

INDEPENDENT CONSUMER ADVOCATE

1022 BOULEVARD

WEST HARTFORD, CT. 06117

QUARTERLY REPORT

JANUARY 1-MARCH 31, 2025

During this quarter there were two inquiries from consumers. Notably neither referenced rates but more generic issues. The first inquired as to the steps necessary to bring public power to more municipalities in Connecticut. This required a bit of research as well as review of a 2024 Office of Legislative Research Report. The ICA is not aware of any action being taken.

The second concerned the absence of demand response rates in the MEUs. A discussion ensued with the customer regarding how best to address fluctuations in load: demand response rates at the customer level versus load management via the microgrid network which CMEEC maintains. The customer was pleased that CMEEC was exploring battery backup as well. The customer appeared satisfied with CMEEC's approach.

CMEEC initiated an effort at the General Assembly for the Assembly to recognize the gains CMEEC has made to 'right the ship' after the Derby related events several years ago. That effort manifested itself in putting forth an amendment to make the Independent Consumer Advocate position optional and subject to the discretion of the Office of Consumer Counsel. Several discussions ensued with legislative leaders and the OCC. While there was general agreement that CMEEC had indeed righted the ship, there was a reluctance to go forward with the legislation. It was felt that this was not the time to eliminate a consumer advocacy position and concern that it would set an unfavorable precedent for other consumer advocacy positions. The decision was made to withdraw the legislative effort and revisit it in a future session.

As part of the reforms adopted several years ago, CMEEC committed to audits of specific areas of activity. These audits are to be conducted each year for a selected area and are in addition to the annual audit. Audits were conducted of safety programs, health insurance, other insurance, and travel and entertainment expenses. They were carried out by outside consultants. While this program will continue, CMEEC has also organized an audit group within its existing staff to carry out additional audits of selected areas. This group is

separate from the rest of the finance group. The results of these audits will be available to the Audit Committee.

The ICA supports these additional audit activities and commends CMEEC for the undertaking.

The annual financial audit was, as usual, undertaken in January 2025 to cover the financial records of 2024. The Audit Committee was presented the results of this audit at its March meeting and was represented by the auditors as being '99%' complete-just waiting for the confirmation by the reviewing partner. The Committee recommended the Audit to the Board subject to the above caveat. However, the Audit item was removed from the Board Agenda for its March meeting when it is typically accepted by the Board. The Board chair stated it would be acted on in April. As of this date, the status of the Audit is unknown to the ICA. Obviously, its resolution is very important.

Respectfully Submitted,

Independent Consumer Advocate

By: David Silverstone

April 7, 2025