



Comments to NC Utilities Commission  
20 September 2011, 9:00 am, Dobbs Building, Hearing Room 2115, Raleigh, NC

**Re: Docket No. E-2, Sub. 998 and Docket No. E-7, Sub. 986**

My name is Susannah Tuttle and I am the Co-Director of NC Interfaith Power & Light. NCIPL is a non-profit program of the North Carolina Council of Churches. We work with faith communities to address the causes and consequences of global climate change and promote practical solutions through education, outreach and advocacy. As one of 38 state affiliates of national Interfaith Power and Light, we seek to mobilize a religious response to global warming in congregations through the promotion of renewable energy, energy efficiency and conservation.

We are here this morning in support of NC WARN's requests for safe, healthy and cost effective energy efficiency and renewable energy programs to be stipulated as conditions for the proposed merger between Duke Power and Progress Energy. NC WARN, and all the other organizations and individuals testifying, are sharing their expertise and submitting reports that clearly demonstrate a road to the most cost effective solutions for a 21st Century Energy Economy revolving around a comprehensive plan for achieving the maximum attainable energy efficiency in our state.

We have faith and great hope that this wisdom being offered is appreciated and received with respect, our intention is for you to challenge yourselves to your highest moral vision and duty, acting for all future generations, because as we all know, this is a critical juncture for our state's energy policy in this time of planetary peril.

Catholic Priest, Father Thomas Berry, a Greensboro native, wrote in his 1988 book 'Dream of the Earth':

*"The deepest crisis experienced by any society are those moments of change when the story becomes inadequate for meeting the survival demands of a present situation. Such, it seems to me, is the situation we must deal with..."*

This is the crisis point, as evidence being submitted today demonstrates:

North Carolina utility companies are NOT currently national leaders in investing in energy efficiency and demand side management...

...but they could be, and should be.

North Carolina is NOT currently a national leader in energy efficiency...

...but we could be, and should be.

As a sage once said, “*A journey of a thousand miles begins with one step.*” The journey to a safe 21st Century energy economy for North Carolina will require you take that step, and to rule that Duke Energy, as a condition of this merger, must agree to a comprehensive, bold energy efficiency resource standard, pursue wind and solar power generation as safe, non-polluting sources of energy which do not contribute to climate change, and provide significant funding for an independent body to ensure that the poorest among us get assistance in weatherizing their homes.

I would like to remind you of the wisdom in the Robert Frost poem *The Road Not Taken*

*“I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I-  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.”*

We are at a crisis point, the fork in the road, and the merger under consideration will seal the fate of North Carolina’s energy future for decades to come. This is an enormous challenge that we all face, and we, the public, are at your mercy. You, stewards of power, are given the authority to either allow Duke Energy to determine the fate of the energy economy in North Carolina for the next generation for the benefit of their shareholders, or direct Duke Energy to forge a new path that truly benefits the public and is based on significant gains in energy efficiency and clean, safe renewable energy.

This fork in the road will demand an enormous amount of moral courage from us all, but most especially you on the Commission and the Public Staff, who hold the power over our future. Our energy economy is no less than the basis of our collective survival.

We ask you to reflect deeply on these issues, deeper than you ever imagined in a case before the Commission. We ask you to imagine yourself, at the end of your life, “*somewhere ages and ages hence*”. Will you be able to say to yourself and your grandchildren, “*I took the road less traveled, and that has made all the difference.*”?

Thank you for your time and compassion.