

Ms. Kimberley A. Campbell, Chief Clerk
North Carolina Utilities Commission
4325 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-4300

Re: SSDN Reply Comments in Support of Duke Energy's Proposed Electric Transportation Phase II Pilot and Make Ready Credit Programs; Docket Nos. E-2, Sub 1197 and E-7, Sub 1195

Dear Ms. Campbell:

On behalf of the Southeast Sustainability Directors Network (SSDN), I appreciate the opportunity to submit reply comments in support of Duke Energy's proposed Electric Transportation (ET) programs and tariffs¹ and the areas of alignment discussed herein.

SSDN is a network of 100 city and county governments in 10 states across the southeastern United States that works to advance sustainability initiatives in the region. Our growing North Carolina membership includes 24 local governments² and their key sustainability staff. As part of our work, we regularly engage in conversations with utilities and diverse stakeholders to help ensure that clean energy programs and policies that impact our communities and local government operations are developed and implemented as effectively as possible.

SSDN commends the efforts of Duke Energy and the North Carolina Utilities Commission (NCUC) to address the opportunities and challenges associated with transportation electrification.

We support expeditious NCUC approval of Duke's Phase II Pilot and Make Ready Credit Program proposals and thank Duke for its recent engagement with SSDN and member local governments to work toward mutually agreeable solutions on a number of proposed ET programs of interest to local governments and their constituents.

Overall, we believe that Duke's ET proposal will advance our state toward a cleaner, more sustainable energy future that decreases carbon emissions, improves the health of North Carolinians, and lowers energy costs for everyone. One of the most impactful aspects of the proposal is that Duke will invest in EV infrastructure in underserved areas of the state, including in rural communities and in areas with historically underserved populations, particularly low and moderate income areas. We thank the Commission for directing Duke to convene an ET stakeholder collaborative to help inform the utility's proposal. SSDN began participating in this collaborative in mid-February, and in general, believes these processes provide an effective forum by which local governments, intervenors, and other interested stakeholders can share their unique perspectives, input, and feedback. Accordingly, we applaud the Commission for its June 2021 directive to continue this stakeholder engagement process.

¹ DEC and DEP's Make Ready Credit Programs and Tariffs filed on April 20, 2021, and DEC and DEP's Request for Approval of Phase II ET Pilot Programs, filed on May 24, 2021

² SSDN's NC members include: Asheville, Apex, Boone, Buncombe County, Carrboro, Cary, Chapel Hill, Charlotte, Chatham County, Davidson, Durham, Durham County, Henderson County, Hillsborough, Mecklenburg County, Morrisville, New Bern, Orange County, Raleigh, Wilmington, and Winston-Salem.

In addition to participation in this stakeholder collaborative, SSDN and its members have had several recent meetings with Duke to work toward mutually agreeable solutions on a number of ET programs of interest to local governments and their constituents. These conversations have been very productive, and the outcomes are described further below. SSDN and its members look forward to additional dialogue with Duke to achieve further alignment.

Data-access

Since Duke filed its initial application with the Commission, SSDN and its member local governments have had several meetings with the utility to discuss issues including data access. Notably, local governments play several unique roles: they are large customers with their own fleets, property owners that can serve as site hosts for public charging stations, makers and implementers of public policy, and stewards of their communities. The successful implementation of all of these roles necessitates access to diverse forms of data.

For example, as site hosts, local governments would benefit from readily available and timely data related to specific electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE), including: total hours of use, number of unique users, duration of stays, patterns related to time of use (e.g., day of week, hour of day, etc.), kWh consumed, etc. Based on our recent discussions with Duke, the utility has agreed to provide this level of data to local governments.

As regulators and stewards, local governments would benefit from readily available and timely data to guide policy, planning, and programmatic decisions. This data may include the number and location of publicly available EVSE installed under the pilot in their jurisdiction and other aggregated information related to use such as unique users and utilization rates. Based on our recent discussions with Duke, the utility has agreed to provide this level of data to local governments so long as it does not conflict with the Companies' North Carolina Code of Conduct or Commission Rules.

Limitation on Plug Types

Since Duke filed its initial application with the Commission, SSDN and its member local governments have had several meetings with the utility to discuss the plug types eligible through the utility's offerings. Specifically, the Make Ready Credit filing specifies that certain EVSE plug types are required in order to be eligible for the credit (i.e., J1772), but the filing also states that the Make Ready Credit leaves EVSE options open to customers. Specifying certain plug types (i.e., J1772) may be a reasonable approach in the case of multifamily properties or publicly accessible chargers and may be reasonable under the EVSE tariff proposal, but is not needed in the Make Ready Credit. Based on our recent discussions with Duke, it is our understanding that Duke has agreed to implement the program in a manner that allows customers flexibility in this regard, and we support and appreciate that commitment.

Public Chargers — Access Requirements

Since Duke filed its initial application with the Commission, SSDN and its member local governments have had several meetings with the utility to discuss ways in which local governments may be better able to serve as site hosts. For instance, some sites owned and operated by local governments, which may otherwise be ideal for public chargers, do not currently have 24/7 access for security purposes or safety reasons; which could limit collaborative siting. As part of continued discussions with Duke, SSDN and its members

would like to continue to discuss permitting specific exceptions to this requirement that would help support local government participation in the public Level 2 charger pilot.

Public Chargers — Additional Allocation

Since Duke filed its initial application with the Commission, SSDN and its member local governments have had several meetings with the utility to discuss the role of local governments as natural site host candidates. In these discussions, SSDN has recommended that, where there are willing site hosts and remaining EVSE allocations, the EVSE port limit be increased beyond the specified 8 or 20 port maximums per host entity in order to ensure maximum participation in the utility's Public Level 2 Charger Pilot. As part of continued discussions with Duke, SSDN and its members plan to continue discussing specific exceptions to this requirement to more fully enable the participation of local governments and other site hosts in the program.

Maintenance Conditions

Since Duke filed its initial application with the Commission, SSDN and its member local governments have had several meetings with the utility to discuss its EVSE tariff. In particular, SSDN members have expressed a need for a greater level of detail within the tariff and participation agreements with respect to the timing of equipment repairs or replacements particularly that may impact the maintenance and use of emergency/critical care and other fleet vehicles. As part of continued discussions with Duke, SSDN and its members plan to recommend that Duke track and report the length and timing of repair times to help inform long-term program planning and potential future changes to the tariff design.

School Bus Pilot — Emergency Protocols

Since Duke filed its initial application with the Commission, SSDN and its member local governments have had several meetings with the utility to discuss the vehicle-to-grid component of the proposed EV School Bus program and how incidents of power failure (e.g., storms) may or may not impact the "necessary duty cycle" of buses and who has the priority to utilize pre-charged batteries. As a result of our ongoing discussions with Duke, we confirmed the utility does not intend to hinder emergency operations.

Right of Way Installations

Since Duke filed its initial application with the Commission, SSDN and its member local governments have had several meetings with the utility to discuss opportunities to utilize right of ways for EVSE siting in an effort to accelerate the transportation electrification transition, including accessible charging infrastructure. SSDN and its member companies look forward to continued conversation with the utility on this topic.

Conclusion

SSDN commends Duke Energy for making this timely proposal before the Commission and believes that it is a step in the right direction for transportation electrification. We hope that it can build upon the ongoing success of the Phase I pilot programs and infrastructure being implemented in communities across North Carolina and the feedback provided in the ET Collaborative Stakeholders Process.

As a regional organization, we also appreciate the efforts that Duke Energy and the Commission have undertaken to evaluate the work and experience that utilities have already achieved in neighboring states in the Southeast, including South Carolina and Virginia. We encourage this effort to continue and plan to continue to participate in ongoing discussions so that we can increase regional solutions for EV drivers who will inevitably cross state and service territory boundaries.

The Southeast Sustainability Directors Network and our local government members have a history of partnering with Duke Energy on energy programs that benefit our residents, businesses, and local government operations. We are committed to collaboration and look forward to continuing to work with Duke to enable solutions that will accelerate a more affordable, clean, equitable, resilient, and reliable energy and transportation system. Through continued partnership, we can demonstrate to both North Carolinians and the nation what collaborative clean energy leadership looks like.

Sincerely,



Meg Jamison
Executive Director
Southeast Sustainability Directors Network