

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA



OFFICE OF CONSUMER ADVOCATE

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February 24, 2020

Rosemary Chiavetta, Secretary
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
Commonwealth Keystone Building
400 North Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Re: Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission,
Bureau of Investigation and Enforcement
v.
Verde Energy USA, Inc.
Docket No. C-2020-3017229

Dear Secretary Chiavetta:

Attached for electronic filing please find the Office of Consumer Advocate's Notice of Intervention and Public Statement in the above-referenced proceeding.

Copies have been served per the attached Certificate of Service.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laura J. Antinucci".

Laura J. Antinucci
Assistant Consumer Advocate
PA Attorney I.D. # 327217
E-Mail: LAntinucci@paoca.org

Enclosures:

cc: Office of Administrative Law Judge (OALJ)
Certificate of Service

*284077

BEFORE THE
PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION


Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, :
Bureau of Investigation and Enforcement : Docket No. C-2020-3017229
v. :
Verde Energy USA, Inc. :

NOTICE OF INTERVENTION
OF THE
OFFICE OF CONSUMER ADVOCATE

Pursuant to 52 Pa. Code Sections 5.71-74, the Office of Consumer Advocate hereby gives Notice of Intervention in the above-captioned proceeding. A copy of all correspondence and notices, documents, orders or other communications with respect to the above-captioned proceeding should be addressed to the following:

Laura J. Antinucci
Assistant Consumer Advocate
Office of Consumer Advocate
555 Walnut Street
5th Floor, Forum Place
Harrisburg, PA 17101-1923
Phone: (717) 783-5048
Fax: (717) 783-7152

Respectfully submitted,


Laura J. Antinucci
Assistant Consumer Advocate
PA Attorney I.D. # 327217
E-Mail: LAntinucci@paoca.org

Darryl A. Lawrence
Senior Assistant Consumer Advocate
PA Attorney I.D. # 93682
E-Mail: DLawrence@paoca.org

DATED: February 24, 2020
*284026

PUBLIC STATEMENT OF THE OFFICE OF CONSUMER ADVOCATE
PURSUANT TO 71 P.S. SECTION 309-4(e)

Act 161 of the Pennsylvania General Assembly, 71 P.S. Section 309-2, as enacted July 9, 1976, authorizes the Consumer Advocate to represent the interests of consumers before the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (Commission). In accordance with Act 161, and for the following reasons, the Consumer Advocate determined to file a Notice of Intervention and participate in proceedings before the Commission involving the formal complaint of the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission Bureau of Investigation and Enforcement (I&E) against Verde Energy USA, Inc. (Verde), a jurisdictional electric generation supplier licensed in Pennsylvania.

I&E's formal complaint filed on January 30, 2020, alleged that Verde violated the Public Utility Code and/or Pennsylvania Code. Specifically, the complaint alleges that Verde engaged in deceptive and misleading tactics while conducting door-to-door and telemarketing sales, enrolled customers without authorization (i.e., slamming) and accessed customer accounts without authorization. The allegations stemmed from an initial informal investigation by I&E of Verde during which PPL Electric Utilities, in response to I&E-served data requests, identified and provided 339 customer accounts allegedly affected by Verde's alleged deceptive conduct. The group of customers impacted by Verde's alleged deceptive and misleading conduct included some of Pennsylvania's most vulnerable populations: forty-one (41) customers identified as senior citizens, twelve (12) customers identified as infirmed, disabled or unwell, and three (3) enrolled customers were deceased.

The Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA) is intervening in this case to protect the interests of Pennsylvania consumers possibly impacted by these alleged violations. The OCA will also seek to ensure appropriate remedies for any violations of the Commission's regulations so as to protect consumers and ensure the proper functioning of the retail market.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

Re: Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, :
Bureau of Investigation and Enforcement : Docket No. C-2020-3017229
v. :
Verde Energy USA, Inc. :

I hereby certify that I have this day served a true copy of the following document, the Office of Consumer Advocate's Notice of Intervention and Public Statement, upon parties of record in this proceeding in accordance with the requirements of 52 Pa. Code § 1.54 (relating to service by a participant), in the manner and upon the persons listed below:

Dated this 24th day of February 2020.

SERVICE BY E-MAIL & INTER-OFFICE MAIL

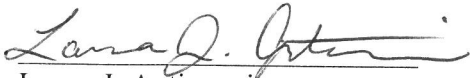
Kayla L. Rost, Esquire
Matthew C. Fallings, Esquire
Bureau of Investigation & Enforcement
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
Commonwealth Keystone Building
400 North Street, 2nd Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17120

John R. Evans, Esquire
Office of Small Business Advocate
555 Walnut Street
1st Floor, Forum Place
Harrisburg, PA 17101-1923

SERVICE BY E-MAIL & FIRST CLASS MAIL, POSTAGE PREPAID

Martha Lopez, Manager
Verde Energy USA
12140 Wickchester Lane
Suite 100
Houston, TX 77079

Michael A. Gruin, Esquire
Stevens & Lee
17 North Second Street
16th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17101



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Dated: February 24, 2020
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