

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

IN RE: INVESTIGATION INTO THE CURRENT STATE :
OF VOLUNTARY AND MANDATED RENEWABLE : DOCKET No. 24-26-EL
ENERGY MARKETS IN RHODE ISLAND :

NOTICE OF COMMENCEMENT OF DOCKET AND OPPORTUNITY FOR COMMENT

The Public Utilities Commission (Commission or PUC) hereby gives notice that it has opened a docket to investigate the current state of voluntary and mandatory renewable energy markets in Rhode Island. The purpose of the docket is to meet the requirements of R.I. Gen. Laws §36-26-4(c), which relates to the Renewable Energy Standard (RES), and which states in part:

In 2024, the commission, with input from the office of energy resources, division of public utilities and carriers, obligated entities, other market participants, and the public, shall assess the impact of allowing voluntary renewable energy purchases to be counted toward meeting the [mandatory Renewable Energy Standard] annual percentages. The commission shall submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the governor, speaker of the house, and senate president no later than September 1, 2024.¹

This investigation is not a contested case; the Commission will conduct a stakeholder engagement process including at least one public meetings and public comment periods to support the creation of a final report. The Commission invites public comments on the scope of the docket described below until **July 22, 2024, at 4:00 p.m.**

1. Identification of the type of energy products purchased and the quantity of voluntary Renewable Energy Certificate (REC)² purchases in Rhode Island;
2. Consideration of what it would mean to, and the impact of, counting voluntary REC purchases as part of the existing mandatory RES requirements;
3. Consideration of whether integrating voluntary and mandatory REC procurement would generate market efficiency;
4. Consideration of why entities voluntarily procure enough RECs to be greater than 100% renewable;

The Commission also seeks input from stakeholders on the following questions:

1. How might counting voluntary RECs toward the RES positively or negatively impact Rhode Island’s RES and ability to meet the mandates of the Act on Climate?

¹ The mandatory Renewable Energy Standard annual percentages are the percent of retail load served in a calendar year that must be sourced from certified eligible renewable energy resources. The specific annual percentages are set forth in R.I. Gen. Laws § 36-26-4(a).

² A Renewable Energy Certificate is a registered market instrument that embodies the “renewable characteristic” of a megawatt-hour of renewable energy. It is used here synonymously with “renewable energy.”

2. How might counting of voluntary RECs toward mandatory requirements impact customer choice and transparency?
3. What verification and tracking mechanisms should be implemented to ensure accurate reporting, compliance, and transparency if voluntary RECs are counted towards the statewide RES reporting system?
4. What administrative and compliance challenges might arise from counting RECs toward the RES?
5. How might the inclusion of voluntary RECs in the RES affect the market, pricing, and availability of RECs?
6. What rationale is behind entities exceeding 100% renewable energy through procurement of voluntary RECs?

The Commission will provide a schedule for the process after a review and consideration of comments received in response to this Notice. Anyone wishing to be included on the service list for this docket should send an email to Luly.Massaro@puc.ri.gov ATTN: Docket No. 24-24-EL.

All filings shall be made electronically to PUC.PublicComments@puc.ri.gov. Public docket materials can be accessed at <https://ripuc.ri.gov/Docket-24-26-EL>.

Luly Massaro
June 25, 2024