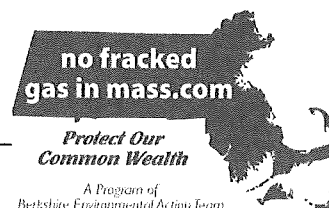




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October 28, 2019

Kara Sergeant
Department of Energy Resources
100 Cambridge St., Suite 1020
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Ms. Sargeant,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Clean Peak Energy Standard currently under development by DOER. Please accept the following comments from No Fracked Gas in Mass & the Berkshire Environmental Action Team (BEAT). BEAT works to protect the environment for wildlife in support of the natural world that sustains us all. No-Fracked Gas in Mass works to stop the expansion of fossil fuel infrastructure in the Northeast states and to promote energy efficiency and sustainable, renewable sources of energy and local, permanent jobs in a clean energy economy.

COMMENTS ON THE CLEAN PEAK ENERGY STANDARD

DEFINITION OF "CLEAN"

We strongly oppose the definition of "clean" energy being pursued by DOER.

With the Global Warming Solutions Act¹ in place as state law, and with a stern warning from the IPCC that we only have about a decade to drastically cut our emissions², it is

¹ The Global Warming Solutions Act (2008). Section 1, Section 19 of Chapter 6A of the General Laws of Massachusetts. <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2008/Chapter298>

² Summary for Policymakers of IPCC Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C approved by governments, <https://www.ipcc.ch/2018/10/08/summary-for-policymakers-of-ipcc-special-report-on-global-warming-of-1-5c-approved-by-governments/>

long past time for us to stop using combustible fuels. It is not acceptable for DOER to classify biomass, "waste-to-energy" trash incineration and other fuel-based electric generation as "clean" energy, for seasonal peak shaving purposes, or for other regulatory considerations such as redefining the RPS.

Biomass and trash incineration plants such as the proposed Palmer plant in East Springfield have emissions that include PM 2.5 fine particulates and nitrogen oxides³.

With the Clean Peak Standard relying on the department's definition of the RPS, it is entirely within the realm of possibility that these fuel-combustion sources of electric generation would receive further incentives, putting already overburdened environmental justice communities in the crosshairs for further local pollution, and our climate at greater risk due to greenhouse gas emissions.

It is also especially important for seasonal peak generation to be from clean sources, because at times of peak energy use, our current portfolio of energy generation plants is already producing a full load of emissions; and during winter peak, emissions from thermal generation loads such as gas, oil and wood heat are also added.

As stated in our April 2019 comments on the initial standard straw proposal of the CPS:

We write to express our strong opposition to new incentives for biomass power generation through the proposed Clean Energy Peak Standard (CPS). DOER's straw proposal indicates that the Department is proposing to focus its CPS procurements on sources such as "most energy storage facilities, small non-solar renewable facilities such as AD or biomass, etc."

The purpose of the law is to support cost-effective reductions in greenhouse gas emissions during peak periods of energy use. In reality, however, biomass power plants are expensive, generate more net CO2 pollution than fossil-fueled power plants per MWH of energy produced, and emit disproportionately large amounts of air pollution. These are exactly the types of carbon-intensive and expensive electricity sources that the CPS is intended to replace and should thus be categorically excluded from eligibility. Biomass power plants should not be considered eligible sources under the CPS at all, much less prioritized for procurements.

UNAVAILABILITY OF DOER GUIDELINES

The draft regulation refers to several guidelines that have not been published by DOER. Without access to full information on what these guidelines are (Guideline for Clean Peak Resource Eligibility⁴, Guideline on Demand Response Resources⁵, Guideline on

³ Air pollution from biomass energy, Partnership for Policy Integrity, 2011.

<https://www.pfpi.net/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/PFPI-air-pollution-and-biomass-April-2011.pdf>

⁴ "The Department **shall publish** a Guideline on Clean Peak Resource Eligibility that explains the parameters of eligibility requirements." 225 CMR 21.00: CLEAN PEAK

Energy Reserves⁶ and Guideline on the Distribution Circuit Multiplier⁷) there is no way to fully and meaningfully comment on this draft regulation. These need to be published by DOER *before* asking for final comments.

EXTENSION OF THE COMMENT PERIOD

Until complete guidelines referred to in the draft regulations are published, it is not fair to set a deadline for comments. Once DOER publishes these guidelines, the comment period deadline should be established 60 days AFTER that date.

In theory, the concept of a Clean Peak Energy Standard could be a brilliant step to boosting a move to an all clean, renewable grid, but avoiding fossil fuel generation sources is not enough if other combustion-fuel-bases sources are to be considered. Since this is being touted by DOER as a "first in the nation" proposal⁸, we should make sure to get it right.

Sincerely,



Jane Winn, *Executive Director*
Berkshire Environmental Action Team



Rosemary Wessel, *Program Director*
No Fracked Gas in Mass, A Program of Berkshire Environmental Action Team

cc:

Charles Baker, Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Kathleen Theoharides, Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs

ENERGYPORTFOLIOSTANDARD (CPS), Section 20.05, page 6.

<https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2019/09/27/225%20CMR%2021%20CLEAN%20PEAK%20STANDARD%20Regulation.pdf>

⁵ Ibid, page 8.

⁶ Ibid, page 10.

⁷ Ibid, page. 10.

⁸ Massachusetts Clean Peak Standard; Market Model, CPS Final Consultant Report, Sustainable Energy Advantage, LLC, August 27, 2019. Page 7. https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2019/09/27/CPS_Final_Consultant_Report.pdf