



## **PRESS RELEASE**

# **OPC Advocates for Pepco to Withdraw its Rate Hike Application to Protect Consumers from Harm** ***OPC Says Pepco Has Turned This into a Mess***

**August 12, 2020**

Washington, DC --Asserting that Pepco's proposal to increase rates "has been riddled with errors, missteps, and false information from the start," People's Counsel for the District of Columbia Sandra Mattavous-Frye calls on the DC Public Service Commission (PSC) to direct Pepco to withdraw its entire rate application because the case has devolved into an "evidentiary and procedural mess that is a waste of public resources." The Office of the People's Counsel (OPC) made the withdrawal request in a joint motion filed with the PSC yesterday.

Pepco's rate application includes two alternative multiyear rate plan (MRP) proposals for a massive rate increase between 2020 and 2023, one seeking \$147.2 million and the other, \$135.9 million. If an MRP is not approved, Pepco has asked that rates be immediately increased by \$76.7 million under its traditional application.

The joint motion explains that the PSC warned Pepco that because an MRP would replace a long-standing method for determining rates in the District, parties would need adequate time to review the proposal. Instead, Pepco has pushed for shortened deadlines and repeatedly made major changes at points in the process where parties would not have had an opportunity to

respond unless, as OPC did, they fought for a say.

"Simply put, Pepco has turned this process into a debacle. The company has attempted to curb the parties' rights to address the proposal and to compromise OPC's ability to advocate for ratepayers," stated People's Counsel Mattavous-Frye. The final straw was when Pepco informed the PSC and the parties on July 28th that it had used the wrong data to calculate charges for commercial customers. Though Pepco claims the error is minor, it is actually a major issue that could negatively impact all customers, including residential consumers.

The joint motion further documents how Pepco has been actively misleading the public. Pepco publicized that its June 1, 2020 MRP is a "rate freeze." In actuality, it is a massive rate increase that will be offset largely by customers' own money.

"Enough is enough. This case has been little more than a 'shell game.' We should not continue to spend limited resources, especially when the COVID-19 pandemic has created an economic crisis, on a case where the evidentiary basis is unreliable and ever changing. The PSC should end this wasteful endeavor, direct Pepco to withdraw its entire rate case application, and provide additional relief for consumers that must include barring Pepco from recovering the costs associated with this case," said the People's Counsel.

OPC is joined in the motion by the Apartment and Office Building Association of Metropolitan Washington, the General Services Administration, DC Water, the Baltimore Washington Construction and Public Employees Laborers' District Council, the Maryland DC Virginia Solar Energy Industries Association, and the Small Business Utility Advocates. Moreover, the District of Columbia Government today filed a letter supporting the motion with the PSC.

The PSC has scheduled a community hearing on the rate increase application on September 1. Separately, OPC has asked the PSC to postpone the hearing to give the public more time to comment.

A copy of the joint motion can be [found here](#). For more information on the rate case, please see [OPC's fact sheet](#).

**Media Contact:**

Doxie McCoy  
Public Information Officer  
(202) 261-1180  
dmccoy@opc-dc.gov

