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## Tempted by the promise of Green Energy

I live in Jamaica Plain, and I am an activist in several environmental groups. I have always wanted to get more renewable energy in my electricity mix. There were very few ways to do this affordably.

In 2009, I was home sick from work and got a knock on the door. A young woman dressed in an outfit with a logo from a green energy company, complete with a hat, jersey, and clipboard, told me that I could get renewable energy affordably by signing up with her company (Veridian?) She was very smart and pushy, and I was gullible and very much wanted to do the right thing for the environment. She rushed me through a long document, and I signed up for something I didn't really understand.

Many months down the line, my electricity bill (which has always been difficult to interpret) rapidly increased. I looked through the paperwork, and it was hard to find someone to contact from the company. I finally spoke with someone with a thick foreign accent who told me that I could not break the contract without a heavy fine. I tried to explain how their reasonable monthly rate had ballooned, but he was hostile and wouldn't give way. I called the BBB, and got the courage up to call him back, and I was able to terminate the contract after having lost several hundred dollars.

They suckered me again in 2016 by coming to my door dressed in their convincing costume. This time it was two black teens, talking fast and high pressured, demanding that I show them my electricity bill so that they could demonstrate the savings. I did not know that this was a common tactic for them to get your account number and switch your account. Fortunately, I didn't let them in and instead told them I would call them back tomorrow. They actually called me the next day and tried to strong arm me into a contract.

It happened one more time—and I went down there and told them to leave the neighborhood. I also sent everyone an email letting them know of their fraudulent designs.

It appalls me that this kind of scam continues after all these years of ripping people off. I am fortunate, in that I am upper middle class and well educated—still they robbed me. It saddens me to know how many less privileged people they have been bullying. Something has to be done, because green energy has now become something people do not trust in.

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