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Dear Sarah, Michigan can't afford the House renewable energy plan

The House plan for renewables would raise residential electric rates by 4 to 5 percent immediately - but does not require the two major utilities to spend that money to develop renewable power until 2012. That's right: They pocket the money now, but the House bill would not require the utilities to provide additional renewable energy for three years.

The plan would be the most expensive in the nation, according to data available from the federally funded Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. ([click here to learn more](#))

Sites of Interest

- [About the Customer Choice Coalition](#)
- [Michigan House of Representatives](#)
- [Michigan Senate](#)
- [Michigan Public Service Commission](#)
- [Customer Choice Coalition](#)

Hold onto your wallet

Consumers Energy business customers are reporting huge rate hikes, according to CCC's sources among alternative electric suppliers, and those businesses are looking to dump Consumers as soon as possible. One furniture company reports seeing 18 percent higher rates this year; grocery stores are reporting 17 percent hikes. Consumers wants to kill competition soon.

Michigan using LESS power, not more, this year and next

Remember when Michigan was first being sold the idea that we needed to build more power plants and only the big utilities could do it? Detroit Edison and Consumers Energy both told lawmakers and the public that energy use was growing in Michigan and we were going to be running short.

Oooooopppsss! Turns out now they were wrong.

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Consumers Energy has told Wall Street sales are down this year from 2008. According to Platts Electric Utility week, "Residential, commercial, and retail sales all fell from the Q2 records set last year (though statistics are only available back to 2003). Retail dropped 5.3% to 8,606 GWh, led by a 7% slide in residential, to 2,773 GWh."

And Detroit Edison has again revised downward its future electric sales projections. In its current rate increase case ([U-15244](#), p. 72) DTE told the MPSC its sales will decline in 2008 by 1.2 percent from 2007 levels, and in 2009 sales will decline again, to 2.4 percent BELOW 2007 levels.

Consumers Energy's proposed Bay City plant: Midland Nuclear financial disaster revisited?

Even as electricity use declines in its territory, Consumers Energy has said it needs to build a new coal-fired plant near Bay City. In May of 2007, that plant was going to cost \$1.1 billion. In September, the company admitted to the MPSC that the cost was up to \$1.4 billion - a 40 percent cost overrun already! In its most recent conversation with Wall Street, Consumers Energy said it has increased its cost estimate for the plant again - but won't tell anybody how much until NEXT YEAR. (click here to read the Platt's MegaWatt Daily article)

What's this stuff really cost?

When you hear someone say Michigan needs a "comprehensive energy plan," you notice they never tell people the real cost? There has never been a legislative analysis completed on these packages before lawmakers have a chance to vote on them. That's no accident - legislative leaders know customers will be outraged to learn that this package will raise residential rates 30 percent or more.

Priorities? We don't need no stinkin' priorities

While Michigan's roads and bridges crumble before our eyes, lawmakers say Michigan can't afford a gas tax increase. But get this: The House is ready to support a \$36 a month increase in your electric rates to give to the electric companies, who don't have to do anything with that money until 2012. If you drive 12,000 miles a month and have a car that gets 20 miles to the gallon, a 5 cent a gallon gas tax hike would cost you \$30 - and the road

building could start immediately. Michigan's highest priority seems to be helping the bottom line of the two utilities - not fixing our roads.

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