



Consumer Council Provides Consumer Perspective at Electric Power Research Institute Conference

August 28, 2018

Consumer Council Elin Swanson Katz moderated a panel on Shared Energy Communities at the Electric Power Research Institute's (EPRI) Summer Seminar on The Interactive Energy Consumer, which took place in Toronto, Canada, on August 12-14, 2018. Consumer Katz was invited to the Seminar in her capacity both as Connecticut's Consumer Counsel and as President of the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates (NASUCA), an association of 55 consumer advocates in 43 states and the District of Columbia, Barbados, Puerto Rico, and Jamaica. NASUCA's members are designated by the laws of their respective jurisdictions to

represent the interests of utility consumers before state and federal regulators and in the courts.

The panel on Shared Energy Communities featured, in addition to Consumer Counsel Katz as moderator, panelists Stan Connally, Executive VP, Operations, Southern Company; Michael (Casey) Herman, Assurance Partner and US Leader, Power and Utilities Sector, PWC; and CR Herro, VP, Innovation, Meritage Homes. The discussion included questions about the basics of Shared Energy Communities (SECs), as well as the costs and benefits to the members of such Communities and to the greater class of electric ratepayers. The panelists discussed their experience with SECs, and the consumer experience of those who purchased such homes. There were presentations about SEC projects constructed by the panelists, and the regulatory challenges faced in their creation. The panelists discussed how such homes tend to sell very quickly, once consumers are educated on their potential energy savings.

The discussion included some lively discussion about the role that a family's children can play in helping educate their parents on the value of technology within a home, which prompted Consumer Counsel Katz to say, "It sounds like there should be a chicken in every pot, and a teenager in every house."

Per the EPRI website, the Summer Seminar EPRI's Summer Seminar "is an annual, invitation-only gathering of global energy leaders from industry, government, and academia to explore the challenges and opportunities in providing society with safe, affordable, reliable, and environmentally responsible electricity. The event fosters collaborative discussion to identify opportunities for technology and related research to shape the future of electricity."



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