

**PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17120**

**Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission,
Bureau of Investigation & Enforcement**

v.

PECO Energy Company

**Public Meeting held February 7, 2019
2531404-OSA**

Docket No. M-2018-2531404

STATEMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN DAVID W. SWEET

At our December 20, 2018 public meeting, we adopted an order allowing for comments to a Joint Settlement entered into by the Commission's Bureau of Investigation and Enforcement and PECO Energy Company regarding an investigation into the wrongful termination of multiple low-income customers during the winter moratorium of the winter of 2016.

As part of the Settlement, PECO agreed to pay a civil penalty of \$10,000 and to increase the amount available for matching contributions in its Matching Energy Assistance Fund (MEAF). The Low-Income Advocates in their Comments expressed the opinion that PECO should simply increase its Hardship Fund by \$20,000 and not require that the funds be matched before they are available.

PECO responds by explaining that its MEAF is a matching program and that there is no separate MEAF budget or mechanisms to provide direct contributions to local community-based organizations (CBO) or other recipients. PECO opines that its only option would be to make a contribution directly to a CBO, which could then turn around and request matching funds from MEAF, potentially doubling the amount that PECO agreed to spend. This, PECO says, is a material change to the settlement and not acceptable to PECO.

While I will not vote to unravel a settlement negotiated by these parties, I believe that PECO can act independently to publish the availability of the money, and to encourage others to contribute to the fund, so that the full amount that is anticipated will be spent to aid low-income customers. In fact, under PECO's own reasoning, it could donate \$10,000 to one or more CBOs and then match the funds up to the remaining \$10,000, and the \$20,000 commitment would be immediately available.

I strongly encourage PECO to be creative, not obstinate and find a practical way to fulfill the spirit of its settlement commitment forthwith.

February 7, 2019

DATE



DAVID W. SWEET
VICE CHAIRMAN