the Year 1 annual review proceeding, which request that the Agencies file annually, by August 1, a list of housing facilities eligible under Tier I of the affordable housing definition approved in the MFH Decision, as well as the DEEP and DOH contact information for a housing facility seeking to be defined as “affordable housing” that does not meet the Tier I or Tier II thresholds of the affordable housing definition. MFH Decision, p. 16. The Authority notes that these orders were not fulfilled for the current year and reiterates the importance of providing this information annually to facilitate multifamily affordable housing participation in the RRES Program. Further, the Authority directs the EDCs to post the most recent compliance with Order Nos. 4 and 6 of the MFH Decision, along with contact information for each of the Agencies, on the RRES Program website by January 1, 2024, and annually thereafter.

In written exceptions, DEEP, on behalf of the MFH Working Group, proposed an alternative process to the annual list of eligible Tier I properties submitted to the Authority, whereby eligible properties could be added to the list on a rolling basis, with quarterly submissions of the Tier I list to the Authority. DEEP Exceptions, Oct. 24, 2023, p. 3. Further, DEEP proposed that if a project not on the current Tier I list seeks participation in RRES, the EDCs could contact the Agencies to verify that the project has been approved for participation in a CHFA or DOH program, and, if so, CHFA or DOH would provide the EDCs with proof of Tier I eligibility. *Id.* DEEP also opined that the change would allow projects to more easily apply for federal programs and facilitate timelier Tier

I property eligibility for RRES, as CHFA and DOH continuously approve new projects for their programs. Id. UI expressed support for rolling approval for Tier I eligibility and quarterly Tier I list submissions. UI Exceptions, Oct. 24, 2023, pp. 7-8. The Authority finds that the proposed change expands affordable housing Program eligibility, in support of the fifth Program Objective, increased inclusivity overall. Consequently, the Authority accepts the proposal to allow the Agencies to approve Tier I submissions on a rolling basis and to submit the list of Tier I properties to the Authority on a quarterly basis and directs the EDCs to update the Program Manual to incorporate such change.

G. PROPOSED APPLICATION FEES

Order No. 2 of the Year 2 Decision directed the EDCs to file annually for Authority review and approval an RRES application fee to “cover the estimated administrative costs associated with processing applications,” including detailed calculations to justify the proposed fee. Year 2 Decision, p. 33. Eversource proposed maintaining the Year 2 RRES applications fees for Year 3 of the Program, because the current fees collected covered Eversource’s entire administrative programmatic costs. Motion No. 8, Att. 1, p. 1. More specifically, Eversource collected approximately \$2.3 million in application fees, while the costs incurred by Eversource to administer the Program totaled approximately \$1.2 million. Id. While Eversource’s collected application fees exceeded administrative programmatic costs, Eversource believed no fee change was warranted because: (1) the resulting excess is credited to customers; (2) the current fees do not present a barrier to RRES Program participation given recent application numbers; (3) current solar deployment levels exceed the historical average and may not be sustained; and (4) administrative costs are expected to increase in 2024 as Eversource enhances customer resources. Id. Additionally, Eversource stated that it would continue to monitor fee revenue and programmatic costs, to see if application fee changes were warranted in the future. Id., p. 2.

Similar to Eversource, UI proposed to maintain the Year 2 RRES application fees for Year 3 of the Program, because the current fees were “appropriately offsetting a significant portion of program costs without discouraging participation.” Motion No. 9, p. 1. The fees collected by UI ultimately covered most but not all administrative programmatic costs (i.e., approximately \$162,000 in fees were collected, versus Program operation costs of \$179,000). Id. Moreover, keeping the fees the same would “reduce customer confusion” and “enable statewide alignment.” Id. Finally, UI stated that it would continue to evaluate Program administrative costs and would report to the Authority if the fees collected vary significantly from actual Program costs. Id.

In a Notice of Request for Written Comments, the Authority requested stakeholder feedback on the EDCs’ proposed Year 3 application fees. Notice, July 18, 2023, pp. 6-7. ConnSSA responded stating that the issue had been “worked out” and no fee increases had occurred. ConnSSA Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 6. Additionally, OCC recommended a tiered fee approach to reduce barriers to low-income participation. OCC Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 15. OCC cited the Home Energy Solutions (HES) Program as one example of a program offering reduced application fees for low-income residents, since the HES Program has an income-eligible fee waiver. Id. OCC noted that reduced fees for low-income and Distressed Municipality residents could aid in the participation of underserved communities in the Program. Id.

Given robust RRES Program enrollment, the Authority concludes that the current application fees fulfill their intent to cover most EDC costs associated with administering the Program, thereby minimizing cost impacts to nonparticipating ratepayers, while not posing a major barrier to Program participation. Residential Tariff Decision, p. 26. Consequently, the Authority grants Motion Nos. 8 and 9 and maintains the Year 2 application fees for Year 3 of the Program. Maintaining the Year 2 fees will further the first and third Program Objectives by reducing customer confusion and limiting Program costs. Additionally, while the Authority sees the potential value of a tiered fee system, where low-income applicants would pay reduced application fees, the Authority determines that additional analysis and stakeholder feedback is warranted before such fee structure is approved. More specifically, the Authority is concerned that reduced fees would not be passed on as cost savings to low-income applicants, particularly if the fees are paid by developers and incorporated into the sales or lease contract signed by the low-income customer. Moreover, the existing adders effectively accomplish the same objective. Therefore, the Authority may revisit the idea of a tiered fee system during the Year 4 RRES Program review to better consider the proposal's costs and benefits, while taking into consideration current low-income deployment rates.

Finally, the Authority clarifies that any application fee overcollection shall be held by the Company for a period of one year before being credited to all ratepayers to mitigate any potential see-saw effects due to under- or over-collection changes from one year to another. Regardless of whether the application fees are over- or under-collected relative to Program administrative costs, such balance shall be reviewed by the Authority in the appropriate rate adjustment mechanism proceeding before being charged or credited to customers. The Authority encourages the EDCs to continue to critically assess whether application fee collection will sufficiently cover future Program administrative costs through its August 1 annual application fee filing.

H. IMPROVED RRES APPLICATION

On September 15, 2022, the Authority directed the EDCs to establish an Application Process Working Group (APWG) to streamline and identify improvements to the RRES application process. Year 2 Decision, p. 29. Accordingly, last year in Docket No. 22-08-02, the APWG submitted for the Authority's review several recommended RRES application improvements, thereby resulting in the Authority's approval of various changes to better align the RRES application process with programmatic goals. Decision, Docket No 22-08-02 (APWG Decision), Feb. 8, 2023. Further, in a May 15, 2023 Notice of Request for Written Comments, the Authority sought comments on RRES application process improvements made to date, specifically for the challenging UI application, to investigate whether additional improvements should be made to further the Program Objectives and RRES deployment targets. Notice, May 15, 2023, pp. 4-5.

In response, ConnSSA stated that there has been "marginal improvement in getting projects through the challenging UI application process." ConnSSA Comments, June 1, 2023, p. 2. Similarly, PosiGen noted that the UI RRES application process has seen improvements throughout 2022 and 2023. PosiGen Comments, June 1, 2023, pp. 12-13. Nevertheless, PosiGen argued that more work was "needed to ensure that the remaining issues that have surfaced with the move to PowerClerk are addressed so that there can be greater consistency (for both UI and installers), but also so that approval timelines can be reduced." *Id.*, p. 13. PosiGen also noted that application timelines are

twice as long for UI when compared to Eversource, primarily because of UI software bugs and learning pains. Id. Additionally, the EDCs highlighted the improvements made to the RRES application process to date, including UI's launch of a PowerClerk-based application process. EDC Comments, June 1, 2023, p. 13. The EDCs also noted several application improvements that are currently underway, including changes related to payment processing and customer data. Id., pp. 13-14. While integration challenges have occurred during UI's transition to PowerClerk, the EDCs highlighted UI's ability to address such challenges by working with applicants and a software vendor. Id., p. 13.

The Authority commends the EDCs' efforts to improve and streamline the RRES application process. The Authority notes that UI's average timeline from RRES application submission to issuance of permission to operate is now below that of Eversource (79 days for UI versus about 94 days for Eversource). Eversource Compliance, July 27, 2023, Docket No. 22-08-02, Att. 1, p. 1; UI Compliance, May 1, 2023, Docket No. 22-08-02, Att. 1, p. 1. The Authority encourages the EDCs to continue to proactively streamline RRES application processes and forms, to further reduce application barriers and timelines, in furtherance of the Program Objectives and RRES deployment targets.

I. ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES

The Authority directed the EDCs to file a robust electronic signature proposal for the RRES Program, including at least one feature to ensure customers are informed of relevant financial data and educational materials, by July 1. APWG Decision, p. 17. Accordingly, the EDCs made a revision to the Program's customer disclosure form "to ensure customers are informed of relevant financial data and educational material," including a hyperlink to the EDCs' customer educational pages. EDC Order No. 24 Compliance, June 30, 2023, p. 2. Additionally, UI stated that it uses an electronic signature feature provided by DocuSign to efficiently and conveniently obtain signatures required by the RRES application through an electronic process. Id., pp. 1-2. Further, Eversource was still implementing electronic signature capabilities for the RRES Program and planned to copy UI's signature process for the sake of consistency, with a planned launch date in the third quarter of 2023 at a cost of \$3.80 per document package. Id., p. 2. Notably, installers still have the capability to provide wet signatures with the launch of electronic signature processes. Id. Last, the EDCs remained "engaged with stakeholders on their respective e-signature plans/processes." Id.

Upon reviewing the EDCs' electronic signature proposal, the Authority requested written comments from stakeholders, including whether any changes should be made. Notice, July 18, 2023, p. 4. PosiGen stated that it uses "UI's electronic signature process wherever possible and supports Eversource rolling out a similar process." PosiGen Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 10. Nonetheless, PosiGen also believed that wet signatures should still be allowed for use in the Program. Id. Further, Trinity Solar believed that the "format for submitting signatures has been efficient." Trinity Solar Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 2. Should additional revision be needed, however, Trinity Solar requested collaboration between developers and the EDCs to ensure a good customer experience. Id. ConnSSA conversely believed that the current UI electronic signature process was problematic. ConnSSA Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 4. Finally, OCC favored a simplified application process, including the option to sign documents electronically. OCC Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 11. OCC also argued that Program

participants should not incur additional fees to fulfill document signature requirements. Id.

In support of the Program Objectives, the Authority approves the EDCs' electronic signature proposal. More specifically, the Authority concludes that electronic signatures will increase Program efficiency and accessibility by enabling quick document and signature collection, thereby shortening application timelines and supporting the first and fourth Program Objectives. Further, EDC revisions to the customer disclosure form will help ensure customers are informed of relevant financial data and educational materials during the electronic signature process. The Authority clarifies that the implementation cost of electronic signatures should be paid for using the revenue collected from existing RRES application fees. Last, the Authority strongly encourages the EDCs to work with members of the previously-organized APWG before implementing any electronic signature changes, so that developers are adequately informed of process modifications, and to alleviate any potential developer concerns with EDC proposed changes.

J. CANCELLATION PERIOD

The EDCs cannot remove stale or duplicative RRES project applications according to the current Program requirements. Year 2 Decision, p. 27. Consequently, the Program queue could build up as outdated projects remain pending indefinitely. To resolve this issue, in the Year 2 Decision the Authority directed the EDCs to work with the Interconnection Policy Working Group (IPWG), established through Docket No. 17-12-03RE06, PURA Investigation into Distribution System Planning of the Electric Distribution Companies – Interconnection Standards and Practices, to propose a cancellation period for projects which have not progressed. Id., pp. 27-28. After discussions with the IPWG, the EDCs requested “authorization to automatically withdraw Level I (25 kW and less) applications that have remained in a status requiring customer/applicant action (e.g., received contingent approval/awaiting municipal inspection) for 12 months or more.” EDC Order No. 18 Compliance, June 30, 2023, p. 2. The EDCs also proposed sending email notifications to both the applicant and customer no less than 15 business days before an application's cancellation, whereby the EDCs would maintain the application should a request to do so be received from either the applicant or the customer prior to the application's cancellation. Id. Last, the EDCs requested authorization to withdraw duplicate applications if the efficient enrollment of RRES customers is hindered. Id. Upon receiving notification of an application's impending cancellation, applicants and customers would be given 15 business days to request project retention, provided that a duplicate application is subsequently withdrawn. Id. Upon reviewing the EDCs' project cancellation proposal, the Authority requested written comments and feedback from all stakeholders. Notice, July 18, 2023, pp. 3-4.

PosiGen supported the EDCs' project cancellation proposal because PosiGen believes the proposal's cancellation timeframes are reasonable, and because developers would still be given an opportunity to maintain applications that should not be canceled. PosiGen Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 9. Further, ConnSSA stated that the EDCs' proposal addressed developer concerns by alerting developers of impending project cancellations. ConnSSA Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 3. Additionally, Trinity Solar stated support for the EDCs' proposal and argued that the developer and customer should be notified concurrently regarding impending application cancellations, to provide developers a chance to respond accordingly. Trinity Solar Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p.

1. Finally, OCC argued that customers should not be penalized for stale applications that did not move forward through no fault of their own. OCC Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 10.

In line with stakeholder comments, the Authority determines that the EDCs' proposal to cancel stale or duplicative RRES applications is in line with the Program Objectives because the proposal will increase Program efficiency through the removal of projects that will not progress, while giving both applicants and customers a reasonable timeframe to request the maintenance of a project application. Importantly, the proposal was also developed by the EDCs through an open and transparent process including discussions with project developers at APWG meetings, thereby supporting the first Program Objective, the orderly development of the state's solar industry. The EDCs' application cancellation proposal is therefore accepted and shall be included directly in the updated Program Manual to be filed in compliance with this Decision. The Authority clarifies that the applicant, customer, and developer, if the applicant's contact information has not been provided to the EDCs, shall be notified simultaneously according to the timetable included in the EDCs' proposals, to give all parties a chance to respond prior to an application's cancellation. The Authority thanks all parties involved and looks forward to the efficient administration of the RRES application queue.

K. COST DATA REPORTING

During the First Technical Meeting in this proceeding, stakeholders raised the issue of installed cost data reporting, noting that it was self-reported and that there was not much EDC guidance for how applicants should report such data. Hr'g Tr., June 21, 2023, 34:22-35:8. Consequently, the Authority requested written comments from stakeholders on cost data reporting requirements, including guidance on data standardization across all applicants. Notice, July 18, 2023, p. 7.

Accordingly, CGB remarked that updated Program data provides "transparency to the market" by helping customers compare costs, and by providing data for state, research, and educational organizations for the analysis of market trends. CGB Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 9. CGB also provided a list of data points publicly collected for the Residential Solar Investment Program (RSIP), which are not currently released publicly for the RRES Program. *Id.* CGB cautioned, however, that the RSIP data list was only a starting point for a potential data collection expansion in the RRES Program. *Id.* Additionally, CGB asserted that clear definitions and explanations for each field used in the RRES application "may help make data more consistent." *Id.* Further, ConnSSA believes that "[a]ll parties would be helped by a document that clearly explains to installers how to enter [RRES project] information." ConnSSA Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 6. Moreover, OCC supported standardized data reporting because it would increase Program transparency and "establish consistent baselines" for data analysis. OCC Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 15. PosiGen supported the existing cost categories and argued that guidance could be provided to developers to ensure that cost data that should not be included, such as battery costs, are not reported by installers. PosiGen Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 12.

ConnectDER believes that data improvements could be made to help the Authority better understand interconnection and service upgrade cost impacts on residential solar projects, since interconnection costs could be split across several of the current RRES

cost categories included in the application. ConnectDER Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, pp. 1-2. ConnectDER ultimately recommended that the EDCs establish a single document outlining data reporting requirements, with specific guidance on interconnection and service upgrade costs, so that cost solutions could be developed more effectively. *Id.*, p. 2. Last, the EDCs welcomed suggestions on clear data reporting guidance to “to promote consistent collection of data.” EDC Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 8. The EDCs also believed that while current solar deployment outpaces the historical average, seemingly in contrast to reported solar costs, the quality of current installed cost data should not necessarily be questioned as such data matches what is reported on customer disclosure forms. *Id.*, p. 9.

The Authority determines that additional action is required to ensure that the project data collected is as standardized and accurate as possible. Moreover, the stakeholder comments make clear that additional EDC guidance would be helpful to Program participants by reducing customer confusion about what to include when answering data field questions in a project application. Different interpretations across Program participants reduce the reliability of the data collected, thereby negatively impacting any quantitative analysis of Program costs or data trends. Consequently, the Authority directs the EDCs to develop and submit for review and approval a draft project data guidance document that provides clear definitions for each data field required in an RRES application, including guidance on what not to include and specific examples for each data field. The EDCs shall consult with and allow members of the Application Process Working Group (APWG), established through the September 15, 2022 Procedural Order in Docket No. 22-08-02 and subsequently disbanded,³⁸ an opportunity to comment on the draft document prior to submission with the Authority. The guidance developed should not deviate substantially from developers’ current interpretation of the data fields, particularly where developers have a consensus understanding of a field’s definition, so that future data collected does not unnecessarily differ from the data collected in prior Program years. The EDCs shall file such document for review and approval with the Authority by February 1, 2024, and shall post such document on the Program webpage(s) alongside other installer resources once a final determination is reached by the Authority. Finally, by March 15, 2024, or 30 days after Authority approval of the project data guidance document, whichever occurs later, using the guiding document, the EDCs shall develop an “i”, or information, button for any data fields where significant developer confusion is present in the web-based RRES application. When a developer hovers over the “i” button, a brief definition of the data field shall appear. The EDCs’ compliance with this requirement shall include screenshots and descriptions of each “i” button.

Additionally, the Authority notes that the EDCs are currently required to file RRES Program information by August 1 annually, pursuant to Order No. 6 of the February 8, 2023 Decision. Decision, Feb. 8, 2023, p. 14. The Authority directs the EDCs to include in each annual filing a list of all existing fields collected in the RRES application, in addition

³⁸ Per the September 15, 2022 Procedural Order in Docket No. 22-08-02, the APWG members included ConnSSA and its members, Sunrun, Tesla, Inc., as well as DEEP and OCC at their discretion. The September 15, 2022 Procedural Order is available at: [https://www.dpuc.state.ct.us/dockcurr.nsf/8e6fc37a54110e3e852576190052b64d/52860e7d7cbbd895852588be0069270e/\\$FILE/22-08-02%20Procedural%20Order%20-%20Application%20Process%20Working%20Group.pdf](https://www.dpuc.state.ct.us/dockcurr.nsf/8e6fc37a54110e3e852576190052b64d/52860e7d7cbbd895852588be0069270e/$FILE/22-08-02%20Procedural%20Order%20-%20Application%20Process%20Working%20Group.pdf). The Authority understands that the APWG has not met since the report was filed on December 14, 2022, in Docket No. 22-08-02.

to any supplemental field data as indicated in CAE-1 and CAE-14 in the above-captioned proceeding and included in the EDCs' redacted filings. UI Interrog. Resp. CAE-14, Att. 4 Public; Eversource Compliance, Aug. 22, 2023, Att. 1. The annual filings shall also include fields with information on the application submission and approval date for each project. Lastly, the Authority directs the EDCs to include a copy of the Program data on the RRES Program websites. Notably, this data can be provided in any reasonable fashion (e.g., attached file, web link, embedded data), and may be relocated to the PURA data dashboard, as established pursuant to the Decision dated April 20, 2022 in Docket No. 21-07-01, Application of The Connecticut Light and Power Company and Yankee Gas Services Company, each Individually d/b/a Eversource Energy, The United Illuminating Company, Connecticut Natural Gas Corporation, and The Southern Connecticut Gas Company for Approval of Arrearage Forgiveness Program 2021-2022 (PURA Data Dashboard), when the dashboard is expanded to include Clean Energy Program data.

1. Roof Repairs

In the May 15, 2023 Notice of Request for Written Comments, the Authority sought information on the practice of bundling of solar costs with roof repairs, including information on whether any repair costs are included in the RRES Program \$/kW pricing information provided to the EDCs, so that the Authority can ensure that tax credits and ratepayer incentives are being used both properly and effectively. Notice, May 15, 2023, pp. 5-6. Additionally, the Authority noted "that under the Investment Tax Credit (ITC) only some solar roofing tiles and shingles may qualify, while strictly roofing or structural materials do not." Id., p. 6.

CGB subsequently filed written comments with the Authority stating that about 5% of Smart-E Loans involving solar PV installations involved non-solar costs, including roof repairs or tree removals, and that those non-solar costs amounted to approximately 18% of the total cost of the Smart-E loans for such projects. CGB Comments, June 1, 2023, p. 7. Further, ConnSSA stated that its members are aware that roof repair costs are ineligible for the ITC, but that costs for electric work necessary to complete projects are bundled with solar costs. ConnSSA Comments, June 1, 2023, p. 2. ConnSSA further argued that where project costs are being tracked, it should "clearly state [solar] costs do not include any other site prep or electrical upgrade work." Id. Additionally, OCC believed that ratepayer funding should not be used for roof repairs. OCC Comments, June 1, 2023, p. 3. Last, PosiGen stated that it does not bundle roof repair costs with its solar leases, and such costs are reported as separate invoices. PosiGen Comments, June 1, 2023, p. 15. Roof repairs are needed on between 10-20% of projects at a typical cost of between \$2,500 to \$7,000. Id. Notably, most of PosiGen's projects requiring roof repairs do not move forward due to the added cost. Id. The project cost data reported by PosiGen also only includes solar costs not inclusive of roof or electrical upgrades. Id., p. 16. PosiGen stated, however, that electrical upgrade costs should be reported with solar costs in instances where the electrical upgrade is required for the project to participate in the Program, including multi-gang meter socket upgrades required for Buy-All projects per the latest Eversource Information and Requirements Book. Id.

The Authority clarifies that roof and electrical repairs, under most circumstances, do not qualify for the ITC, and, likewise, should not be reported in the project cost data sent by developers to the EDCs. Consequently, the EDCs shall clarify in the RRES

Program documents to be filed in compliance with this Decision that RRES project cost data shall only include solar PV costs. However, for data tracking purposes, and to compare with historical data, the Authority directs the EDCs to add a location specifying costs for associated electrical upgrades in its Order No. 6 compliance, as those costs are sometimes bundled and may have been reported in historical project pricing. The Authority notes, however, that other funds, such as the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund or Solar for All, may be used to fund rooftop or electrical repairs.

L. RRES DATA PORTALS

In the Residential Tariff Decision, the Authority directed the EDCs to create a webpage containing relevant data related to the RRES Program, including aggregate avoided emissions, lease price, total installed cost, system size, and historical kilowatt-hour (kWh) dispatch. Residential Tariff Decision, p. 33. Further, the data was to be aggregated on a rolling six-month average and by town by January 1, 2023.³⁹ *Id.* After the EDCs created a webpage containing RRES Program data, the Authority requested written comments “on the accessibility, visibility, and content of the data on the webpages, including any recommendations for improvements.” Notice, May 15, 2023, p. 5.

Accordingly, ConnSSA stated that its members saw “no appreciable impact from the EDC webpages [because] the summary data appears to be intermingled with contractor information.” ConnSSA Comments, June 1, 2023, p. 2. ConnSSA therefore believed that customers would likely be unable to find or use RRES Program data unless the data were moved to a more prominent location. *Id.* Additionally, PosiGen believes that while Eversource’s webpage is generally accessible to the public, UI’s webpage was not as the target audience is installers rather than consumers. PosiGen Comments, June 1, 2023, pp. 13-14. PosiGen nevertheless recommended changes to both webpages. *Id.* For the Eversource webpage, PosiGen recommended: (1) an expansion of the supply, distribution, and retail rates section to show a six-month time period, so consumers could have a better understanding of rate fluctuations’ impact on their solar system; (2) a display of average system size alongside project cost data; and (3) an inclusion of RRES approval timelines including for individual project phases. *Id.* Moreover, for the UI webpage, PosiGen recommended the following: (1) a clearer customer website navigation path; (2) a separation of the RRES and Non-Residential Renewable Energy Solutions (NRES) webpages to prevent customer confusion; (3) the inclusion of a link to the “Historical Rates, System Costs, and Program Data” from the “Getting Started” webpage; (4) a display of the average system size alongside project cost data; and (5) the inclusion of RRES approval timelines including for individual project phases. *Id.*, pp. 14-15.

Further, the EDCs stated that they were working on a joint data portal for all Program reporting requirements pursuant to a final Decision in Docket No. 21-07-01. EDC Comments, June 1, 2023, pp. 14-15. Consequently, the EDCs jointly released a

³⁹ All data reporting requirements outlined in the Residential Tariff Decision must be fulfilled by the EDCs. The Authority notes that UI’s RRES Program website currently lacks aggregate RRES data by town, which was required last January. Consequently, if the EDCs’ RRES Program websites lack any data requirements outlined in the Residential Tariff Decision, the EDCs must publish such data when the EDCs file compliance with Order No. 29. As the RRES website requirements are already past due, the Authority may consider further actions including, but not limited to, civil penalties pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. § 16-41 if the website(s) remain deficient of any data requirements outlined in the Residential Tariff Decision. *See* Residential Tariff Decision, p. 33.

“Request for Proposal (‘RFP’) for the development of a centralized Data Reporting Platform ... to develop a user-friendly, web-based centralized data reporting platform, providing accurate reporting of the electric and gas companies’ Energy Affordability data” in addition to other clean energy programs such as RRES. Id., p. 15; Decision, April 20, 2022, Docket No. 21-07-01, p. 57. Additionally, the EDCs noted that at the RFP’s conclusion, they could develop a detailed timeline and plan for improvements to the PURA Data Dashboard to include RRES data. Id.

The Authority concludes that changes are warranted to the existing RRES data reporting on the EDCs’ websites to ensure user accessibility and data transparency. Therefore, the Authority directs the EDCs to incorporate, by April 1, 2024, the changes suggested by PosiGen into the RRES Program webpages. See PosiGen Comments, June 1, 2023, pp. 13-14. Additionally, to ensure that Program participants can easily access RRES programmatic information, the Authority directs the EDCs to break out the current RRES webpage(s) into three distinct pages displaying the following: (1) RRES customer educational materials and general programmatic information; (2) RRES required forms, fees, and installer materials; and (3) RRES programmatic data.⁴⁰ Each webpage shall also include links to the other webpages in a prominent and clearly identifiable section. The Authority finds that these changes to the RRES Program webpage(s) will further the first and fourth Program Objectives by fostering the sustained and orderly development of the state’s solar industry and by increasing Program accessibility for customers. Last, the EDCs shall provide a detailed implementation timeline for the incorporation of RRES data into “a centralized Data Reporting Platform” by January 1, 2024.

M. SYSTEM EXPANSION UNDER NETTING TARIFF

The Authority recently approved a modification to the Program Manual to allow RRES customers to expand existing solar projects under the Netting tariff. System expansions were previously only allowed using the Buy-All tariff. EDC Compliance to Order No. 13, Dec. 15, 2022, Docket No. 22-08-02, Att. 2, p. 2. However, on June 6, 2023, the Authority approved a revision to the Program Manual to allow customers with existing PV systems to enroll a second PV system in the RRES Netting tariff. Motion No. 16 Ruling 2, Docket No. 22-08-02. The change took effect immediately for Eversource customers. Id., p. 1. For UI customers, however, system upgrades, with an estimated timeline of seven months, will need to occur before the change can take effect. Id., p. 2. As a result, the Authority directed UI to file compliance in Docket No. 23-08-02 no later than two weeks after the completion of the UI system modification to allow existing solar PV customers to enroll a second PV system in the RRES Netting tariff, indicating the date(s) when the UI system modification was completed and when the change can take effect. Id. The compliance shall also include a clean and redlined final version of the RRES Program Manual incorporating such change. Id. The Authority looks forward to the successful completion of UI’s system upgrades, which will further the first, third, and fourth Program Objectives by expanding RRES tariff options for existing solar PV customers.

1. Non-Bypassable Charge for Netting System Expansions

⁴⁰ Including all the data requirements listed in the Residential Tariff Decision, in addition to the new data requirements ordered through this Decision. See Residential Tariff Decision, pp. 25-26, 33.

In the Residential Tariff Decision, the Authority directed the EDCs to jointly file proposals for non-bypassable charge designs for projects taking service under the Netting tariff in the RRES Program. Residential Tariff Decision, p. 47. Upon reviewing the EDCs' non-bypassable charge proposal, the Authority approved EDC system modifications to support the potential implementation of a non-bypassable charge in the RRES Program.⁴¹ Motion No. 24 Ruling, Feb. 24, 2022, Docket No. 21-08-02, pp. 1-3. Further, as discussed above, system expansions, where an existing solar customer decides to expand their original solar system, can immediately take service under the Netting tariff in Eversource territory, while such option will become available to UI customers after the completion of necessary system upgrades. Motion No. 16 Ruling 2, July 19, 2023, Docket No. 22-08-03, pp. 1-2. Additionally, the Authority requested a supplement to the EDCs' original non-bypassable charge proposal, including an identification of any changes to non-bypassable charge implementation costs or timelines, while taking into consideration the effects of allowing system expansions to take service under the Netting tariff. Motion No. 16 Ruling 1, June 9, 2023, Docket No. 22-08-02, p. 4. Consequently, the Authority requested written comments from stakeholders on whether the allowance of system expansions to take service under the Netting tariff requires modification if a non-bypassable charge is implemented in the RRES Program. Notice, July 18, 2023, p. 5.

In its supplemental compliance filing, UI stated that the estimated cost and timeline for allowing system expansions to take service under the Netting tariff remain valid, assuming no issues arise with the implementation of a non-bypassable charge. UI Compliance, Aug. 17, 2023, p. 2. Further, in written comments UI stated that if a non-bypassable charge were approved, add-on Netting systems could not be accepted by UI before the completion of IT billing and system upgrades, which could not begin until January 2024 based on UI's resource utilization for other regulatory projects. EDC Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 7. Moreover, UI was unaware of additional barriers caused by the approval of a non-bypassable charge. *Id.* Eversource stated that it could support non-bypassable charges for all add-on Netting systems except those enrolled in a time-of-use rate because those customers are billed through a separate system, which could not support a non-bypassable charge for multiple Netting systems behind one meter. *Id.* Nevertheless, Eversource did not believe that this was a "meaningful barrier to implementing a non-bypassable charge and continuing to allow Add-On netting systems," since only a small number of customers are enrolled in both time-of-use rates and the RRES Program. *Id.* Additionally, PosiGen argued that no modification to the non-bypassable charge structure approved in Docket No. 21-08-02 would be needed for add-on Netting systems. PosiGen Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 11. Similarly, ConnSSA did not see the need for any modifications to the allowance of add-on Netting systems, because a non-bypassable charge could be applied solely to the production of the new system. ConnSSA Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 5.

The Authority determines that no changes are warranted to the allowance of add-on Netting systems in the RRES Program at this time because non-bypassable charges could be supported by both EDCs for most add-on Netting systems. Nevertheless, the Authority reiterates its conclusion that non-bypassable charges are an important

⁴¹ The Authority clarifies that any EDC cost recovery associated with implementing a non-bypassable charge for the RRES Netting tariff remains subject to a full prudence review in the applicable Rate Adjustment Mechanism (RAM) proceeding. *See* Motion No. 24 Ruling, Feb. 24, 2022, Docket No. 21-08-02, p. 3.

mechanism designed to ensure that non-participating ratepayers are not facilitating a rate of return that is more than is necessary to sustain historical solar deployment, thereby supporting the third Program Objective, balancing Program costs and benefits. Residential Tariff Decision, p. 39. Therefore, should a significant number of add-on Netting systems that are unable to support the addition of a non-bypassable charge enroll in the Program, the Authority requests that the EDCs alert the Authority in the current RRES annual review proceeding (i.e., if in 2024, in Docket No. 24-08-02), so that the Authority can determine the appropriate steps, including potential EDC billing or IT modifications or additional programmatic changes.

N. OVERSIZING ALLOWANCE FOR SYSTEMS

In a May 15, 2023 Notice of Request for Written Comments, the Authority requested stakeholder feedback on the pros and cons of allowing residential solar customers to receive additional incentives for system oversizing, in return for sending “credits for a percentage of the energy generated to low-income residents at no cost to the recipient,” as is currently done in Massachusetts via the Solar Equity Program. Notice, May 15, 2023, p. 4.

In written comments, the EDCs supported exploration of creative solutions to increase RRES inclusivity. EDC Comments, June 1, 2023, p. 10. Nevertheless, the EDCs believe that the RRES Program has already achieved some success on low-income and underserved enrollment and noted that Conn. Gen. Stat. § 16-244z(b)(2) currently limits RRES system oversizing. *Id.* Further, the EDCs noted that the Massachusetts Solar Equity Program was launched by a private company and is helped by the unique programmatic design of the Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target (SMART) Program. *Id.*, pp. 10-11. The EDCs also do not “have in place the processes and resources to transfer bill credits among a range and volume of customers similar to Massachusetts,” which would require time and resources to implement in Connecticut. *Id.*, p. 12. Ultimately, the EDCs stated that the proposal would increase RRES Program costs without improving outcomes for Connecticut electric customers, because the RRES Program currently supports customer inclusivity. *Id.* Additionally, while OCC recognized that system oversizing could increase Program participation, OCC was concerned that the proposal would undermine Program inclusivity. OCC Comments, June 1, 2023, pp. 2-3.

CGB, conversely, supported allowing additional incentives for system oversizing in the RRES Program in return for sending credits at no cost to low-income residents. CGB Comments, June 1, 2023, p. 6. CGB noted that through the existing Buy-All tariff, Program participants can already direct compensation to another party, and CGB sees no reason that such party could not be another electric meter. *Id.* CGB also highlighted the importance of ensuring “that this arrangement does not qualify as additional income or taxes,” to avoid penalizing the low-income recipient. *Id.* Further, the city of New Haven supported the proposed change because residential solar customers could utilize additional space to satisfy other customers’ loads while improving their projects’ economies of scale. New Haven Comments, May 31, 2023, p. 3. New Haven also noted that the proposal would increase solar project equity, since wealthier customers would share benefits with low-income households. *Id.*

While the Authority remains committed to exploring innovative programmatic changes to increase low-income deployment in the RRES Program, to support the fifth Program Objective by increasing inclusivity overall, the Authority ultimately declines to implement a proposal to provide additional incentives for system oversizing in return for sending credits to low-income residents at no cost. Conn. Gen. Stat. § 16-244z(b)(2) does not allow RRES system oversizing, thereby currently preventing the proposal's implementation. Moreover, the Authority concludes that additional data would be needed before the proposal could be implemented, including implementation cost estimates from the EDCs and more specific information on the proposal's status and success in the SMART Program. The Authority highlights, however, that low-income enrollment in the RRES Program remains low, at only 4.3% of total deployment. EDC Comments, June 1, 2023, p. 5. Consequently, the Authority is concerned about low-income inclusivity and remains open to the consideration of similar proposals in the RRES Program in future Program years.

O. SOLAR PANEL RECYCLING

In a Notice of Request for Written Comments, the Authority sought stakeholder feedback “on any proposals or recommendations for solar panel recycling, including information on any programs in other jurisdictions.” Notice, July 18, 2023, p. 4. Accordingly, CGB noted that solar panels remain useful for 20 to 25 years. CGB Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 6. Additionally, with the passage of Public Act 21-115, CGB's mission was expanded to include “waste and recycling.” *Id.* CGB was consequently interested in resolving the issue of solar panel recycling. *Id.* CGB ultimately recommended that the Authority “work with DEEP and the EDCs to study the potential waste from solar panels and battery storage over time and bring forth recommendations at the next annual review of the RRES and ESS programs.” *Id.*, pp. 6-7. Moreover, ConnSSA noted that solar panels ready for recycling were “not at a quantity for investors to create recycling businesses.” ConnSSA Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 4. ConnSSA nevertheless believed that the formation of a multi-state recycling program would be worthwhile and pointed to the success of other solar panel recycling programs, including Solarcycle in California. *Id.*

Further, PosiGen provided information on solar panel recycling solutions proposed in other states. PosiGen Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 10. For example, to resolve the issue of solar panel recycling, other states have established task forces or working groups, extended producer responsibility, designed tax incentives for solar recycling facilities, and created solar decommissioning plans. *Id.* Any solar panel recycling policy, PosiGen argued, should consider both large- and small-scale solar installations, in addition to customer or third-party owned systems. *Id.* PosiGen concluded by providing several informational references on solar panel recycling efforts, including resources produced by the Solar Energy Industries Associations (SEIA). *Id.*, pp. 10-11. Last, the EDCs stated that they were unaware of any solar panel recycling programs in their service territories. EDC Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 5.

The Authority determines that a proactive approach is needed to resolve the issue of solar panel recycling and waste and consequently accepts a modified version of the proposal suggested by CGB in written comments. Accordingly, the Authority respectfully requests that CGB convene and lead a working group of relevant stakeholders, including DEEP and the EDCs, to develop recommendations to proactively address foreseeable

issues related to solar panel recycling and waste for residential solar projects in Connecticut. Additionally, the Authority anticipates that recycling will also become an important topic in the NRES, SCEF, and Energy Storage Solutions (ESS) Programs as well once commercial solar and batteries reach their end of life. Consequently, the Authority requests that CGB, in consultation with DEEP, the EDCs, and other stakeholders, develop recycling and waste recommendations for the NRES, SCEF, and ESS Programs as well. The Authority requests that the recommendations consider the environmental effects of solar panel and battery waste and the success or failure of approaches used in other jurisdictions. Further, all recommendations should include a description of the pros and cons of each approach, and an estimate of each approach's implementation timeline and cost. If suggested as an outcome of these collaborative efforts, the Authority would strongly consider creating a new fee, either applied at the time of project application or on an annual basis per developer, across the state's clean energy programs to cover the costs associated with solar panel and battery recycling. Last, the Authority requests that CGB provide an update on the stakeholder process, including any recommendations developed, by August 1, 2024. Ultimately, while solar panel recycling and waste is not yet a prevalent issue in Connecticut, the Authority concludes that the development of a solution is needed sooner rather than later, to ensure state preparedness for when the issue becomes more emergent, and in support of state environmental goals and the first Program Objective, the sustained and orderly development of the state's solar industry.

P. SOLAR PLUS STORAGE ADDER

The Authority sought stakeholder feedback on an increased incentive for solar plus storage projects, specifically for customers eligible for either the low-income or Distressed Municipality adder. Notice, July 18, 2023, p. 3. Further, the Authority requested comments on challenges related to solar plus storage project deployment, and whether an increased incentive should be provided solely by developers who meet a certain threshold of solar plus storage deployment among low-income or Distressed Municipality customers (e.g., if a developer deploys 40% of solar plus storage systems to underserved customers in a subsequent Program year). Id.

CGB stated support for the implementation of an adder to encourage the deployment of solar plus storage projects for underserved customers. CGB Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 5. CGB noted several barriers to retrofitting existing solar with storage, including "additional research and labor costs to determine if the existing system is compatible with new energy storage technologies, the potential need for redesigning, rewiring, replacing old equipment, and, the cost of labor for installing new equipment." Id. Further, CGB asserted that a solar retrofit adder should be administered through the Energy Storage Solutions (ESS) Program, because retrofits for systems installed before the launch of RRES would then qualify for the adder. Id. Moreover, ConnSSA argued that an adder for solar plus storage projects should be worked out in Docket No. 23-08-05, the annual ESS Program review proceeding. ConnSSA Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 3.

PosiGen similarly argued for a solar plus storage incentive to be investigated in Docket No. 23-08-05, where it can be considered in the context of existing ESS incentives. PosiGen Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 8. PosiGen also noted that the cost of energy storage has not declined since the launch of the ESS Program. Id., p. 9.

Additionally, in an interrogatory response, PosiGen provided quantitative analysis of the estimated RRES adder needed to equalize customer savings between solar only and solar plus storage systems, for both standard and low-income customers. *Id.*, p. 8. The analysis was based on a typical PosiGen solar lease and considered existing RRES and ESS Program incentives. Interrog. Resp. CAE-21, p. 1. PosiGen cautioned however that its analysis used many complex variables and assumptions, including cost data likely to fluctuate in the future, as well as company-specific data. *Id.* PosiGen also assumed battery use over a 10-year time frame rather than the full 20-year RRES tariff length given uncertain battery replacement costs and the potential discontinuation of ESS incentives.⁴² *Id.*, p. 2. Ultimately, PosiGen's analysis recommended a 20-year solar only lease rate of \$0.2132/kWh, a 20-year solar plus storage adder of \$0.0452/kWh for standard customers, and a 20-year solar plus storage adder of \$0.0297/kWh for low-income customers. *Id.*

OCC stated support for increased adders for solar plus storage projects for low-income or Distressed Municipality customers. OCC Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, pp. 9-10. Nevertheless, because many underserved customers live in rental properties, OCC noted concern that landlords would collect the solar plus storage adder and not share it with their tenants. *Id.* OCC believes a solar plus storage adder would also likely require coordination between the RRES and ESS Programs, "to ensure alignment between program benefits and application and eligibility criteria." *Id.*, p. 10. Finally, while the EDCs noted support for promoting solar plus storage projects to underserved customers, the EDCs recommended that the Authority "carefully consider the effectiveness of [RRES and ESS] incentives in achieving target outcomes" of underserved deployment, instead of assuming "that further incentives would be effective or efficient." EDC Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 5.

The Authority will not implement a solar plus storage adder in the RRES Program at this time. More specifically, the Authority concludes that a solar plus storage adder in the ESS Program would better balance non-participant cost and benefits, because, in contrast to the RRES Program, battery dispatch events in the ESS Program bring value to all ratepayers via peak shaving and ancillary services. Decision, Dec. 21, 2022, Docket No. 22-08-05, Annual Energy Storage Solutions Program Review - Year 2, p. 3. Consequently, the Authority may consider implementing a solar plus storage adder in Docket No. 23-08-05, Annual Energy Storage Solutions Program Review - Year 3, or another future annual review of the ESS Program. The Authority, nonetheless, determines that better coordination could exist between the RRES and ESS Programs. As a result, the Authority directs the EDCs to work with the ESS Program Administrators to promote or market the ESS Program through the RRES Program. As compliance, the EDCs shall file, by March 1, 2024, a plan for better coordination between the RRES and ESS Programs, so that RRES customers and developers are aware of the incentives and requirements of the ESS Program. Last, the Authority directs the EDCs to include, by January 1, 2024, a link to the ESS Program website, along with a brief description of the ESS Program, on the RRES Program webpage(s), to provide RRES stakeholders with easy access to information pertaining to the ESS Program.

⁴² Additional assumptions used by PosiGen include: (1) an 8 kW-DC solar system producing 9,288 kWh in year 1; (2) a 7.6 kW/18 kWh storage system size; (3) full ESS participation; (4) an Eversource customer with applicable RRES adders; (5) no customer savings from energy efficiency, only from solar; (6) a \$20,000 total battery cost; (7) a target of 20% savings or greater over the lease's term; and (8) a 20-year solar lease. Interrog. Resp. CAE-21, pp. 1-2.

Q. OMBUDSPERSON

In the Year 2 review of the Non-Residential Renewable Energy Solutions (NRES) Program, and in the Year 4 review of the Shared Clean Energy Facilities (SCEF) Program, stakeholders supported the implementation of an independent ombudsperson to resolve disputes between developers and the EDCs that do not require an Authority ruling. Decision, Nov. 9, 2022, Docket No. 22-08-03, Annual Non-Residential Renewable Energy Solutions Program Review – Year 2, pp. 31-32; Decision, Dec. 7, 2022, Docket No. 22-08-04, Annual Shared Clean Energy Facility Program Review – Year 4, pp. 19-20.

While the idea of a clean energy program ombudsperson has primarily been considered from the perspective of the NRES and SCEF programs to date, the Authority is concerned that developer disputes with the EDCs could become more common in the RRES Program if project applications and deployment levels remain at historic levels. EDC Corresp., June 16, 2023, pp. 13-14. Consequently, the Authority concludes that the use of an independent ombudsperson could be beneficial for the RRES Program in furtherance of the first Program Objective, the sustained and orderly development of the state's solar industry, and by furthering the fourth Program Objective, accessibility for customers through customer protections. However, as the number and type of issues that have risen to date have not been significant, the Authority only finds such ombudsperson appropriate if also determined to be necessary for the NRES and SCEF Programs so that costs can be shared across those programs in furtherance of the third Program Objective to balance participant costs. Therefore, if approved in one of the annual program review Decisions for the NRES or SCEF Programs, the Authority will issue a competitive request for proposal (RFP) to hire an independent ombudsperson to serve as a dedicated Program resource to resolve Program disputes that do not require a ruling from the Authority. In such case, the cost of the ombudsperson shall be partly recovered through RRES application fees. Since the ombudsperson would be used as a Program resource for other statewide clean energy programs besides RRES, only 25% of the cost of the ombudsperson shall be recovered by the EDCs through RRES application fees. Last, if an ombudsperson is deemed necessary for the NRES and SCEF Programs, the Authority will file a cost estimate for the ombudsperson in the present docket when the RFP process has concluded, which shall inform the EDCs' recommendation for RRES application fees for Year 4 of the Program.

R. TRANSFORMER COST SOCIALIZATION

The Authority recognizes that interconnection costs, including transformer upgrades, pose a barrier to the deployment of RRES projects, particularly for low-income residents who may be unable to afford unexpected distribution system upgrades. The Authority plans to issue a decision addressing interconnection costs for residential systems in Docket No. 22-06-29, PURA Investigation into Distributed Energy Resource Interconnection Cost Allocation, by the end of calendar year 2023.

S. PROPOSED PROGRAMMATIC CHANGES**1. Wiring Diagrams**

In the Year 2 annual review proceeding, Tesla noted that the current EDC-approved Buy-All wiring configurations limit solar systems' ability to provide back-up

power to a home during a grid outage. Year 2 Decision, p. 17. Consequently, Order No. 18 of the Year 2 Decision, which was later updated to Order No. 16 in the APWG Decision (APWG Order No. 16), directed the EDCs to jointly develop with solar industry stakeholders several wiring configurations with the ability to provide home backup power during grid outages, including an estimated timeline and cost of implementation for each diagram. Year 2 Decision, p. 36. In the EDCs' compliance with APWG Order No. 16, several diagrams were submitted. EDC Order No. 16 Compliance, June 30, 2023, Atts. 1 and 2. Eversource stated that the diagrams could be implemented "without added time or cost," while UI stated that the diagrams would "have minimal impact on UI's billing systems and therefore may be implemented with relatively low cost to UI." EDC Order No. 16 Compliance, June 30, 2023, p. 2. Accordingly, the Authority requested written comments on the EDCs' compliance, including any support or opposition to implementing the proposed diagrams. Notice, July 18, 2023, p. 6.

In response, CGB stated that it had "not heard of any potential issues" with the diagrams. CGB Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, pp. 8-9. CGB also believes the diagrams would provide greater customer access to solar and storage configurations. *Id.*, p. 8. Further, PosiGen supported the additional configurations because they would provide customers with new options. PosiGen Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 12. Last, ConnSSA argued that it should be possible "to have the normal output circuit feed the grid via a [front-of-the-meter] connection and have the backup loads in the home be fed during an outage." ConnSSA Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 5.

Additionally, on August 1, 2023, the EDCs filed metering wiring diagrams for Authority review and approval in Motion No. 10, in accordance with Order No. 7 of the Year 2 Decision. Order No. 7 directed the EDCs to review and update their meter wiring diagrams and guidelines no less than annually by August 1. Year 2 Decision, p. 32. Eversource proposed that its "meter wiring diagrams for configurations of the Netting and Buy-All Tariffs for Year 3 remain the same as presented in Year 2." Motion No. 10, p. 1. UI proposed a set of Netting and Buy-All metering diagrams that were "intended to simplify and consolidate various metering configurations into a single diagram for each Tariff". *Id.*, p. 2. Notably, the EDCs' proposed wiring diagrams included the additional Buy-All and Netting tariff configurations filed in compliance with Order Nos. 16 and 25 of the APWG Decision, as discussed at the beginning of this section. Motion No. 10, Att. 1. Further, the EDCs filed a redlined version of the RRES Metering Guidelines reflecting the proposed changes. Motion No. 10, Att. 3. The Authority grants Motion No. 10, pursuant to any Program updates as directed by the Authority in this Decision.

In written comments, several stakeholders proposed additional updates to the metering guidelines and requirements of the RRES Program. Tesla recommended the Authority direct the EDCs to explicitly allow meter socket adapters (MSAs, also called meter collar adapters), which are currently disallowed under the RRES Metering Guidelines. Tesla Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, p. 2. Tesla asserted that customer-owned MSAs, which are a category of device installed between a residential utility meter and the meter socket, "allow for residential solar and battery storage systems to be installed roughly 10-times faster, with significantly less rewiring, and can help avoid the need for electrical panel upgrades." *Id.* Tesla further suggested that the EDCs employ certain approval and assessment criteria, such as allowing only MSAs that are approved or listed by a National Recognized Testing Laboratory, as has been done in other utility jurisdictions. *Id.* In written comments, ConnectDER also encouraged updating the RRES

guidelines to enable the use of MSAs, citing faster installation and avoided upgrade costs. ConnectDER Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, pp. 3-5. Like Tesla, ConnectDER suggested that the Authority and the EDCs take similar steps to approve certain MSAs as have been pursued by other states and utilities. Id.

Conversely, Eversource stated that the company had identified several issues with MSAs based on physical evaluations of the devices “that would have adverse impact on Company policies, processes, and safety measures.” Eversource Corresp., Sep. 7, 2023. Specifically, Eversource noted that such devices are not compatible with the voltage measurement and recording equipment the Company uses to diagnose power quality issues. Id. In addition, Eversource stated that MSAs block access to the bypass switch on all self-contained meter sockets, such that meter replacements or maintenance require a customer outage. Id. Further, Eversource noted that the other utilities identified by Tesla that have approved MSAs do not require lever bypass sockets with clamping jaws for 200A services, which differs from Eversource’s existing standards. Id.

Further, in written comments, ConnSSA suggested several additional metering requirement changes. The recommended changes included modifying or eliminating the requirement for meter grouping, allowing customers to have more than one Netting meter at the project site, and allowing Netting REC meters to be installed inside if the customer’s existing utility meter is inside. ConnSSA Comments, Aug. 15, 2023, pp. 6-7. ConnSSA argued that the cost of these requirements is preventing the deployment of projects that would otherwise be viable. Id.

First, the Authority approves the wiring diagrams submitted by the EDCs in compliance with Order Nos. 16 and 25 of the APWG Decision. The Authority directs the EDCs to implement the new diagrams for immediate use in the RRES Program. The Authority foresees no issues with the diagrams’ implementation and concludes that the diagrams will further the RRES Program Objectives, particularly the first, third, and fourth Program Objectives, by providing RRES participants with new wiring options at a minimal cost to non-participating ratepayers. The Authority thanks all parties involved for their work on this matter and looks forward to the allowance of backup power under the Buy-All tariff. If the approved diagrams are not sufficient to deploy solar systems that can provide backup power to a home during a grid outage, or if stakeholders believe that other options exist that may further advance the Program Objectives, the Authority invites data and information pertaining to cost, safety, equipment availability, and any improvements offered by such alternative configurations or solutions to be submitted in the next annual review proceeding (i.e., Docket No. 24-08-02).

Second, the Authority recognizes the concerns raised by Eversource regarding the potential adoption of MSAs and will therefore not allow MSAs for use in the RRES Program at this time. However, the Authority is generally inclined to allow MSAs for residential solar installations as they provide potential benefits that would advance the Program Objectives by lowering solar installation costs. Additionally, the potential to defer costly wiring upgrades by utilizing MSAs could be a particular benefit for low-income customers, thereby increasing low-income Program enrollment. Accordingly, the Authority directs the EDCs to file by April 10, 2024, a summary of all MSA safety concerns, along with solutions for each safety concern, and estimated costs and timelines for implementing each solution. In developing the compliance, the EDCs shall work directly with ConnectDER and Tesla to understand how other jurisdictions have addressed MSA

safety concerns, and to determine if steps taken by other jurisdictions to allow MSAs can be replicated in Connecticut. Further, the compliance shall also be filed in Docket No. 23-08-05, as similar concerns have been raised by Tesla in that proceeding. See, Tesla Comments, Aug. 30, 2023, Docket No. 23-08-05, pp. 5-9. Finally, the EDCs shall present their findings to the Interconnection Working Group and allow for written feedback from that working group before submitting its MSA safety concerns and solutions filing on April 10, 2024.

Third, the Authority does not approve the metering modifications suggested by ConnSSA for Program Year 3, as broad stakeholder input has not been provided on these topics in the annual review process. Consequently, the Authority declines to make a decision on these topics at this time, as PURA lacks pertinent information on the impact of such requirements, as well as the safety and feasibility of alternative metering configurations. Additionally, solar deployment under the RRES Program has significantly exceeded the historical average to date, thereby suggesting that the existing metering requirements do not pose a significant barrier to entry for Program participants. EDC Corresp., June 16, 2023, pp. 11-15. However, ConnSSA may work with the Interconnection Working Group to propose solutions to the metering problems described. Additionally, if compelling and detailed quantitative or qualitative information is provided to the Authority, the Authority may consider ConnSSA's suggested changes to the RRES metering requirements in a future annual review proceeding.

2. Production Meter Ownership and Non-Bypass Meter Sockets

In the APWG Decision, the Authority stated its intent to “re-implement the utility-owned meter socket requirement starting on January 1, 2024, absent overwhelming evidence that the requirement should not be reinstated.” APWG Decision, p. 8. In briefs, the EDCs concurred with the Authority decision and requested that the Authority affirm the re-implementation of utility-owned production requirements beginning January 1, 2024. Eversource Brief, p. 8.

The Authority notes that no evidence has been received indicating that utility-owned production meters should not be required, and, thus, affirms its prior guidance to reimplement the requirement for utility-owned production meters beginning on January 1, 2024, for all new RRES applications.

Additionally, the Authority maintains the allowance of non-bypass meter sockets in the RRES Program through 2024. The Authority is concerned that continued meter shortages and supply chain challenges could hinder Program participation if non-bypass meter sockets were disallowed at this time without sufficient notice to installers. However, the Authority intends to reconsider the allowance of non-bypass meter sockets in the next annual Program review. Ultimately, unless stakeholders provide compelling and data-driven evidence for why the allowance of non-bypass meter sockets remains necessary in the next annual review proceeding, the Authority will not allow their use in the Program beyond the end of 2024.

3. Program Manual

On August 1, 2023, the EDCs jointly filed redline edits to the RRES Program Manual in Motion No. 11, in compliance with Order No. 1 of the Year 2 Decision, which directed the EDCs to annually file “(1) Program Manual and guidelines and (2) other resources for residential utility customers and/or renewable energy contractors to explain the technical, administrative, and procedural requirements of the Residential Tariff program, including all cash out provisions.” Year 2 Decision, pp. 32-33.

The Authority grants with modification Motion No. 11, pursuant to the redline updates as directed by the Authority in this Decision. Further, the Authority directs the EDCs to file updated RRES Program documents, including the Program Manual (both a redlined and a clean version), incorporating the approved modifications authorized herein as compliance in this proceeding by December 15, 2023.

V. CONCLUSION AND ORDERS

A. CONCLUSION

In this Decision, the Authority explores and approves several changes to the RRES Program to better serve the Program Objectives. The Decision also approves the RRES Program Tariff rates for project applications received in calendar year 2023.

Further, the Decision includes the Authority’s rulings to Motion Nos. 8, 9, 10, and 11 in the instant proceeding.

T. EXISTING AND NEW ORDERS

For the following Orders, the Company shall file an electronic version through the Authority's website at www.ct.gov/pura. Submissions filed in compliance with the Authority's Orders must be identified by all three of the following: Docket Number, Title and Order Number. Compliance with orders shall commence and continue as indicated in each specific Order or until the Company requests and the Authority approves that the Company's compliance is no longer required after a certain date. All Orders requiring Authority review and approval shall be submitted as a motion.

The below standing orders are a summation of prior orders related to the RRES Program that continue to apply. In some instances, the Authority has amended those standing orders with redline edits. The below new orders apply on a going forward basis.

1. Standing Orders to be filed in RRES Annual Review Dockets

1. Reference Interim Decision, Feb. 10, 2021, Docket No. 20-07-01, Order No. 4, p. 44: No later than [August 1], 2021, the EDCs shall develop and file for the Authority's review, modification, and approval a set of (1) Program Manual and guidelines and (2) other resources for residential utility customers and/or renewable energy contractors to explain the technical, administrative, and procedural requirements of the Residential Tariff program, including all cash out provisions. Such Program Manual, guidelines, and other resources shall strictly adhere to this Interim Decision, incorporating any direction provided herein. Any proposed rules and guidelines shall include a list of program eligibility requirements. The EDCs shall update all Program Manual, guidelines, and other resources by August 1 annually to reflect the most recent program information and Authority orders and/or rulings and file the aforementioned updated documents in the appropriate annual review docket (e.g., changes to be enacted in 2024 should be filed in Docket No. 23-08-02).
2. Reference Interim Decision, Feb. 10, 2021, Docket No. 20-07-01, Order No. 5, pp. 44-45: No later than [August 1], 2021, and annually thereafter, each EDC shall file, in the annual Residential Tariff program review and rate setting proceeding for the Authority's review, modification, and approval a proposal for a Residential Tariff program application fee to cover the estimated administrative costs associated with processing applications. The EDCs shall provide detailed calculations and written descriptions to explain and to justify the proposed application fee. In the same filing, the EDCs shall file for the Authority's review, modification, and approval a proposed nominal administrative fee pursuant to Section III.A. for any change orders or re-designation changes subsequent to the initial project interconnection, so long as a robust rationale for the proposed fee and fee level is provided. The 2021 submission shall provide a copy of the language to be included in the customer disclosure form informing program participants of the fee.
3. Reference Interim Decision, Feb. 10, 2021, Docket No. 20-07-01, Order No. 15, p. 46: No later than November 1, 2021, the EDCs shall file with the Authority link to their respective Residential Tariff program webpages. Such webpages shall include all relevant information regarding the "buy-all" and netting Residential Tariffs for interested residential customers and renewable energy contractors.

Such website shall be made public no later than January 1, 2022 and shall be updated as frequently as is practicable, unless otherwise directed herein, to reflect the most recent program information and Authority orders and/or rulings.

4. Reference Interim Decision, Feb. 10, 2021, Docket No. 20-07-01, Order No. 19, p. 47: No later than January 1, 2023, each EDC shall have in place a customer education and information webpage that shall, at a minimum, include the average installed cost (\$/W) and PPA or lease price (\$/kWh) for all Residential Tariff applications accepted by the EDC over the preceding 6-month period, as well as current and historical retail rates for the customer to compare their pricing and savings in real-time. Such website shall be updated at least monthly and customers shall be required to electronically acknowledge that they have reviewed the material on the customer education and information webpage as part of Residential Tariff application process. On or before January 1, 2022, each EDC shall submit a cost estimate for the development of such a webpage. On or before August 1, 2022, each EDC shall file with the Authority a working draft of such webpage.
5. Reference Interim Decision, Feb. 10, 2021, Docket No. 20-07-01, Order No. 21, p. 47: No later than June 1, 2022, each EDC shall publicly disclose the costs of setting up and maintaining the REC metering equipment, as well as the customer acquisition costs, on their respective Residential Tariff websites. Each EDC shall update the required information at least annually. No later than June 1, 2022, and annually thereafter, each EDC shall submit in the above-captioned proceeding and in the appropriate annual review docket (e.g., changes to be enacted in 2024 should be filed in Docket No. 23-08-02) the required REC metering cost information.
6. Reference Interim Decision, Feb. 10, 2021, Docket No. 20-07-01, Order No. 22, p. 47: No later than August 1, 2022, and annually thereafter, the EDCs shall jointly file, in the annual Residential Tariff program review and rate setting proceeding the Excel workbooks outlined in Section III.[C].6.a. The EDCs shall each use the same Excel workbook, including the same format and the exact same data fields, as each other. The EDCs shall follow all other direction provided in Section III.[C].6.a. [The Authority further directs the EDCs to include the following in each annual filing: (1) any supplemental field data as indicated in CAE-1 and CAE-14 in Docket No. 23-08-02 and included in the EDCs' redacted filings; (2) a list of all existing data fields collected in the RRES application; (3) information on the application submission and approval date for each RRES project; (4) both solar PV costs, and other costs (e.g., costs of associated electrical upgrades); (5) the number and percentage of LIDR customers enrolled in the RRES Program, broken out by both LIDR tier and RRES tariff; (6) the number of add-on Netting systems enrolled in the Program which are unable to support the addition of a non-bypassable charge; (7) by each developer, the number and percentage of systems by type of housing (e.g., single family, 2-4 unit multifamily, or multifamily affordable housing); and (8) by each developer, the number and percentage of total approved RRES applications which are eligible for the low-income or Distressed Municipality adder(s). See, UI Interrog. Resp. CAE-14, Att. 4 Public; Eversource Compliance, Aug. 22, 2023, Att. 1. Last, the Authority also directs the EDCs to include a summary of the Program data on the RRES Program websites. Notably, this data

can be provided in any reasonable fashion (e.g., attached file, web link, embedded data), and may be relocated to the PURA Data Dashboard when the dashboard is expanded to include Clean Energy Program data.]

7. Reference Interim Decision, Oct. 6, 2021, Docket No. 21-08-02, Order No. 8, p. 28: No later than January 1, 2022, the EDCs shall submit revised compliance with Order No. 14 of the Residential Tariff Decision for Authority review and approval. The EDCs shall review and update their meter wiring diagrams and guidelines as appropriate, but no less frequently than August 1 annually, and submit the revised documents in the appropriate Annual Review docket.
8. Reference Decision, June 8, 2022, Docket No. 21-08-02, Order No. 4, p. 16: No later than August 1, 2022, and [quarterly] thereafter, PURA requests that the Agencies file as compliance in the appropriate RRES annual review docket (i.e., in Docket No. 22-08-02 on August 1, 2022, etc.) a list of housing facilities eligible under Tier I of the affordable housing definition approved in Section II.A of this Decision. [The EDCs shall post the most recent compliance with this order, along with contact information for each of the Agencies, on the RRES Program website by January 1, 2024, and quarterly thereafter.]
9. Reference Decision, June 8, 2022, Docket No. 21-08-02, Order No. 5, p. 16: No later than August 1, 2022, and annually thereafter, the EDCs shall file as compliance in the appropriate RRES annual review docket (i.e., in Docket No. 22-08-02 on August 1, 2022, etc.) a list of housing facilities eligible under Tier II of the affordable housing definition approved in Section II.A of this Decision.
10. Reference Decision, June 8, 2022, Docket No. 21-08-02, Order No. 6, p. 16: No later than August 1, 2022, and annually thereafter, PURA requests that the Agencies file as compliance in the appropriate RRES annual review docket (i.e., in Docket No. 22-08-02 on August 1, 2022, etc.) the DEEP and DOH contact information for a housing facility seeking to be defined as “affordable housing” that does not meet the Tier I or Tier II thresholds of the affordable housing definition approved in Section II.A of this Decision. [The EDCs shall post the most recent compliance with this order on the RRES Program website by January 1, 2024, and annually thereafter.]
11. Reference Decision, June 8, 2022, Docket No. 21-08-02, Order No. 9, p. 17: No later than August 1, 2023, and annually thereafter, the EDCs shall file as compliance documentation of the distribution of the incentive adders to validate that the required percentage of the benefit was received by the tenants in multifamily affordable houses in the previous year (e.g., calendar year 2022 for the August 1, 2023 filing), for both the cases of on-bill credits for individually metered units and annual checks or other approved distribution methodology for those multifamily homes where units are not individually metered.
12. Reference Year 2 Decision, Order No. 12, p. 35: On a [quarterly basis beginning on January 1, 2024] through [the duration of the RRES Program], the EDCs shall provide updates to Docket No. 21-08-02 Response to Interrogatory CAE-8. Specifically, the Authority adapts the ruling in Docket No. 21-08-02 to Motion No. 26 dated March 22, 2022, which directed the EDCs to submit as a compliance filing

an update to Interrogatory CAE-8 ~~on or before the 15th of every month through January 1, 2023 (i.e., the final filing would have been made on December 15, 2022), to instead direct the compliance filings to continue monthly through January 1, 2024.~~ Such filings shall be made in [the annual review proceeding (i.e., in 2024, Docket No. 24-08-02)] and should also include tariff type and incentive adder status information. [Last, beginning by July 1, 2024, the quarterly filings shall include: (1) the total number of low-income customers and customers located in Distressed Municipalities, and associated project capacity, which do not receive either adder, in addition to the existing breakouts for customers enrolled in the low-income and Distressed Municipality adders; (2) the number and associated project capacity of customers who reside in environmental justice census block groups, broken out by customers that qualify for the low-income and Distressed Municipality adders and those that do not; and (3) the number and associated project capacity of RRES customers who qualify for the Federal Justice 40 disadvantaged communities definition.]

13. Reference Year 2 Decision, Order No. 15, p. 35: No later than January 1, 2023, the EDCs shall update any clean energy and hardship program webpages where dual enrollment in any clean energy programs is adversely impacted or otherwise prohibited. Specifically, Eversource shall update at least their RRES Program and New Start webpages with a disclaimer alerting customers that, until such time as a proposal to enable concurrent participation in the RRES Program and the New Start Program is submitted by Eversource and approved by the Authority, existing New Start Program participants are unable to continue to participate in New Start once enrolled in the RRES Program. Moreover, moving forward, the Authority requires Eversource and UI to provide such disclaimer(s) on the appropriate clean energy program website for any instances where hardship program enrollment is jeopardized or negatively impacted by enrollment in solar programs, or vice versa. Each disclaimer should include an explanation of why dual enrollment is adversely impacted or prohibited. Further, the EDCs shall file a copy of the disclaimer(s) as compliance and provide links to the online locations where the disclaimer(s) is/are located.
14. Reference Year 2 Decision, Order No. 17, p. 36: No later than May 1, 2023, and quarterly thereafter for the remainder of the RRES Program, the EDCs shall submit information for the prior quarter (e.g., January 1, 2023 through March 31, 2023 for the May 1, 2023 filing) on the following items related to RRES Program applications: (1) the length of time from application to submission to tariff review approval; (2) the length of time from tariff review approval to interconnection contingent approval; (3) the length of time to receive the work order number needed to apply for permits from cities and towns; (4) the length of time to process payments when applicable; (5) the length of time for any applicable witness tests; (6) the number of days between when the utility is notified of a completed inspection to meter installation; and, (6) the length of time for final issuance of the permission to operate. The RRES APWG may recommend additions to this list in their final report filed on December 14, 2022. Such filings shall be submitted in the relevant RRES Program review docket (e.g., any updates related to Year 2 of the RRES Program shall be disclosed in this proceeding, Docket No. 22-08-02).

15. Reference Year 2 Decision, Order No. 22, p. 37: Through the end of the RRES Program, the EDCs shall follow the guidance provided in Section IV.N of this Decision when making administrative changes to the RRES Program without prior PURA approval. Such changes shall be clearly documented, explained, and justified in a compliance filing submitted at least ten (10) business days prior to such changes taking effect in the relevant RRES Program review docket (e.g., any changes related to Year 2 of the RRES Program shall be disclosed in this proceeding, Docket No. 22-08-02). Justification must include a clear articulation of how each Program Objective may or may not be impacted and how the requested change would serve to further the Program Objectives overall.
16. Reference Decision, Feb. 8, 2023, Docket No. 22-08-02, Order No. 26, p. 17: As required, the Authority directs the EDCs to identify any required NEPOOL waivers to allow the program to continue without the utility-owned meter socket requirement through June 2024, and to request the requisite authorization from PURA.
17. Reference Motion No. 16 Ruling 2, Docket No. 22-08-02, p. 2: [UI shall] file compliance in Docket No. 23-08-02, no later than two weeks after the completion of the UI system modification, indicating the date(s) when the UI system modification project was completed and customers with existing PV systems can enroll under the Netting tariff in UI's territory. Further, the compliance shall include a clean and redlined final version of the RRES Program Manual incorporating such change.

2. New Orders

18. No later than December 15, 2023, the EDCs shall file as compliance updated RRES Program documents, including the Program Manual and RRES Metering Diagrams, incorporating all the approved modifications authorized in this Decision. Such filing shall include both a clean and a redlined version of all RRES Program documents.
19. Reference Decision, Feb. 22, 2023, Docket No. 22-08-01, pp. 4-5: No later than January 1, 2024, and annually thereafter, the EDCs shall file an updated Frequently Asked Question document and Fact Sheet for the RRES Program that reflects the Program modifications as directed in the most recent final Decision issued through the RRES Program Annual Review proceeding, Docket No. XX-08-02.
20. No later than January 1, 2024, the EDCs shall include a link to the ESS Program website, along with a brief description of the ESS Program, on the RRES Program website(s). The EDCs shall file compliance with the Authority when this order is fulfilled.
21. No later than January 1, 2024, the EDCs shall include a link to Connecticut's environmental justice mapping tool on the RRES Program webpage(s), along with

- a brief summary of the tool and how installers can use it.⁴³ Additionally, no later than January 1, 2024, the EDCs shall include the map and table in Section IV.E., and additional, similar resources identifying areas where RRES projects may be eligible for both state and federal incentives, on the RRES Program webpage(s), along with a brief description of federal incentive eligibility. The EDCs shall file compliance with the Authority when this order is fulfilled.
22. No later than January 1, 2024, the EDCs shall amend the RRES customer disclosure form to include the following information: (1) definitions of each RRES adder; (2) adder amounts; (3) a list of programs whose participation would qualify a customer for the low-income adder (e.g., Home Energy Solutions – Income Eligible [HES-IE]); (4) a link to the Distressed Municipality webpage of the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD); and (5) a link to a webpage with the latest guidance on state median income percentiles, broken out by family size. Further, the above information shall be displayed in a prominent location in the customer disclosure form to ensure customers are aware of the RRES adders. Additionally, the Authority directs the EDCs to include such information on the RRES Program website when the customer disclosure form is amended. As compliance, the EDCs shall file both a clean and redlined version of the RRES customer disclosure form, and links to the Program webpage(s) which were updated to fulfill this order.
 23. No later than January 1, 2024, the EDCs shall submit as compliance a detailed implementation timeline for the incorporation of RRES data into a centralized data reporting platform. See, EDC Comments, June 1, 2023, p. 15.
 24. No later than February 1, 2024, and annually thereafter, the EDCs shall hold at least one webinar with solar developers to inform them of the underserved adder eligibility criteria, in addition to other Program requirements and information. Further, during the webinar to be held by February 1, 2024, the EDCs shall update Program installers on the implementation of LIDR and provide information and examples of how installers can identify LIDR-enrolled customers, to ensure that LIDR customers are receiving bill savings from participation in the RRES Program. At least 30 days' notice shall be provided to Program stakeholders prior to the date of the webinar on the Program website. As compliance, the EDCs shall file the date, time, and location of the webinar with the Authority in the applicable annual review proceeding at least 21 days prior to the webinar.
 25. No later than February 1, 2024, the EDCs shall file a draft document for the Authority's review and approval that provides clear definitions for each data field required in a RRES application, including guidance on what not to include and providing specific examples for each one. The draft guidance shall be developed by the EDCs in coordination with Application Process Working Group members. The guidance developed should not deviate substantially from developers' current interpretation of the data fields, where developers have a consensus understanding of a field's definition, so that future data collected does not

⁴³ Connecticut's environmental justice mapping tool may be found here: <https://connecticut.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=85bf095c8fc043edaa15ca5f78299fe3>.

unnecessarily differ from the data collected in prior Program years. The EDCs shall post such document on the Program webpage(s) alongside other installer resources once a final determination is reached by the Authority.

26. No later than March 1, 2024, the EDCs shall file as compliance a plan for better coordination between the RRES and ESS Programs, so that RRES customers and developers are aware of the incentives and requirements of the ESS Program. The EDCs shall coordinate with the ESS Program Administrators when developing such plan.
27. No later than March 15, 2024, or 30 days after the Authority's approval of the project data guidance document developed in Order No. 25, whichever occurs later, the EDCs shall use the data guidance document to develop an "i" or information button for any required data fields where significant developer confusion is present in the web-based RRES application. When a developer hovers over the "i" button, a brief definition of the data field shall appear. The EDCs' compliance with this requirement shall include application screenshots and the text descriptions of each "i" button.
28. No later than March 15, 2024, the EDCs shall develop and submit for the Authority's review and approval a plan to alleviate any potential safety or tampering risks associated with trough-type connections with side-by-side meter installations. Such plan shall include implementation costs and expected timelines for allowing such metering configurations for use in the RRES Program. Additionally, when developing the proposal, the EDCs shall research any steps taken by other jurisdictions in the United States to allow trough-type connections with side-by-side meter installations at multifamily housing sites, to determine if such steps can be replicated in Connecticut. Finally, the EDCs shall consult with the Interconnection Working Group, established in a Decision dated November 25, 2020, in Docket No. 17-12-03RE06, PURA Investigation into Distribution System Planning of the Electric Distribution Companies – Interconnection Standards and Practices, when developing the proposal.
29. No later than April 1, 2024, the EDCs shall incorporate the changes suggested by PosiGen into the RRES Program webpages. See, PosiGen Comments, June 1, 2023, pp. 13-14. Additionally, to ensure that Program participants can easily access RRES programmatic information, the Authority directs the EDCs to break out the current RRES webpage(s) into three distinct pages displaying the following: (1) RRES customer educational materials and general programmatic information; (2) RRES required forms, fees and installer materials; and (3) RRES programmatic data. Each webpage shall also include links to the other webpages in a prominent and clearly identifiable section. The EDCs shall file compliance with the Authority when this order is fulfilled.
30. No later than April 1, 2024, the EDCs shall include underserved enrollment percentages, broken out by both low-income and Distressed Municipality status, in the Program data published on the EDCs' respective websites. If an underserved customer qualifying for a Program adder is not (auto)enrolled by the Program Administrators for not meeting the new requirements outlined in this Decision (i.e., the tariff payment beneficiary is not the customer of record, and the

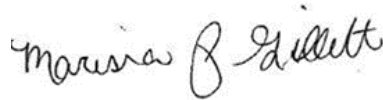
developer did not apply for an adder in the initial Program application), the Program Administrators shall still track such enrollment and include it in the data reporting so that it may be counted toward the Program's 40% deployment target in underserved communities. Consistent with the existing data on the Program website, the EDCs shall update the underserved deployment data no less than monthly. Last, the EDCs shall file compliance with the Authority when this order is first fulfilled.

31. No later than April 10, 2024, the Authority requests that the Multifamily Housing Working Group (MFH WG) provide a comprehensive proposal for master-metered housing projects' participation in the RRES program, incorporating proposed protections from eviction and renter protections for master-metered multifamily affordable housing that identify enforcement mechanisms for ensuring that tenants are not harmed via increased rents that are tied to the Authority's jurisdiction (e.g., including RRES compensation clawback provisions, etc.). The filing shall also include a clear plan for how tenants will financially benefit from all eligible building upgrades (e.g., documentation demonstrating the quantifiable financial benefits free broadband access will provide tenants, etc.). In the compliance filing, the MFH WG may propose updates to any of the Authority's conclusions outlined in Section IV.F., or to any recommendations previously made by the MFG WG, to ensure that the proposal most effectively advances the Program Objectives. Additionally, the Authority requests that the MFH WG develop and submit a plan for: (1) a member or members of the MFH WG to conduct eligibility screenings for project adherence with master-metered Program requirements prior to the start of construction; (2) at least annual audits of completed projects' adherence with the master-metered Program requirements; and (3) suggested remedies if projects later fail to adhere to the master-metered Program requirements after receiving approval to proceed.
32. No later than April 10, 2024, the EDCs shall file a summary of all meter socket adapter (MSA) safety concerns, along with solutions for each safety concern, and estimated costs and timelines for implementing each solution, in Docket Nos. 23-08-02 and 23-08-05. In developing the compliance, the EDCs shall work directly with ConnectDER and Tesla to understand how other jurisdictions have addressed MSA safety concerns, to determine if steps taken by other jurisdictions to allow MSAs can be replicated in Connecticut. Finally, before submitting their compliance, the EDCs shall present their findings to the Interconnection Working Group, established in a Decision dated November 25, 2020, in Docket No. 17-12-03RE06, PURA Investigation into Distribution System Planning of the Electric Distribution Companies – Interconnection Standards and Practices. In so doing, the EDCs shall allow for written feedback from Interconnection Working Group members on the EDCs' compliance before filing it with the Authority.
33. No later than June 1, 2024, and April 1 and annually thereafter, all renewable energy contractors participating in the RRES Program shall file in the reopener to the annual Program Review docket for contractor education and enforcement (e.g., Docket No. 23-08-02RE01 for 2024, etc.,) their marketing scripts and training materials generated for or provided to anyone engaging with a customer. Last, the Authority clarifies that the collection of marketing materials shall be administered and enforced by EOE.

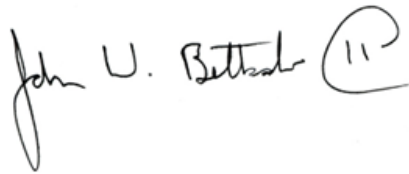
34. No later than June 1, 2024, and April 1 annually thereafter, all Program developers shall file in the reopener to the annual Program review docket for contractor education and enforcement (e.g., Docket No. 23-08-02RE01 for the 2024 filing, etc.), a Financial Benefits Compliance, in accordance with Section IV.D. Specifically, the Authority directs each developer participating in the RRES Program to annually file with the Authority the following for all RRES projects deployed in the previous calendar year: (1) All customer disclosure forms; (2) An unlocked Excel file summarizing key information from the customer disclosure forms, as well as other information provided to customers such as contracts and promotional materials, for each project as detailed below (Financial Benefits Summary Sheet); and (3) A narrative explanation of any calculation methodologies included in the Financial Benefits Summary Sheet (Sheet Narrative). The Financial Benefits Summary Sheet shall include one row each for every project deployed by the developer under the RRES Program in the previous calendar year. For each project, the following information shall be provided (i.e., each of the following should be a column in the Financial Benefits Summary Sheet): (1) site address; (2) utility account number associated with the project; (3) annual contract rate increase amount; (4) estimated year one production (kWh) as a percentage of estimated annual utility customer usage (kWh); (5) estimated year one customer net savings; (6) starting utility rate used to estimate net year one savings; (7) estimated net savings over the RRES tariff term (i.e., 20 years) if provided by the developer to customers in a contract or promotional materials, or if it can be easily extrapolated from the customer disclosure data; and (8) utility rate used to estimate net savings over the RRES tariff term (i.e., 20 years) if provided by the developer to customers in a contract or promotional materials, or if it can be easily extrapolated from the customer disclosure data. The Sheet Narrative may be a simple summary document (e.g., as brief as a couple of pages) outlining the methodology used to calculate the above required information to be included in the Financial Benefits Summary Sheet, as applicable, along with a general list of the documents needed for such calculations (e.g., a customer's electric bill and sales contract are needed to verify the methodology for the fourth requirement, etc.). Last, the Authority clarifies that the collection of financial benefit documentation shall be administered and enforced by EOE. EOE may audit a contractor's Financial Benefits Summary Sheet and Sheet Narrative and can request additional documentation or evidence as needed to verify a contractor's Financial Benefits Summary Sheet calculations, particularly for low-income customers.
35. No later than August 1, 2024, the Authority requests that CGB provide an update on the stakeholder process to develop recommendations to resolve the issue of solar panel and battery recycling and waste for clean energy projects in Connecticut. The Authority respectfully requests that CGB convene and lead a working group of relevant stakeholders, including DEEP and the EDCs, to develop recommendations to resolve the issue of solar and battery waste that consider the environmental effects of solar panel and battery waste and the success or failure of approaches used in other jurisdictions. Further, all recommendations should include a description of the pros and cons of each approach, and an estimate of each approach's implementation timeline and cost. The Authority requests that the update, including any recommendations developed, be filed in Docket Nos. 24-08-02, 24-08-03, 24-08-04, and 24-08-05.

36. No later than October 1, 2024, and annually by August 1 thereafter, EOE shall complete its audit of the Financial Benefits Compliance filings and a sampling of RRES developer marketing materials and file any findings with the Authority as directed in Section IV.D.3. of this Decision following the “four strike” system authorized in the Residential Tariff Decision as necessary.

This Decision is adopted by the following Commissioners:



Marissa P. Gillett



John W. Betkoski, III



Michael A. Caron

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The foregoing is a true and correct copy of the Decision issued by the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority, State of Connecticut, and was forwarded by Certified Mail to all parties of record in this proceeding on the date indicated.



Jeffrey R. Gaudiosi, Esq.

November 1, 2023

Date

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