

**QUESTIONS FROM THE GEORGIA SOLAR ENERGY
ASSOCIATION
FOR ALL 2018 PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION CANDIDATES
2018**

Section I - Power Resource Allocation

- A. Do you think the current factors used to determine the resource mix for power generation (i.e. capital investment, operations and maintenance, taxes) are sufficient? What additional factors - air quality impacts, water quality and water use, and land use impacts, for example - should be included in managing Georgia's power generation decisions?

Some appropriate considerations would indeed include water/air quality and land/water use. Also the directly attributable loss of human life, disruption of ecosystems, and less concrete quality of life issues like altering the horizon. When quantifiable, they must all be judged on a per-unit-energy basis, so that it's always apples-to-apples.

However, there are undoubtedly thousands of other considerations that will never occur to me. I support electric choice, because Georgia's most trustworthy judge of these complex matters is the general public - each of us.

- B. What role does solar, both on-site and large-scale, play in the future generation mix for Georgia?

Presumably the future is quite bright for solar power. I can say that with confidence because many Georgians strongly prefer solar, so there's a market for it, and research has been making it increasingly cost effective and will continue doing so.

On-site solar has a couple peculiar advantages most other forms don't. One is its decentralized nature. It's more resilient to natural disasters and cyber attacks than most energy sources. Another is that it can work at small scale. It's entirely practical for individual home owners and small organizations to install solar panels independently, and their neighbors really have no room to complain. It's unobtrusive enough that we can say pretty universally: governments at all levels need to stay out of the way of such installations.

Large-scale solar farms will undoubtedly become more common in the future. Efficiency will continue to improve with research. Costs will come down as private investment ramps up production of photo voltaic

cells to meet demand. Competitive demand will decrease as places with greater solar resources and those with more manipulated markets meet diminishing returns. At some point it will simply be the obvious choice, and some will have invested in solar farms ahead of that curve.

Section II - Rate Structure

- A. What is the appropriate way to assess the value of on-site solar in the future generation mix for Georgia?

Each land owner should make this decision for themselves.

- B. What additional measures should be taken to support consumers' private investment in on-site solar in Georgia?

As little interference from the government as possible, but also preventing state-granted monopolies (utilities) from acting antagonistically.

- C. Do you support on-bill financing for solar installation?

If a utility wishes to offer this financing, and the customer opts into it, I certainly have no objection.

- D. As customer adoption of on-site solar grows in Georgia, how should that impact rate design?

Rate structure should reflect cost structure. If this is achieved, reduced grid consumption poses no issues.

- E. How should solar be treated compared with other demand-side energy investment, such as energy efficient light bulbs, in rate design?

The same way. Lower consumption must always yield reduced cost. If a utility or power provider wants to provide an incentive program for efficiency investments, of course that's fine. But no state agency should be involved in something so invasive and likely to choose an incorrect balance of technologies.

Section III - Power Consumer Protection

- A. What would you do to protect Georgia consumers from steep rate hikes to pay for the completion of Units 3 and 4 at Georgia's nuclear Plant Vogtle?

The nuclear construction cost recovery fee must come to an end. If someone wants to secure capital investment for their own business, they must do so through private investment. It's not acceptable to simply tack on a fee to a bill we have no choice not to pay since they have state-granted monopoly powers.

If private capital cannot be raised, then project should not go forward. If no one is willing to put their own money on the line, the project is not worthwhile.

- B. What are the lessons to be learned about the regulatory process that managed the construction of Vogtle?

The Commission cannot be trusted to keep monopolies accountable. They're more than willing to force mistimed malinvestment and wealth transfer upon us. Poorly-managed projects will go unchecked as long as they're connected to campaign donors.

- C. What changes should be made to the regulatory process to incorporate these lessons for future commission deliberations?

All future construction should be managed through private investors, who can apply true accountability. Further, monopoly utility companies should not gain additional ownership stake in vertical industries like power generation. That separation brings more honest voices to the table.

Section IV - Utility Industry Regulation

- A. How should the PSC's role change or the regulatory process change as customers, accustomed to many options in other aspects of living, increasingly seek a range of choices regarding their energy provider, rate schedule and energy source?

The PSC can play a role in transitioning to a system with fewer and smaller monopolies and more consumer choice. But ultimately the influence of these five unreliable people should dissipate. There simply isn't need for yet another layer of regulatory capture and cronyism, at least not in the long term.

- B. How should the PSC's role or the regulatory process change in an era of growing adoption of on-site distributed energy and increasing adoption of electric vehicles?

The PSC should have as little influence over these industries as is practical. We should welcome these technologies and celebrate the

improvement they make to the human condition, not burden them with the reckless opinions of elected busybodies.

- C. How should the role of the utility adapt to an era of decreasing or flattening energy demand?

I'm not convinced energy flattening is a long-term trend, but regardless the utilities should become more localized. The way in which your community manages infrastructure shouldn't be dictated by a state-wide vote and the interests become less entrenched.

Section V - General (Ethics, transparency, constituent service, staff management and input)

- A. What is the proper relationship between Georgia Public Service Commission members and industry stakeholders such as utility executives, industry vendor companies and paid lobbyists?

Commissioners should seek input where appropriate, as their expertise can be valuable. But one needs to always be skeptical since utilities will undoubtedly put their own interests first. If your candidate is accepting money, vacations, or gifts from the utilities you really need to look for a new candidate.

- B. In considering the input of the PSC staff on rate-making, resource allocation and other decisions, what latitude should the PSC Commissioners apply in deviating from staff recommendations?

Each decision should be thoughtfully considered. Staff input can be valuable of course, but the commissioners must make decisions independently of them. If one is unclear of why there is a disagreement, it may be worthwhile to have staff members defend their position. And ultimately conversations can be had about the commissioner's reasoning so that future recommendations can take the viewpoint chosen by the voters into account.