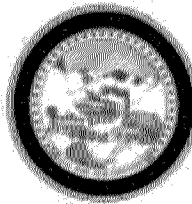


CHRIS BROOKS

SENATOR
District No. 3



State of Nevada Senate

Eightieth Session

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Growth and Infrastructure
Natural Resources

Member: Commerce
and Labor

June 9, 2020

Hayley Williamson, Chair
C.J. Manthe, Commissioner
State of Nevada
Public Utilities Commission
1150 E. William Street
Carson City, NV 89701-3109

Re: Docket Nos. 20-02031 & 20-02032

Dear Commissioners:

As has been the case since we successfully passed wildfire mitigation legislation during the 2019 Nevada Legislative Session, Nevada is no stranger to natural disasters. Increased wildfires, earthquakes, such as the recent earthquake that was a 6.4 magnitude outside of Tonopah, (the largest earthquake to hit the state since 1954), monsoons, and other natural disasters pose a danger to our public safety, our economy, and our critical infrastructure such as the electric grid. With the increase in natural disasters, coupled with the destruction of Paradise, California due to the Camp Fire, legislation fast tracking disaster mitigation efforts became a priority during the session. Additionally, these natural disasters pose an increased threat to our Nevada communities and environment, based on evolving climate conditions, increased fuel risk, growing population in urban interface areas and aging electric infrastructure. These factors led to the introduction of Senate Bill 329 (SB 329).

SB 329 required NV Energy to file a Natural Disaster Protection Plan (NDPP) which included: "(1) the identification of areas within electric utilities' service jurisdictions that are at a heightened risk of fires or other natural disasters; (2) cost effective strategies and methods to mitigate fires and other natural disasters; (3) preventative measures aimed at ensuring fires don't start because of electrical equipment; and (4) ways to de-energize distribution lines and disable reclosers in the event of a fire or other natural disaster."¹

NV Energy's first NDPP provides a strong basis to ensure Nevada's electric grid is strengthened against natural disasters through all possible preventative measures, including operations, maintenance, system hardening, public safety preparation, and prevention programs. Increasing vegetation management, inspections, corrections and physical improvements to harden the electric grid and infrastructure are necessary to ensure the intent of SB 329 is fulfilled. As discussed in the NV Energy's first NDPP, both controllable risks and uncontrollable risks need to be mitigated by implementation of operations, maintenance and grid hardening programs.

¹ April 9, 2019 Remarks of Senator Brooks, Committee Hearing on Senate Growth and Infrastructure.

In addition, the intent of the SB 329 was to ensure that the cost of the NDPP is cost effective for all Nevadans. NV Energy's NDPP proposed a single rate for the entire state of Nevada to ensure the cost of the NDPP is equitable and is paid for by all customers in the state of Nevada. A single rate is exactly the cost effective strategy and method the Nevada Legislature intended. The costs to avoid a catastrophic event, caused by a natural disaster, in one area of the state should not be limited to that service territory only. Natural disasters, whether they be wildfires in Lake Tahoe or Mount Charleston, or a monsoon affecting the Las Vegas strip will affect the economy of the entire state. Moreover, these areas are state treasures not just for all Nevadans but also for out of state tourists. A catastrophic event or natural disaster, in either Northern or Southern Nevada, will ultimately impact the economy of the entire state of Nevada.

While we understand that NV Energy's NDPP will evolve with future filings, projects and programs included in the initial NDPP are essential to reduce risk to our state's physical security and economy. Additionally, the single rate will ensure that all of these projects will have the ability to be complete, with an equitable and cost-effective method to mitigate fires and other natural disasters throughout Nevada.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to anyone of us.

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Cc: Doug Cannon