

PNM is holding our Grid hostage, asking us to pay ransom, and calling it Grid Modernization. A bold statement perhaps, but that's my view on the active 'revenue request' case 22-00058-ut which is currently in the hands of the Public Regulatory Commission (PRC).

I got involved in this case in October 2022 after reading a notice from PNM informing us that they had submitted a Plan and revenue request for \$344M to be added to our bills over 6 years for 'Grid Modernization Projects'. The cost caught my eye, and I have a keen interest in the topic as I have been a clean energy advocate working with Solar and all kinds of 'electric stuff' since 2007. I am fairly well informed on the technical limitations of our existing Grid infrastructure, and I know that significant investment will be required to enable us to reach our goal of 100% renewable electricity. So, I followed the links and read through the (845 pages) PNM Plan and related documents.

What I discovered is that PNM's plan proposes spending close to \$200M of the \$344M requested over the first 2 years or so to remove and replace all 500,000 of our (functioning) meters with 'smart meters' to upgrade/automate their billing systems, enable remote meter reading, data collection and remote disconnect/reconnect capabilities before starting Grid Mod projects. Smart Meters would reduce Operational costs for PNM significantly, but not reduce our bills or enable any more Renewable Energy to be contributed, managed, stored or used on the Grid. In fact, the complexity of the plan has delayed desperately needed infrastructure improvements by two years already, and will delay key infrastructure projects by two more years if PNM is allowed to start with implementation of smart meters rather than other hardware and batteries that would enable additional Solar to contribute to the Grid to serve increasing Demands as we 'Electrify' our heating/cooling and transportation with electric bikes and cars, trucks, and buses.

I joined the case in January 2023 as a *Pro Se* Intervener with no company or non-profit backing me up hoping to help change the Plan to prioritize additional Solar Investment/contribution from individual and Community Solar projects. It's been an eye opening experience. At this moment there are literally thousands of homes and businesses that are not allowed, or have to pay \$2500 for a 'supplemental review', before they can contribute Solar energy to the Grid because PNM has not made investments in the equipment needed to monitor, manage, store and distribute daytime Solar surplus energy.

I am hoping that the time I have spent preparing and reviewing Testimony, Briefs, and participating in 8 days of Hearings have contributed to the body of evidence the Commissioners are now reviewing to enable them to reach a decision that will secure the early release of our 'hostage' Grid Mod projects, and help us Ratepayers get more renewable Energy on the Grid to serve our increasing demands.

My opinion is that the best and quickest way to move forward with Grid Modernization is for PRC Commissioners to deny PNM's current Plan and require

re-prioritization and revision of the Plan to focus first on projects that enable Ratepayers and Communities that are able to invest to contribute to the Grid for the use of all.

It is hard to predict when the Commissioners will meet to discuss and rule on this case, but I hope members of the Public will watch the agendas published at <https://www.prc.nm.gov/nmprc-open-meeting-agenda/> and take one last opportunity to comment and watch the proceedings on case 22-00058-UT.