8/13/2026 - NYS Public Service Commission

STATE OF NEW YORK

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

2026 COMMISSION SESSION

DATE: **AUGUST 13, 2026 at 10:33 a.m.**

LOCATION: **AGENCY BUILDING 3, 19TH FLOOR**
EMPIRE STATE PLAZA
ALBANY, NY 12223

COMMISSIONERS:

RORY M. CHRISTIAN, Chair
COMMISSIONER JAMES S. ALESI
COMMISSIONER DAVID J. VALESKY
COMMISSIONER JOHN B. MAGGIORE
COMMISSIONER UCHENNA S. BRIGHT
COMMISSIONER DENISE M. SHEEHAN
COMMISSIONER RADINA R. VALOVA

Reported by Tina Hotaling

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(The hearing commenced at 10:33 a.m.)

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Good morning. I call this session of the Public Service Commission to order.

Madam Secretary, are there any changes to the final agenda?

SECRETARY PHILLIPS: Yes. There's one change to the final agenda. We are pulling item 373.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Item 373 is pulled. Thank you very much.

Before moving to the agenda, I'd like to conduct a roll call of Commissioners. When I call your name, please confirm that you are present.

Commissioner James Alesi?

COMMISSIONER ALESI: Present.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Commissioner David Valesky?

COMMISSIONER VALESKY: I'm here.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Commissioner John Maggiore?

COMMISSIONER MAGGIORE: Present.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Commissioner Uchenna Bright?

COMMISSIONER BRIGHT: Here.

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CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Commissioner Denise Sheehan?

COMMISSIONER SHEEHAN: Present.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Commissioner Radina Valova?

COMMISSIONER VALOVA: Present.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you. Before we begin the regular agenda today, do any Commissioners wish to recuse from voting on item 202?

Commissioner Alesi?

COMMISSIONER ALESI: I do not.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you.

Commissioner Valesky?

COMMISSIONER VALESKY: No.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you.

Commissioner Maggiore?

COMMISSIONER MAGGIORE: No.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you.

Commissioner Bright?

COMMISSIONER BRIGHT: No.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you.

Commissioner Sheehan?

COMMISSIONER SHEEHAN: No.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you.

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And Commissioner Valova?

COMMISSIONER VALOVA: No.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you. That said, we'll now move to our first item for discussion today item 202, case 26-M-0525 as it relates to the Excelsior Power Program presented today by Matt Brown. Rob Cully, Marco Padula, and Dave Drexler are available for questions.

Matt, please begin.

MR. BROWN: Good morning, Chair Christian, Commissioners. My name is Matt Brown. I'm with the Office of Markets and Innovation. Draft order before you would initiate case 26-M-0525, proceeding on the motion of the Commission to initiate the Excelsior Power Program.

Just a few months ago, we came before you to discuss the annual demand response program reports and status, and I'm very grateful to be back before you so quickly with the draft initiating order that, if approved, will help create the next generation of demand response programs in the residential market.

This draft order will initiate a new proceeding, which will direct the joint utilities to

submit a proposed implementation plan and solicit public comments. I would just like to note that it is constructed. There is a two-step implementation envision that will first create an immediate rebrand of the existing utility specific programs into the Excelsior Power Program, and allow a pathway for enhanced incentives to begin flowing quickly. And second, to create a comprehensive plan for a new statewide platform.

Both steps will include stakeholder feedback and require Commission feedback and approval. So what is peak load and why is peak load management important? Peak electricity and gas usage is typically limited to just a few days each year, and generally, only for a few hours in each of those days. Demand response or DR programs provide a means for electric and gas distribution utilities in the New York Independent System Operator to reduce these peaks and thereby reduce delay, or potentially even eliminate the need for major infrastructure investments that would otherwise be required to serve customers for these small number of hours each year.

Accordingly, DR programs are a cost-effective way to manage the need for such major

infrastructure investments and undertaking significant capital expenditures on the energy system. So how does demand response work? DR programs allow utilities to call upon participating customers, who volunteer to decrease their energy and demand usage during a small number of peak hour events throughout the year.

Typically during the summer cooling season, the electric system and during the winter heating season for the gas system. Customers that respond to these DR events are provided with incentive payments based on their performance. To help frame peak load reduction policies in New York State, the first electric system peak load reduction efforts began about a quarter century ago. In those first iterations, it was very much a manual process and even relied many times on direct individual phone calls and individual people then walking through buildings to manually change set points, turn off equipment, lighting, et cetera.

The first load management efforts focused only on commercial and industrial sites. Since those early days, this market has gone through a series of iterations that are now taking advantage

of new technologies and communication protocols to provide an easier implementation and appeal to a broader audience of participants.

Today, residential customers typically participate in DR programs through a Wi-Fi-enabled smart thermostat, which can be signaled to temporarily set to higher temperatures during the summer or lower temperatures during the winter during DR events. Smart thermostats use a variety of strategies to perform during events, generally with the goal of maximizing demand savings without impacting customer comfort.

New York has successfully enrolled approximately 120,000 residential customers in these voluntary DR programs to date. Excelsior Power is an exciting next step in the development of the demand response market. New York already has a robust Bring Your Own Thermostat program operating in most utilities in the State, providing peak load relief in both summer and winter periods.

The State also has a smaller number of utilities, now offering a Bring Your Own Battery program. Managed charging, smart appliances, smart outlets, and other new smart home features also now

provide an opportunity to expand eligible customers and the amount of load controlled in the coming years. Leaning on New York's long history of demand management programs, and to take advantage of ever improving technological capabilities of the residential market to control load, Governor Hochul announced in her State of The State address this year, a new program concept of Excelsior Power. During her address, Governor Hochul highlighted the need for New York's electric grid to be more flexible while simultaneously ensuring that reliability is maintained and that growing customer energy needs are met while minimizing new infrastructure build out. Following that policy introduction, the New York State Legislature included new state budget funding in the amount of 33 million to support this new program and platform.

This new funding includes 30 million to be made available for newly enrolled eligible utility customers to participate in the program and receive bill credits for the first twelve months of their participation. This new funding is expected to support an increase in program participation to roughly double the current number of participants

that are in the program today. I do want to note that consistent with public service law and among other things, customers will be allowed to override utility control of the thermostats during events and customers will not be penalized for those actions, except for discounting or derating a customer's bill credits.

Customers are also able to de-enroll from the program without penalty, and de-enrollment must be as convenient as enrollment. And lastly, that the program must include customer education and outreach efforts. While the governor's and legislature's language centered on thermostats, we see no reason to limit the use of the Excelsior Power Program to only thermostats and the electric system.

Accordingly, the draft order assumes the platform will be a one-stop shop for residential customers to enroll all applicable devices within the residential DLC programs for electric and gas systems. Additionally, recognizing that the Commission has limited oversight regarding LIPA and its present system operator, PSEG Long Island, this draft order would direct the utilities to engage LIPA and PSEG Long Island in this process to allow its

customers to also participate in the Excelsior Power Program, consistent with language in the legislation with state funding.

The first and primary reason to create a single statewide platform is an improved customer experience. Having a single statewide platform for all technologies will make customer participation in electric and gas demand response programs of all types significantly easier. This improved customer experience is critical as each customer participating in the program receives financial incentives, sharing the benefits they are creating for all ratepayers. The sharing of benefits improves energy affordability to the participating customers through reduced energy use and receiving incentives, and is also shared across the entire system with all ratepayers benefiting from a reduced need for expensive infrastructure investments.

Second, a single platform will also make enrollment and de-enrollment significantly easier for customers.

Third, a single statewide platform will be easier and more cost efficient to solicit a single platform provider and have a comprehensive

outreach and education programs for consumers around the entire state versus having each utility run its own independent procurement and administer its own standalone platform. This benefit of a single platform also creates a more effective and efficient onboarding process for technology manufacturers that would only need to go through the process once versus the current process requiring those same efforts across each utility to have their equipment become eligible.

A few notes on the program itself. With regard to the new enhanced incentives that the approved state budget makes available, 30 million of the total 33 million allocated in the State budget will be made available for enhanced incentives for new customers. If approved, this draft order would direct the remaining 3 million of the 33 million in state funding to be used by utilities for a new outreach and education program dedicated to encouraging new participants. The balance of costs would continue to be funded via ratepayer collections.

The order also directs the utilities to plan for the possibility of additional funding to

be added from other sources in the future. The draft order follows the governor's initial recommendation that new customers be eligible for a $25 per month benefit for the first year of participation in the program. Existing customers will not be eligible to receive this enhanced benefit. As noted earlier, the draft order lays out a vision of a two-step implementation. The utilities are directed to first submit implementation plans, outlining how they propose to implement steps to achieve rebranding and faster deployment of enhanced incentives within thirty days.

The second step is for utilities to submit a second implementation plan within 120 days that comprehensively addresses a series of questions and requirements set forth in the order to administer the program long term as a single platform. Each of these implementation plans will go through the standard stakeholder comment process and require Commission action before advancing both stages of development and deployment. That concludes my presentation today. I'm joined by Rob Cully, Marco Padula, and Dave Drexler to help -- who are available to help with any questions. Thank you.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you, Matt. Appreciate the presentation. I have a question. I know you point out that new customers are eligible, but let's say one was an existing customer and left the program and came back. Would they be eligible to receive the incentive?

MR. CULLY: So for that particular customer, we would separate them out not -- or rather, it's important to separate out the level of incentives between the new enhanced incentives that are funded by the State budget presently and existing utility avoided cost value incentives that are available presently to the existing participant pool and would be the controlling incentive level after the one-year period of a new customer coming on and staying on beyond the one-year period of the enhanced incentive. So those levels are different. And a customer that de-enrolls but has previously participated in these programs in the past and re-enrolls, we believe should be eligible for the value-based incentive as opposed to the enhanced incentive.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Got you. Let's try to figure out a way to get $25, for myself out of the program, but thank you for that, Rob. My

self-serving goals aside, I look at this order representing a very meaningful step forward in advancing energy affordability while also giving customers more agency in managing their energy use and ultimately their energy costs. The action we're taking today consolidating the program, streamlining existing utility programs into the Excelsior program will create a unified and transparent statewide program, something that will provide tangible benefits of $25 a month to eligible recipients.

But in addition, beyond that, they will also have bill savings by avoiding use of electricity during significant times or natural gas in some cases. And the benefits extend beyond those who participate because, as you pointed out, enhanced resiliency and helping withstand increasingly unpredictable weather events will also help benefit the investments that we're able to make -- making them more targeted and less costly. So I also want to emphasize the importance of scale.

Individual actions matter, but it's through this collective action that the value of demand response is realized when each of these actions are aggregated and coordinated. They can

become a very powerful force, multiplying the benefits of any one individual of actions. And in this way, distributed resources can become system resources and see this program as the venue for this transition to continue. So I see this as an opportunity for New York to lead, and I like the framework that we're putting forward, has the potential to set a new standard, and I look forward to seeing that unfold. So thank you for your presentation.

And I'll go to Commissioner Alesi.

COMMISSIONER ALESI: Thank you very much. Good report. I have no questions or comments.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you.

Commissioner Valesky.

COMMISSIONER VALESKY: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Matt and the entire team for this initiating order. It's certainly an idea whose time has come, regardless of the fact that the governor and legislature put money in the budget, I think that just makes it all the more a no brainer. Just two real quick questions, Matt. I know you said it's a two-step process. Can you just give -- as I often like to do with initiating orders, I like to think

ahead and think as to roughly when will the public be able to be participating in, you know, in the goal and in this case, the statewide platform. So at what point in time would you anticipate a statewide platform being up and running?

MR. BROWN: Thank you, Commissioner. Importantly, and if it's okay with you, I'll break your question into two parts.

COMMISSIONER VALESKY: Sure.

MR. BROWN: The first part was how quickly can funding get moving? So that's actually why we chose to advance this to you as a proposed two-step process. By doing it in two steps, what we're asking utilities to do is to immediately rebrand their programs to begin using Excelsior Power name, but very importantly, to also begin advancing implementation of the enhanced incentives. By doing it in this two-step process, we expect funding to be able to start moving it, you know, as early as maybe the end of this year or early next year.

COMMISSIONER VALESKY: Okay.

MR. BROWN: The -- the second piece, the how will they participate to a single statewide -- statewide platform, that will take a

little bit longer. As -- Commissioner, as you know through overseeing these things for many years, you know, it's a complex set of things that the -- the utilities will have to propose, how are they going to migrate all of the existing customers, how are they going to migrate all of the existing approvals for OEMs, and how does that translate across utilities where they may not be currently enrolled?

They'll have to -- once -- once all of that gets worked out and -- and you know, to your satisfaction and approved, then they'll have to go through the process of procuring a statewide vendor so that, you know, the -- the statewide platform is a little bit more of a bigger lift. There's some complex steps that need to be thoughtfully worked out and -- and done very well to avoid hiccups that will cause frustration in the market that we're -- we're really seeking to avoid. So that statewide platform is -- is likely not to be in place until more like the end of next year.

COMMISSIONER VALESKY: Okay. And actually, I do have a second question, but you sort of already answered it. And that would be when we get to that point, who will actually manage the

program? You indicated there would be a solicitation for a statewide vendor. Is that how that will work?

MR. BROWN: Well, that's how we anticipate it work -- working, yeah. So -- so the -- the utilities are -- are being asked to propose how they would manage it. So I look forward to what that propo -- proposal says. We anticipate it will be some sort of joint venture. I don't know what the exact format might be. And then -- I'm sorry, what was the second part of your --

COMMISSIONER VALESKY: Well, just the process of selecting.

MR. BROWN: Oh, yeah. So -- so they'll have to lay that out in their implementation plan. They'll have to go through whatever competitive procurement process they -- they do. There's more than one existing vendor in the market that could potentially respond. And you know, we certainly hope for competition in that procurement.

COMMISSIONER VALESKY: Sure. And then regardless of the outcome, obviously, the Commission will continue to have oversight over the --

MR. BROWN: In -- in both steps, you will go through the standard SAPA and public comment

period, and then the Commission needs to provide feedback and ultimate approval for any -- any stage to advance.

COMMISSIONER VALESKY: Great, terrific. Matt, thanks for the good work. I look forward to supporting this item.

MR. BROWN: Thank you, Commissioner.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you.

Commissioner Maggiore.

COMMISSIONER MAGGIORE: Yeah, I think this is an item that I'm really happy to be voting yes on. Some of the major issues that we look at are stress on the grid, emission reductions, and high energy bills. This item addresses all three of those at the same time, and so, like, that's terrific. There's something that you said that we all know that I don't think everybody knows, which is that demand response programs are available for people to sign up for right now. Right. And you -- you just said that 120,000 households are enrolled in demand reduction programs. That means there's a lot that aren't.

And I think there's a lot more than 120,000 households that are concerned about high energy bills. If that's your only concern, you could

sign up for a demand reduction program right now that has a positive impact in that respect. And just because, you know, not everybody knows how, like, you know, this isn't pertaining directly to this order, but it's related. If you -- you know, there's millions of people watching this right now, live. So if I'm watching this and I want to sign up, what do I do?

MR. CULLY: So if I could follow in Matt's example maybe separate that out into what you could do literally today --

COMMISSIONER MAGGIORE: Yeah.

MR. CULLY: -- to sign up for a demand response program, and what we envision will be the process in the future under the Excelsior Power Platform. So today, you would go and you would find your existing electric or gas distribution company, you know, go look in your bill and the name on the top of the bill, that's who you got to talk to. So for me, it's National Grid. For Chair Christian, I believe, is Con Ed. You would go to their website and they will often have a section of their website that says something like how to save money. You follow the links on the website. It leads to a

platform or a subpage to that website that you then sign up.

You need to have a smart thermostat of your own. And there is a process for actually enrolling that -- that smart thermostat in with the company program through generally platform providers like EnergyHub, I believe is the currently the biggest one that the utilities are using. And so it's kind of a -- a several step process to go from customer decides they want to sign up, talk to the utility. Utility guides them through the process and then they can begin participating.

What we envision in the future is that a customer will say, hey, I want to participate in this Excelsior Power Program. They'll go to the Excelsior Power website. They'll put in their address. The website itself does the matchmaking between the electric and gas utility programs, and the customer basically gets an offer from their electric and gas utilities to participate at the incentive levels that they're eligible for. If they're a new customer, they'd be getting that enhanced incentive level for the first year. If they're an existing customer, they'll get the value-

based level.

And then they're essentially off and running and right into that specific technology enrollment process that I understand is -- is pretty easy. So it's a much faster, seamless process that we're envisioning for customer enrollment and de-enrollment if a customer decides they don't want to participate anymore in the future with this Excelsior Power Platform.

COMMISSIONER MAGGIORE: Great. So we're -- we're making the process even smoother. But if you're watching this and you don't know about it, there's a way to do it right now. And look, if 120,000 of your fellow New Yorkers could do, you could do it, too. So thank you very much. It's very exciting.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you.

Commissioner Bright.

COMMISSIONER BRIGHT: Thank you, Chairman, and thank you, Matt and Rob and Dave and Marco, of course. Great presentation. I don't have any questions. I mean, I'm incredibly excited to begin this next phase of our demand response and flexibility programs. Such a key component as we

look to more fully utilize the grid and our existing infrastructure, which of course, helps us manage costs and will also provide bill savings. So I am very excited to absolutely support this and I look forward to all the next steps.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you.

Commissioner Sheehan.

COMMISSIONER SHEEHAN: Thank you, Chair. Thanks, Matt, Rob, team. You guys did a great job as usual. Like my fellow Commissioners, I'm also very excited to see this get off the ground. I -- I do have one question. You talked about how currently it's mostly smart thermostats. What else are we envisioning, including going forward?

MR. CULLY: Let me pick that apart.

COMMISSIONER SHEEHAN: Okay.

MR. CULLY: Going forward, I think having a single platform really makes it a lot easier to peel the onion of controllable customer load and get down into much, much deeper in the stack of controllable load at a customer's house. Right now with a smart thermostat, we're really only able to use that single biggest energy and demand use, right, residential HVAC. And with a single platform --

sorry, before I talk about the future, let me step back into the past.

We've had experience with trying to enroll smaller direct load control, demand response, technology types into these programs, but we've really struggled at a level that's lower than whole home air conditioning to make that cost effective. Con Edison, a number of years ago, probably on -- on the better part of a decade now, had a pilot program that unfortunately, we -- we had to cancel because it was not penciling out to be cost effective where they would enroll individual smart room air conditioners.

And the cost to actually implement that project simply exceeded the benefits of controlling that number of rather small devices to -- to give a little sense of scale, a smart thermostat can provide about a kilowatt, give or take, of responsive demand load relief when called upon, whereas a room air conditioner, we're talking about a quarter of that. But the amount of enrollment and IT that goes into controlling those devices is the same. So essentially for the same level of cost to control the device, you're getting one quarter the amount of load relief.

Now -- that's the old way. The new way with that single platform -- a single platform provider that can much more efficiently on board a whole bunch of different types of controllable load can do that, we think, at a much lower price point and make a lot more controllable load within a customer's house become cost effective to control. So sometime in the future, we may be looking to expand and -- and re-up that room air conditioner program on the Excelsior Power Platform, for example.

MR. BROWN: And Commissioner, if I can just add to that. You know, currently the program is focused on HVAC, as Rob said, about a kW or so per house and batteries about 5 kW per house on average. In the future, as communications and smart home controllers get more technologically advanced and also more widespread, managed charging. Smart appliances where you can time things when -- when they operate or not. Down to smart outlets. You can have whole smart home hubs that control things.

So you know, in the context of a -- of an apartment or condo, you know, think a total peak load is maybe 5 to 10 kW for a home, 10 to 15 kW on average. It could be more or less depending on size

and what you have there. But you know, if you -- if you can go from controlling 10 percent to 25 percent of the load just by doing timing controls or shifting things, that's the kind of expansion. So it's not just an expansion of customers. It's a much deeper load that you can control within homes, potentially as -- as we move forward.

COMMISSIONER SHEEHAN: Yeah. I really appreciated that. That's very illuminating. And I -- you know, it does point to that. It's very exciting and the potential is really big. I think it's also important that this is voluntary. You know, it's not this big scary thing. It's people choosing and you're choosing it because you're going to save money. Right. And what a great way to do it, you just enroll, you make -- you know, you get a -- you get a reimbursement and you get a discount on your bill and you don't have to do anything.

I mean, it's -- it's a great way to engage customers in better ways to control their bill. So I think it's very exciting, and I do look forward to seeing what the utilities bring forward. You know, the how we do this is going to be interesting to watch and be a participant in, but I'm

excited to get it off the ground. So thanks again.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you.

Commissioner Valova.

COMMISSIONER VALOVA: Thank you. Thank you for a great report. And I'm also very excited, as my colleagues have expressed to see this -- this program expand and see the program platform develop. I have just one question. Because, Commissioner Sheehan, stole my -- my second question, and I -- I appreciate your -- your answer on that point. Why are existing customers not eligible for the enhanced credit? And specifically, for example, if you are a residential customer participating in your electric utilities demand response program, why wouldn't you be eligible now for receiving the enhanced incentive if you sign up for gas utilities DR program? And can you -- can you tie that into the overall goal of -- of the program?

MR. CULLY: So the -- the overall goal of the program, really, is the enhanced incentive is a shot in the arm, if you will, to get a lot more customers into the demand response space. And that -- that kind of underlies the -- the fact that it's a very sizable incentive and only available

for -- to a limited number of customers for a limited period.

This enhanced incentive level is at a level that at -- at kind of worst-case scenario is about $300 per kilowatt if we're only controlling a single thermostat, right, a single HVAC on the electric side. That's not cost effective. We want the programs to be cost effective in long term, and that is why we are limiting the enhanced incentive to times where there is that outside funding to help provide it. So the stated purpose, essentially, of this enhanced incentive today is to really act as a magnet to get new customers enrolled into the program, trying it out and hopefully staying.

MR BROWN: And Commissioner, if I can just add to that. You know, at about 120,000 customers currently, that's providing about 120 megawatts worth of savings on -- on average. Our -- our goal and hope here is, as Rob said, to almost double that. And then once we get new customers in and existing customers, with the platform simplified and more easy to expand to other services, it's not just one kW anymore, it's one kW plus the gas savings, plus maybe they consider doing some other

smart home. So our goal is to not just add more customers, but to add services and depth of savings within each existing customer.

COMMISSIONER VALOVA: Thank you. I'm going to use a term that I'm -- I'm not sure I'm using correctly. You can correct me if I'm wrong, but it sounds like this program is intended to be a force multiplier. So you're -- you're getting more customers engaged in paying attention to how they can proactively manage their energy bills, getting them more interested, if they see results, maybe they'll want to participate in other programs. And so when -- when not if -- when this program is successful, we'll see not only an increase in the number of customers, but total increase in energy saved and overall system efficiency, not just because there's a one-to-one increase in customers, but also in all the other ways that they might participate more.

MR. BROWN: I would say you nailed it with that summary. Thank you. I'll -- I'll use that when I'm -- we're back in a couple of months with our proposed solutions here, but no, that's exactly right. And -- and I would add a layer to that, which

is that, you know, the legislature saw fit to add an additional $3 million for outreach and education. So the platform will do exactly what you just described. And then in addition to that, we'll have a much more robust outreach and education program working across the state to make people aware that it is voluntary.

You can directly and personally save money. You know what, if you want to override it that day, that's okay. You can do it, and also you can leave this program at any time you want. So it'll, you know, include success stories which -- which many of you have actually laid out really nicely today. Thank you for -- for the talk -- future talking points and messaging. And you know, it will also help bring more people into the program and help people understand that there's new services that might be available in the future that they can join.

COMMISSIONER VALOVA: Great. It's -- everything you're saying, it's all of the reasons for which I'm -- I'm also very excited about the program. Last question that came up as -- as you were speaking. How does the enhanced incentive compare to what a customer would receive normally under the

program? You mentioned that it's a sizable incentive. What does that really mean?

MR. CULLY: So our -- our present level of incentives is for a -- for a smart thermostat, generally speaking, let's talk about just the electric side first because the gas -- the gas side, they're really still in something of a nascent phase. Only the National Grid gas companies upstate, KEDLI and KEDNY have operational gas demand response programs right now -- presently. So I'm just -- the electric side generally, we're speaking about customers getting a $50 to $85, depending upon the utility, upfront enrollment payment to help defray the cost of a smart thermostat.

And then afterward, after that first year, they generally begin earning approximately $20 per demand response season. So $20 for the summer season, roughly $20 for the gas season, and that would continue thereafter. Now, our smart thermostat programs are very cost effective, and that's the way we like them. So we're -- we're always trying to make sure that we can tweak those incentives to get the best outcome for participants and the broader pool of customers. And we -- we do that process

every single year, usually around March or April session with the demand response annual report draft orders that we present.

COMMISSIONER VALOVA: Thank you. A couple of comments. I am very excited about the program because of its potential to maximize savings. And it sounds like it's a -- it's an easy -- it's a -- it's an easy, yes, for all of us because for every dollar we invest, and the legislature which is -- and the governor support. I'm really grateful that we're not using just ratepayer dollars, but that there's also funding for the education and outreach, which in this case may be the most important element of -- of the program.

For every dollar that we're investing, we're going to get lots more back in terms of savings for individual customers and the grid. And I also want to note that I appreciate that we're taking a holistic view of energy system management. We've got the Grid of the Future proceeding where we're looking at proactive planning and also cybersecurity. You know, like, we recently adopted some of the most stringent cybersecurity -- the most stringent cybersecurity requirements for utilities in -- in the

country. And the more connected devices we have, the more important that is. So I just really want to note that I -- I am appreciative of the fact that we are looking not only at programmatic improvement, but also security improvements. Thank you.

MR. BROWN: Thank you, Commissioner.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you. With that, I'll conduct the call for a vote. My vote is in favor of the recommendations contained in the draft order as discussed.

Commissioner Alesi, how do you vote?

COMMISSIONER ALESI: Yes.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you.

Commissioner Valesky?

COMMISSIONER VALESKY: Yes.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you.

Commissioner Maggiore?

COMMISSIONER MAGGIORE: Yes.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you.

Commissioner Bright?

COMMISSIONER BRIGHT: Yes.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you.

Commissioner Sheehan?

COMMISSIONER SHEEHAN: Yes.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you.

Commissioner Valova?

COMMISSIONER VALOVA: Yes.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you. The item is approved and the recommendations are adopted. Thank you, everyone.

We'll now move to the consent agenda. Do any Commissioners wish to comment on or recuse from voting on any items on the consent agenda? I'll begin with Commissioner Alesi.

COMMISSIONER ALESI: I do not.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you.

Commissioner Valesky?

COMMISSIONER VALESKY: No comments or recusal.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you.

Commissioner Maggiore?

COMMISSIONER MAGGIORE: No comments or recusal.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you.

Commissioner Bright?

COMMISSIONER BRIGHT: I have a couple comments.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: There we go.

COMMISSIONER BRIGHT: So I want to comment on item 264. The Regional Residential Weatherization Programs for Non-LMI EE/BE portfolio. I just really want to express really profound gratitude and appreciation to the groups, the teams, the utilities, just continuing to engage in the EE/BE process.

It's such an important part of providing energy to customers with the best service and also improving people's quality of life. I also, like, many other aspects of this work, it takes so many different minds to sort of come together for the best outcomes, and I feel like that is what has happened here. So I really appreciate, especially the Office of Markets and Innovation, your work and -- and the teams to -- to pull these portfolios together.

Also, I want to comment on item 370, which is the headroom calculations. I'm extremely supportive and just want to thank the joint utilities for their petition. The stakeholder engagement has been great, and it's always helpful in helping us make well-rounded decisions that are grounded in real world conditions and build in flexibility. I also

want to acknowledge that this headroom calculation order is the product of the Department and this Commission's thoughtful planning efforts in the CGPP process. So I want to thank Staff, the utilities, developers, EPAC, the Energy Policy Planning Advisory Committee, working group has done phenomenal work in that area.

The advocacy groups, faith -- all of all sizes and shapes, faith-based justice, environmental consumer advocacy groups really helping in this CGPP process and -- and providing feedback in -- on the record, as well as New York State -- State agencies whose expertise is always invaluable. So I'm constantly awed by just the brilliant minds coming together to build this Commission's record and really appreciate it.

The last one I wanted to mention was item 374, which is -- I can't help but mention, it's the interconnection cost and timeliness order. There's just been a lot of discussion around it, and I hope that this provides clarity both in looking backwards and also putting structure and information in place for people to have better visibility and certainty going forward, and would just, again, thank

the -- the working groups' Interconnection Technical Working Group and the Interconnection Policy Working Group for their continued hard work on these issues as we continue to work to bring down soft costs. So that is my last comment. Thank you.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you.

And Commissioner Sheehan?

COMMISSIONER SHEEHAN: Thank you, Chair. No recusals. I do have comments on two items. The first item is item 374, the interconnection which adopts modifications to the SIR to address cost estimating and transparency of interconnection cost data. So first, I just want to thank the Staff and the stakeholders for the time and effort they put into this process and to putting -- to putting proposals forward and to reviewing those proposals.

I also want to acknowledge the effort that goes into our Interconnection Technical Working Group and our Interconnection Policy Working Group. These are, you know, very time intensive. People roll-up their sleeves. They're very important to this process. So I do want to emphasize that this order adopts some important modifications that

specifically increase transparency. But I also -- I would be remiss if I didn't also mention that there are a lot of pending issues in this docket.

And I don't want anyone to think for one second that we're not aware of that, and that we know that there's a lot of things still out there with respect to interconnection. A quick perusal of the docket just shows that there's a lot out there, and there's a lot of important issues related to interconnection. I do just want to encourage Staff and stakeholders to continue to work together to resolve those issues, and to bring these matters to our attention as quickly as possible.

My specific interest is in ensuring that DERs, that we need to improve the grid are being deployed in a timely manner. So I just wanted to say that because I know everyone in this docket is like, sees this number on the list and it's, like, oh, what is it, right, which item is it going to be because there's so much happening. So this is an important step and don't -- and we -- we aren't declaring victory. We just know this is step one or this is one part of this puzzle and we will continue to work on it. And I know that many of the people in the

front row are going to be a part of that process.

Okay. The next item I wanted to comment on is item 376, which is the order addressing NYSERDA's petition to backfill positions in the Clean Energy Standard program. I'm supporting this order, but I also want to explain why. In December, the Commission adopted an order approving NYSERDA's 2026 Clean Energy Standard Administrative budget. And in that order, we included the requirement that no new hires or backfills could happen without Commission approval.

I did not vote on that order. I was recused at the time under public officers law. So I believe that this order is consistent with my fellow Commissioners' order back in December. So that's why I'm supporting it. However, I -- from my personal opinion, I just want to stress that going forward, my preference is for the Commission to work with NYSERDA to establish a Clean Energy Standard budget, the FTEs associated with that, provide the parameters around that program that we want to see in terms of management of the program, and then allow NYSERDA to manage the program, and also be accountable for that management.

I don't believe that this level of micromanagement by the Commission is efficient, and I do think it creates additional burdens for our staff, for stakeholders who have to comment, the requirement that it has to be subject to SAPA. You know, I'm a former DOB gal. So I know the process of having to get positions approved. I just do think that we can -- there's better ways to ensure proper management of ratepayer funds. So I would just say that for going forward. So that's it. Those are my comments. Thank you.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you.

And Commissioner Valova.

COMMISSIONER VALOVA: Thank you. No recusals. And for efficiency, I will say I support the comments of my colleagues, Commissioner -- Commissioners Bright and Sheehan in item 374. Thank you.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: All right. Thank you. We'll now conduct a call for vote. My vote is in favor of the recommendations on the consent agenda.

Commissioner Alesi?

COMMISSIONER ALESI: Yes, on all

items.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you. Yes, on all items? Yes, on all items. Thank you.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you.

Commissioner Valesky?

COMMISSIONER VALESKY: Yes, on all items.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you.

Commissioner Maggiore?

COMMISSIONER MAGGIORE: Yes, on all items.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you.

Commissioner Bright?

COMMISSIONER BRIGHT: Yes, on all items.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you.

Commissioner Sheehan?

COMMISSIONER SHEEHAN: Yes, on all items.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you.

Commissioner Valova?

COMMISSIONER VALOVA: Yes, on all items.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you. The

items are approved and the recommendations are adopted.

Madam Secretary, is there anything else to come before us today?

SECRETARY PHILLIPS: There's nothing further.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Are you sure?

SECRETARY PHILLIPS: I'm positive.

CHAIR CHRISTIAN: All right. With that, I conclude today's meeting. Thank you.

(The hearing concluded at 11:19 a.m.)

8/13/2026 - NYS Public Service Commission

STATE OF NEW YORK

I, TINA HOTALING, do hereby certify that the foregoing was reported by me, in the cause, at the time and place, as stated in the caption hereto, at Page 1 hereof; that the foregoing typewritten transcription consisting of pages 1 through 42, is a true record of all proceedings had at the hearing.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name, this the 14th day of August, 2026.

TINA HOTALING, Reporter

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