



CITIZENS UTILITY BOARD

Fighting for Illinois Consumers

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STATEMENT: CUB JOINS OTHER CONSUMER ADVOCATES IN CHALLENGING FEDERALLY MANDATED RATE HIKE TO KEEP ‘ZOMBIE POWER PLANT’ OPEN

***Initial estimate: DOE move to keep Pennsylvania’s Eddystone oil and gas plant
open beyond its close date will cost customers an estimated \$5.1 million***

The following is a statement by Clara Summers, manager of the Citizens Utility Board’s Consumers for a Better Grid campaign, on a federal order to keep the Eddystone Generating Station, a power plant in Pennsylvania, open. The move could needlessly cost customers across the country, including Commonwealth Edison (ComEd) customers in Illinois, millions of dollars in higher electric bills.

In a summer when Illinois electricity customers are already paying higher power bills, a new Department of Energy (DOE) order will unnecessarily add to our pain, and that’s why we are challenging it. The DOE’s maneuver is not about reliability--this is a handout to the fossil fuel industry, paid for by consumers across the region, including Illinois. PJM has already concluded that there are adequate resources for this summer, but the DOE has manufactured an emergency to prop up an outdated power plant that should already be shuttered. The DOE just made a bad situation even worse, and Illinois consumers will pay the price. In challenging the DOE order, CUB and other consumer advocates argue that keeping this “zombie power plant” open is not only costly for consumers, but it’s also illegal, a violation of the Federal Power Act.

Background:

- Consumer advocates, including the Citizens Utility Board (CUB) of Illinois and Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul’s office, are [challenging](#) a U.S. Department of Energy [202\(c\) order](#) that has kept an aging oil and gas plant in Eddystone, Pennsylvania open this summer past its close date—at extra cost to consumers.
- Consumer advocates initially estimate that keeping the Eddystone Generating Station open 90 days past its expected close date will cost consumers across the PJM region around \$5.1 million. If the 90-day order is extended—as expected—it will cost more.
- The operating units at Eddystone run on oil or gas and were built around 50 years ago (1974 and 1976). They were slated to be closed on May 31, before the DOE issued its order mandating PJM Interconnection, the power grid operator, and Constellation, the owner of the plant, to keep them open for another 90 days.
- The DOE vaguely cited an “emergency situation” regarding reliability. However, the challenge, filed on June 27 by the Maryland Office of People’s Counsel (OPC) and a coalition of consumer advocates, argues that no emergency justified the Department’s order and requests a rehearing on the matter. The DOE has 30 days to respond to the request, after which parties can challenge the order in court.

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- Joining in support of the OPC filing were CUB, Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul's office, the Delaware Division of the Public Advocate and the New Jersey Division of Rate Counsel.
- The DOE's May 30 order on Eddystone followed a [similar order](#) a week earlier to the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) mandating that the coal-fired J.H. Campbell Power Plant in West Olive, Michigan remain open for 90-days at an estimated cost of \$100 million. Consumer and environmental advocates, including CUB, are also challenging that order.

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For more than 40 years the Citizens Utility Board (CUB) has been Illinois' leading nonprofit utility watchdog group. Created by the Illinois Legislature, CUB opened its doors in 1984 to represent the interests of residential and small-business utility customers. Since then, CUB has saved consumers more than \$20 billion by helping to block rate hikes and secure refunds. For more information, call CUB's Consumer Hotline at 1-800-669-5556 or visit CUB's website, www.CitizensUtilityBoard.org.