Concerning D.P.U. Docket #20-80

Greetings:

As a citizen of Somerville and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, I concur with many of the citizens who testified at the hearing on May 3. Specifically:

* Gas as a fuel, by whatever name, is based on fossil fuels (except for hydrogen obtained by the electrolysis of water using renewable energy, an expensive path). So-called blue hydrogen is not a viable alternative.
* This is the time to wind down gas usage and convert to renewably based electricity and build up the electric infrastructure. Gas pipelines should be phased out. The timeline is tight but it can be done. (Customers may not all be happy, but that’s the way it goes. The legislature has spoken.)
  + Note 1: If some customers truly want gas for cooking, there are alternatives such as LNG and propane tanks.
  + Note 2: Apparently some industries really will continue to need gas, but I’m sure they also can figure out workarounds, such as LNG. It may be more expensive, so they should be warned ahead of time to seek alternatives. My guess is that they will suddenly find that they can replace those needs with electricity to a much greater extent when they consider the alternatives.
* Replacing pipelines, rather than repairing them, makes no sense as long as they will no longer be used by 2050.
* Allowing any aid to gas companies (not a surcharge) should only be allowed if the aim is a short-term method of making sure that the diminishing number of customers are not burdened with excessive expense during the wind-down period. The amount of money and time allowed should be determined in advance so gas companies are incentivized to make sure the transition happens while they are still getting sufficient funds.

Finally, I can see where DPU feels it is easier to let the utility companies come up with ideas, but there also need to be experts involved who do not have a financial stake in the results. I hope that hearings and comments matter and are not just window dressing. I look forward to a robust response from DPU to these proposals based on these comments.

Sincerely,

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