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THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

CHAIRMAN  
Amy L. Ignatius

COMMISSIONERS  
Robert R. Scott  
Martin P. Honigberg

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
Debra A. Howland



PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

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September 18, 2014

Her Excellency, Governor Margaret Wood Hassan  
and the Honorable Council  
State House  
Concord, NH 03301

Your Excellency and Honorable Councilors:

**REQUESTED ACTION**

The New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission requests authority to continue its membership and participation in the New England Conference of Public Utilities Commissioners, Inc. (NECPUC), Vendor #162916, for the period of October 1, 2014, or the date of Governor and Council approval, through September 30, 2015, for an amount of \$24,000.00.

Funding is 100% Other Funds (Utilities Assessment) and is available in account 'Organizational Dues', as follows:

<u>Account</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>FY 2015</u>
02-81-81-810010-28120000	Office of the Commissioner	
010-081-28120000-026-500251	Membership Fees	\$24,000.00

**EXPLANATION**

The New England Conference of Public Utilities Commissioners is a non-profit organization comprising the utility regulatory bodies of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont. Established in 1947, NECPUC was incorporated in 1976. Every New England utility commissioner is a member of NECPUC for the duration of his or her tenure. NECPUC provides regional regulatory assistance on matters of common concern to the six New England states, addressing issues challenging the electricity, gas, telecommunications and water industries. NECPUC has no independent regulatory authority.

Membership in NECPUC has proved especially valuable in responding to increased regional activity and numerous Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) initiatives. Through NECPUC, we have also been able to leverage staff resources from all the New England states and, as a result, the work product in both quantity and quality has been at a level that we would not have been able to achieve alone. In addition to funding the position of NECPUC Executive Director and the administrative costs of the organization, NECPUC dues from each member state help defray expenses incurred as a result of the multitude of ongoing FERC proceedings, as well as regional activities and policy issues involving ISO-NE and the distribution, generation, and transmission companies that participate in New England regional energy markets. NECPUC also sponsors training programs for member states. Full day trainings in FY 2014 included a session on cyber security in the field of utility regulation, and the regulation of advanced energy technologies.

A copy of the invoice is attached.

Listed below are answers to standard questions required for Governor and Council organization dues and membership approval submissions:

1. **How long has this organization been in existence and how long has this agency been a member of this organization?** NECPUC has been in existence since 1947. The New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission has been a member since its inception.
2. **Is there any other organization which provides the same or similar benefits which your agency belongs to?** No. NECPUC is the only entity that provides regional education and coordination on issues of common concern such as electric, gas, water, and telecommunications.
3. **How many other states belong to this organization and is your agency the sole New Hampshire state agency that is a member?** The six New England states, Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont, are members of NECPUC. The Commission is the only New Hampshire agency within the organization.
4. **How is the dues structure established? (Standard fee for all states, based on population, based on other criteria, etc)** There is a standard fee for all six states.
5. **What benefit does the state receive from participating in this membership?** NECPUC coordinates positions on regional issues and has had great success in changing policies that would have been very costly to New Hampshire ratepayers. Increasingly, the policies are determined on a national and regional level; waiting for issues to make their way to the Commission would be too late to have meaningful input.
6. **Are training or educational/ research materials included in the membership? If so, is the cost included? Explain in detail.** Yes. NECPUC sponsors training sessions on emerging issues and to educate new Commissioners and Commission Staff members. NECPUC also coordinates conference call briefings on federal and regional developments that affect New Hampshire.
7. **Is the membership required to receive any federal grants or required in order to receive or participate in licensing or certification exams? Explain.** No, membership in NECPUC is not required in order to receive federal grants or participate in licensing or certification exams.
8. **Is there any travel included with this membership fee? Explain in detail any travel to include the number of employees involved, the number of trips, destination if known and purposes of membership supported trips.** There is no travel specifically tied to the payment of NECPUC's membership dues.
9. **Which state agency employees are directly involved with this organization? (Indicate if they are members, voting members, committee members, and/or officers of the organization.** The Commission is one of six voting members. Chairman Ignatius is NECPUC's treasurer and participates in NECPUC discussions along with Commissioners Robert Scott and Martin Honigberg. Commission Staff are active on NECPUC Committees, including those concerning consumer affairs, electric markets, regional energy issues, and utility cyber security.
10. **Explain in detail any negative impact to the State if the Agency did not belong to this**

**organization.** New Hampshire benefits from the coordinated positions developed through NECPUC. It would be less efficient and less effective for New Hampshire to “go it alone” on these regional issues. Ultimately, it would be New Hampshire ratepayers that would suffer, as NECPUC positions have resulted in wholesale rate savings that are passed through to customers’ retail bills.

Your consideration of our request is appreciated.

Sincerely,



Amy L. Ignatius  
Chairman

Attachment - Invoice



*New England Conference of Public Utilities Commissioners*  
**necpuc**

Honorable James Volz, President  
Sarah Hofmann, Executive Director

**INVOICE #2014-1**  
**NECPUC Dues for October 2014-September 2015**  
**New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission**

Date: September 12, 2014

Bill To: Eunice Landry  
NH PUC  
21 South Fruit Street – Suite 10  
Concord, NH 03301-2429

Terms: Due on receipt  
Check Payable to **NECPUC**  
Tax ID # 05-0376760

Description: Organizational dues for regional activities and coordination

**Amount due:** **\$24,000**

Please mail your check, payable to **NECPUC** at:  
Sarah Hofmann  
NECPUC  
Executive Director  
50 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05602

Direct electronic transfer to a NECPUC bank account is also an acceptable payment method. Please contact Sarah Hofmann at 802-522-4068 with any questions.

**SERVICES RENDERED BY NECPUC**

The **New England Conference of Public Utilities Commissioners, Inc. (NECPUC)** is a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation comprising the utility regulatory bodies of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont. NECPUC was established in 1947 and incorporated in 1976. Every New England utility commissioner is a member of NECPUC for the duration of his or her tenure. The presidency rotates among the six states on an annual basis.

NECPUC provides regional regulatory assistance on matters of common concern to the six New England states. NECPUC has no independent regulatory authority. It addresses issues challenging the electricity, gas, telecommunications and water industries. NECPUC meets regularly throughout the year and sponsors an annual symposium on utility issues.

Services provided by NECPUC include:

- 1) Represent the joint interests of the members of the six public utility commissions and regulatory bodies in New England (Commissions) in regional utility and regulatory matters;
- 2) Provide information and training to the Commissions on regulatory matters;
- 3) Act as a liaison between the six states on regulatory matters;
- 4) Act as a liaison between Commissions and Federal regulatory agencies and utility trade organizations on regional utility matters;
- 5) Organize and assist in the conduct of regional meetings, inquiries, investigations and the hiring of necessary consultants and legal assistance on utility matters of common interest to the Commissions;
- 6) Render assistance to, and respond to the requests of Commission members and staff for information, data and analysis of regional regulatory utility issues; and
- 7) Follow and report on significant developments occurring at the federal and state levels on utility issues affecting the Commissions.