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Letter of Comment

In accordance with the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, to submit a letter of comment concerning an application currently before the Commission, please provide a completed form to commission.secretary@bcuc.com. If email is unavailable, please mail the form to the address above. By doing so, you acknowledge that all letters of comment are published with the author's name as part of the public evidentiary record, both in print copy and on the Commission's website. All personal contact information provided on this page is removed before posting to the website. Forms must be received by the Commission by the last filing date included in the proceeding's regulatory timetable before final arguments.

Proceeding name

Are you currently registered as an intervener or interested party?

Name (first and last)

City Province

Email Phone number

Letter of Comment

Name (first and last)

John B. Sprague

Date:

2016 Aug 24

Comment: Please specify the reasons for your interest in the proceeding, your views concerning the proceeding, any relevant information that supports or explains your views, the conclusion you support and any recommendations. The Commission may disallow comments that do not comply with the Rules of Practice and Procedure.

This is a recommendation to reduce the difference between Step 1 and Step 2 power rates for households, in the interest of reducing greenhouse gas emissions from home heating by burning fuel

Those of us [REDACTED] do not have access to natural gas. Home heating by electricity was common a few decades ago, and many of us use that system. It has become expensive. In 2010 our family power consumption for the six months January to June was 13,741 kwh. In January-June of the current year 2016, consumption has been 14,173 kwh, in other words little changed during the six years (3% more, perhaps because we added an electric car). However our power bill for the earlier half-year was \$1,071 and for the current half-year is \$1,784. That is a 66.6% increase over the six years, although the consumer price index only showed a rise of only 11 %.

Such increase in cost drives householders to heat by other means; lacking the option of natural gas, that other method is often burning wood. That results in greater emission of greenhouse gases, at a time when it is urgent to reduce those gases. (Although some people think that burning wood is neutral for CO₂, that is only true in terms of centuries, if trees regenerate to the same size. We must deal in terms of one or two decades to reduce CO₂, and for that time, burning wood is similar to using fossil fuels.)

The trend to increased greenhouse gas does not make sense, since we are told that British Columbia is self-sufficient in electricity, and that most of it comes from dams. In a few years there will be an even greater supply of electricity with the completion of the Site C dam. It makes sense then, in the interests of reducing British Columbia's greenhouse gas emission, to encourage home heating with electricity instead of wood or fossil fuels. An obvious way to do that is to make step 2 rates lower than step 1. That concept is not a foreign idea; it is commonly followed in Canada for big industrial users, who often get a low rate if they are big users of electricity. The increased availability of electricity should be used to encourage use for heating, in order to displace fossil fuels, even in those locations with access to natural gas.

Such new rates could be adjusted for no reduction of income to B.C. Hydro.

John B. Sprague, Ph.D.