

Energy 1020 Draft Plan

To: The Idaho Legislature, Committee on Energy, Environment and Technology

My name is Eva Blecha and I have been a resident of Idaho since 1978. Currently, I am a Certified Family Home Provider for the State of Idaho and we are an average household of 6 people.

Our power is all electric and on average in the summer our power bill runs approx. \$300.00 and in the winter it runs \$500.00. We do our best to control the amount of energy we consume but, rules & regulations for our home control the thermostat settings, laundry has to be done during the day light hours for the most part and all bedding is hung outside on appropriate days. This is just a few of the things we do to help.

After reviewing the Energy Draft Plan I would like to make a few comments on the proposal for the next 5 year plan.

Helping **educate the public** on energy efficiency through the years has been helpful to some extent but, after so many pamphlets in my power bill, it becomes a point of redundancy therefore not being reviewed and a very costly expense.

I would like to remind the committee that we are in hard times right now and it appears that will continue for at least the next 5 years. It is all some can do to pay the power bills every month. There are several individuals who own homes such as mobile homes, older manufactured homes and older homes that are not very efficient when it comes to electricity therefore leading to high power usage. Rather than eliminating incentives I feel it would be more beneficial to restructure the incentives so that the individuals on a lower or fixed income could afford the change out appliances, water heaters or heating and cooling sources and reduce the usage of power. Maybe offer a program to allow it to be placed on their utility bills at a low monthly payment, no interest and the payment follows the home should it change ownership. I know if we had the opportunity to change our power to something like wind energy and add it to our power bill, I would definitely take a strong look at that opportunity. Some individual fall right in the middle of qualifying for energy assistance yet they do not have the funds to replace items that are high usage.

Lately, I have seen a lot of promotion on increasing jobs in Idaho, children's education and hiring veterans. However, you do not see much on what the local or state government is doing to assist in this promotion. We see how employers are going out of state to hire due to the education levels in Idaho. I can tell you I was never someone who could fully learn by books. I needed the vision learning process in order to absorb what was written. Throughout the plan I see a lot going to research and development and maybe some of that is education just not spelled out. It might be a benefit to IPUC to start at the junior high & high school level offering some of the research and development funds to schools specifically for field work in area like bioenergy or Solid Waste energy so that the kids are getting first hand the process from beginning to end and allowing them to earn credits towards the field to attend college. Maybe offer some of the veterans an internship while paying for such things as housing, transportation ect. Several of the ones who served our country have extensive training in developing other countries. If we can trust them to develop other countries then we need to utilize that experience which could only be a benefit to the State of Idaho. College students might benefit by attending an internship which starts in their sophomore year so that they can have hands on experience with the college studies. Numerous times I have seen individuals with no experience offered a position with a utility company because of who they know and not their education or experience. If that individual can do the job with training, what could Idaho gain by combining education with hands on experience?

In conclusion, the next 5 years we need to really consider developing a better educational integration between the school system and IPUC in order to ensure that we have the individuals available to fill the ever so changing technical fields that are available in our energy resources. The technical field has surpassed the educational level in Idaho and IPUC needs to do their best in promoting a better and more effective way of increasing the workforce for Idaho Public Utilities Commission on all levels.

Thank you for your time and service to Idaho.

Respectfully,

Eva Blecha