



Andrew P. Flanagan
Town Manager

TOWN OF ANDOVER

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October 13, 2022

Mark D. Marini, Secretary
Department of Public Utilities
One South Station
Boston, MA 02110

Dear Secretary Marini,

We write to you regarding the Department of Public Utilities' review of our Town's Plan for a municipal aggregation program, Andover Community Power.

Our community approved pursuing municipal aggregation in fall 2020, and we worked diligently and efficiently to hire an expert consultant and work with local stakeholders to craft an aggregation Plan. The Plan was submitted to the Department in July 2021, and over 16 months later we still await a Department Order on our Plan (Docket 21-77).

Our Plan, submitted to the Department in early July 2021, describes our Town's vision to create a new default electricity supply in Andover that will provide cleaner energy to our residents and businesses, along with other options for those looking for even lower costs or 100% renewable energy. In addition, the Plan give the Town control over the terms and conditions of the power supply contract, and the timing of bidding and term length of contract. Our Town seeks to leverage that local control to provide competitive, stable rates that our community can rely upon. Although we recognize that savings cannot be guaranteed, we note that many other municipalities have deployed such programs to great effect.

Now, Andover residents and businesses are set to pay the highest National Grid winter Basic Service rates ever, with residential rates over 33 cents per kilowatt-hour starting as of November. It is deeply unfortunate that Andover still awaits an Approval Order and therefore does not yet have the opportunity to seek relief for our residents and businesses.

We are further dismayed, as we understand that many Approval Orders require additional "compliance filings", which can add months more. For example, we are aware that the Town of Westwood received its Approval Order on December 31, 2021 but did not receive a ruling on its first compliance filing (submitted end of January 2022) until June 2022.

Those potential economic and environmental benefits of the program may be especially valuable to Andover's low-income population, of which there are at least 450 households eligible for our automatic enrollment in our program. The Attorney General has repeatedly found that these populations are the most vulnerable to deceptive, high-priced third-party supply offers¹.

¹ "Study Shows Low-Income Residents and Communities of Color Are Disproportionately Harmed; AG Urges Passage of Legislation to Ban Suppliers from Signing Up New Residential Customers" from see <https://www.mass.gov/news/new-ag-report-massachusetts-residents-lost-426-million-through-competitive-electric-supply-contracts-in-last-five-years>.

It took the Department nearly a year to issue its first Information Requests on Andover's Plan (June 2022). In response to the that request, this summer Andover incorporated new Department guidance from other municipal aggregation dockets, in our Plan. The Town submitted the updated Plan in July 2022, almost one year exactly from the day we submitted our original Plan. We sincerely hope that we do not have another year of waiting ahead.

We ask that the Department expedite its remaining review of Andover's Plan so that our Town may move toward launching its long-awaited Program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'A. P. Flanagan', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Andrew P. Flanagan
Town Manager