

Stopping the Smart Meter Dictatorship Established By PA Law

Written by Paul Saunders
Saturday, January 12, 2013 -

A member of the Energy & Environment Action Committee wrote to Governor Corbett to ask if PA Law allowed customers to OPT-OUT of the Public Utility Commission (PUC) Smart Meter deployment program and law in PA. The answer below from the PA PUC was a loud **NO!** unless Tea Party members contact their PA Reps. and PA Senators and DEMAND that they pass a customer OPT OUT for this dictatorial, individual-rights-violating program.

The justification for the Government-ENFORCED, energy usage reduction Smart Meter program is that the power companies cannot supply enough electricity into the future because:

1.) the environmental movement is using every means possible, including backdoor legislative deals and frivolous lawsuits, to eradicate or delay new power plant construction,

2.) environmental activists have taken over government environmental agencies and are using their regulatory power to FORCE the shutdown of large numbers of coal-fired power plants that are the backbone supplying U.S. energy needs.

3.) these same environmental activists (aka fanatics) oppose nuclear power, oil-fired power plants, and natural gas power (aka hydraulic fracturing) plants, that is, every inexpensive energy source known to man.

4.) environmentalists plus solar and wind lobbyists have conned PA legislators into a sweetheart deal where the PA legislators have MANDATED by law (HB-2405) an annual ratcheting-upward of "renewable energy" projects onto the backs of the power companies.

These "renewable energy" projects are unjustifiable from:

a.) a moral (redistribution of wealth, discriminatory subsidizing of government-favored industries) perspective,

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b.) an engineering perspective (every solar or wind project requires installation of completely-redundant, duplicate, back-up power capacity using natural gas-fired turbine power) which wastes taxpayers money, and

c.) an economic perspective (Europe is abandoning renewable energy because it is causing customer electric bills to skyrocket).

My comments on the letter contents below appear in square brackets [].

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Dear Ms. X:

Chairman Robert Powelson asked me to respond to your inquiry to Gov. Corbett concerning the legislative mandate for the development and deployment of smart meters in the Commonwealth, and the ability of electric customers to “opt-out” of the smart meter program. We appreciate your inquiry and the issues that you raise.

Currently, Pennsylvania law does not provide for a customer “opt out” of their utility’s smart meter program . **HB 2186** and **HB 2188** were introduced by Rep. Mike Reese (R-Westmoreland and Somerset) to amend Title 66 (Public Utilities) that would partially repeal Act 129 and allow consumers to opt out of having smart meter technology installed at their premises during a mandated 15-year period, as well as require consumer consent in order to share information from electric meters with government agencies. Legislative hearings have been held on the proposed bills, however, to date neither bill has passed the General Assembly and, **as things stand now, there is no opt-out provision for electric customers wishing not to participate in their utility’s smart meter program.**

By way of background, the deployment of smart meters is a result of PA Act 129 of 2008, which puts the PUC in charge of implementing the law and guiding consumers and electric utilities toward achieving the overall goals of reducing energy consumption and peak electric demand.

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The state's seven largest electric distribution companies (EDCs), including Met-Ed, are required to develop energy efficiency and conservation plans (EE&C) and adopt other methods of reducing electricity used by customers - including the use of smart meters by residential customers. This is mandated in the law. **The only reason these energy reduction laws exist is because of environmentalist activism based on their scientific myth - the global warming crisis.]** If there were any changes to the law, those changes would need to be initiated in the General Assembly. At this time the PUC is not aware of any proposed changes to Act 129 so the PUC and the EDCs continue to fulfill their responsibilities under the law.

The utility industry is in a phase of rapid change due to rising energy demand, increased number of customers and their demands, market de-regulation, increased cost, energy theft, etc. As a result, the industry has identified demand side management as an essential solution – and **smart metering is seen as a key component in the implementation of an effective demand side management program.** **Demand-side management is a cutesy leftist term to cover-up the fact that government is violating the customers' individual rights just like in a totalitarian state.]** As noted above, still being weighed in the General Assembly is the feasibility and practicality of a smart meter “opt-out” program at a time when Pennsylvania's major electric distribution companies are quickly moving forward with the development and deployment of smart meter technology across the Commonwealth.

Under Act, 129, reductions are achieved in phases through both EE&C and demand side response programs, which are approved by the PUC and include such things as high efficiency appliances and HVAC rebate programs; and smart-meter technology plans that permit two-way communication, can record usage on an hourly basis, and provide automatic control of electric consumption by the customer, utility and a third party with customer consent. **This is a sad joke on us because the utility (the power company) takes orders from the government and, thus, without your consent, the government can order the power company to shut off your heat or air conditioning.]** At present, smart meters are to be installed in new construction and at the customer's request, with the goal of all customers utilizing smart meters by 2021. **Here is the eco-fanatics and statists end goal -- to have every PA customer under the totalitarian power of the state by 2021. Bye, bye Freedom and free personal choices.]**

All meters, including smart meters installed by an electric utility must meet the rigorous and comprehensive accuracy and reliability requirements contained in the Commission's Regulations at 52 Pa. Code §§ 57.20 – 57.25. Smart meters are capable of recording total electric use on at least an hourly basis. The Commission has directed electric utilities to pursue the ability to provide 15-minute or shorter interval data to support rate programs or conservation programs that utilize this level of granularity. Such capability is to be offered and provided only upon customer request. While a smart meter may have the capability to record customer usage every 60-minutes or less, it cannot identify or record what appliances or equipment are using

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the electricity or any activity associated with the electric use. The recorded data simply allows the electric customer or that customer's designee to know their total electric use for each hour or whatever interval the customer requests.

The Commission believes that it was the intent of the General Assembly to require all covered electric companies to deploy smart meters system-wide, and to do so in a manner that empowers a customer's ability to control their electricity use, as well as their privacy. **[This is statist arrogance par excellence. They must think we are all idiots. To declare that a dictatorial government takeover of the control of your electricity usage "empowers a customer's ability to control their electricity use" is the height of statist brazenness.]** Thus, the Commission will continue to ensure that the electric utilities implement the universal installation of smart meter technology in a manner that meets the intent of the General Assembly. **[This states that the PUC Gestapo will continue to implement the "universal" final solution onto the power companies for ending your control of your electricity usage.]**

Thank you for your inquiry and interest in this issue. I have copied Chairman Powelson's office on my reply.

Sincerely,

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