NEWS RELEASE

Office of Commissioner Brandon Presley
MISSISSIPPI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
NORTHERN DISTRICT

Presley: Commission Unanimously Approves Groundbreaking Net-Metering Rules

JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI - (December 3, 2015) – Today, the Public Service Commission unanimously passed a groundbreaking rule allowing net metering in the state. Net metering is the process by which individual utility customers who use solar panels or other renewable energy generators can sell back their excess power to the power companies. The electricity the customers produce can be placed back on the electric grid to offset what they otherwise would pay on their power bill.

In early January of 2011, the PSC initiated a study of the costs and benefits of net metering. Today's decision is the culmination of nearly 5 years of work by the Commission.

"Mississippians are self-sufficient. They like to fix their own cars and grow their own food. They should be able to make their own power, too," Presley said.

The rule requires that customers who produce excess electricity be compensated at the cost the utility will not have to spend each month, plus 2.5 cents for unquantifiable benefits. To assist low income customers, the Commission orders that each utility file a report on the feasibility of community solar by summer, 2016. Further, the first 1,000 low income customers will receive an additional 2 cents/kWh as a way of offsetting some initial costs. The order further protects consumers by establishing a joint working group to address all concerns raised in the docket. The effectiveness of the rule will be evaluated in 5 years.

"Passing this rule is a big step toward creating a solar market in our state; a step that could one day benefit all ratepayers. No one can predict what the cost of electricity or gas will be tomorrow but I can tell you that the sunshine will be free," Presley concluded.

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