

December 23, 2020



**FROM THE DESK OF
COMMISSIONER
BRENT BAILEY
CENTRAL DISTRICT OFFICE**



The Central District is pleased to bring you the latest information concerning utility rates, project developments, Public Service Commission actions and other news you can use. I hope you will find this information to be a useful resource to learn about the Public Service Commission, consumer issues and the continuous work we are doing for the citizens in the Central District and across the state of Mississippi. Thank you again for allowing me to serve you in this capacity.

Brent Bailey

**Merry
Christmas** *from the*
Central District!

**"The best way to spread Christmas cheer is singing loud
for all to hear." – Buddy the Elf, 2003.**

While you won't be hearing me or other members of the Central District staff singing to you, we do wish you and your families a safe, joyous Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I hope you enjoy our [holiday greetings video](#).



For some folks, 2020 cannot become a memory fast enough. The past year has certainly presented our state and nation with unprecedented challenges and I am proud of the resiliency of its citizens. The team at the MPSC appreciates the opportunity to serve and to assist you with various matters and we look forward to building upon our commitment to be as responsive as possible in 2021.



Continued...

Congress Passes Government Spending, COVID Relief Bills

On Monday night, both chambers of Congress passed bills that will fund the federal government through September 2021 and provides funding for individuals, businesses and industries impacted by the coronavirus. The bills, the \$1.4 trillion ["Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021"](#) and the embedded \$900 million "Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021," totaled 5,593 pages. The consolidated bill now awaits the president's signature.

While the bill includes provisions for direct payments, loans and extended benefits in response to the impacts of the pandemic, there are numerous provisions in the bill that impacts matters of interest to utility customers, utility regulators and clean energy advocates.

Broadband: Total funding at \$7 billion; no state block grants. Of note, the FCC will provide a \$50 monthly emergency broadband benefit for qualifying low-income and unemployed households; \$65 million to improve the FCC broadband maps to better disperse funding to unserved areas; \$300 million grant program to fund broadband in rural areas. Grants would be issued to qualifying partnerships between state and local governments and fixed broadband providers. Tribal Broadband Connectivity grant program includes \$1 billion appropriated for broadband deployment on tribal lands. The deadline to expend broadband grants administered under the previous COVID response bill was extended by one year. Separately, the FY2021 funding bill increases the USDA's broadband infrastructure program by \$80M.

Energy Tax Extenders: Extends the Solar Investment Tax Credit (ITC) at current levels (26%) until the end of 2022; Other technologies (biomass, waste heat, etc.) made eligible for the ITC; Onshore Wind Production Tax Credit (PTC) extended through 2021; Offshore Wind ITC extended through 2025; Commercial energy-efficient property tax credit made permanent; Energy-efficient home improvement tax credit extended through 2021; The carbon sequestration credit placed-in-service deadline extended by two years; The Weatherization Assistance Program is reauthorized. Pipeline Safety funding reauthorized.

Climate: Calls for the U.S. to join other nations in phasing out hydrofluorocarbons used in air conditioning and refrigeration systems over 15 years.

Water: \$1 billion in funding to USDA Rural Development to provide financial support to rural water utilities.

Research & Development: \$35 billion total funding over the next five years includes - \$1.5 B for solar; \$625 M for wind; \$850 M for geothermal; \$933 M for hydro/marine power; \$1.08 B for energy storage; \$2.36 B for grid modernization; Carbon capture to receive \$7.2 B; \$6.6 B for nuclear power; \$2.9 B for ARPA-E program.

Organizations continue to review the text of the bill and unpack all the provisions. More will be learned and we will try to include program details in the coming weeks. Of course, much of this will be moot if the bill is vetoed. Holiday drama in D.C.! About right for 2020.....





Continued...



Highlights of the December 17 Special Meeting

On December 17, 2020, the MPSC held a special open meeting to consider and act on the following:

- ☑ The Commission approved an [ORDER](#) granting **Progress Community Water Association** a Supplemental Certificate to expand its water service and serve new customers.
- ☑ The Commission moved to adopt an [ORDER](#) that instructs **Mississippi Power Co.** to include a plan for retirement of certain fossil fueled-generation assets in the company's April 2021 Integrated Resource Plan filing. The Commission finds that some reduction in excess capacity is in the best interest of customers. The Order also makes a redacted copy of the [Bates White Reserve Margin Plan Review and Assessment Report](#) publicly available.
- ☑ The Commission approved the recommendation by **Atmos Energy** to select Southern Research Group to perform the Annual Customer Opinion Survey for the next three years.



Last week at the MPSC

☞ Liberty Consulting Group presented the Commission with its **Audit and Management Review of Entergy Mississippi LLC (EML)** for the Audit Period of Oct. 1, 2019 - Sept. 30, 2020. The Audit Report examined the fuel and energy procurement and management by and for EML and EML affiliates to the extent they played a role in fuel and energy procurement and management. Public version of report is here: [Part 1](#); [Part 2](#); [Part 3](#); [Part 4](#).

☞ Carr Riggs & Ingram LLC presented the Commission with an [Audit Fuel Adjustment Schedules](#) via review and examination of Adjusted Territorial Energy Costs and the Retail Energy Costs of **Mississippi Power Co.** London Economics International LLC presented the Commission with a **Management Review Audit of Mississippi Power Co. (MPCo)** as well as an assessment of MPCo's practices for procurement of fuel and electric energy. Public version of report is here: [Part 1](#); [Part 2](#).

The audits and management reviews above are conducted to satisfy the purposes of Mississippi Code Annotated § 77-3-42. The Mississippi Legislature will receive summaries of the reports by March 15.

☞ **Entergy Mississippi LLC** filed is monthly update (for Nov. 2020) pursuant to variances in EML's [Energy Cost Recovery Rider Schedule ECR-4](#) (Revised) and [Power Management Rider Schedule PMR-12](#) (Revised).

☞ **AT&T Mississippi** filed a [Motion for Extension of Time to Answer](#) the complaint filed by Airus, Inc. The Commission [granted](#) the extension.

☞ **AT&T Mississippi** filed interconnection agreement amendments with the following: [Callis Communications, Inc.](#); [Birch telecom of the South, Inc.](#); [QuantumShift Communications, Inc.](#)



Continued...

- ✎ **Air Voice Wireless, LLC** filed a revised [Informational Tariff](#) for its Lifeline program in accordance with FCC minimum service standards.
- ✎ **City of Clinton** has filed a [Motion to Investigate and Review the Provision and Rates of Municipal Street Lighting by Entergy Mississippi LLC \(EML\)](#). This Motion, a subsequent action per the City's Amended Formal Complaint against EML relative to street lighting and associated billing, asks the Commission to enter an order directing the MPUS to perform an investigation pursuant to this matter. The Commission issued an [Order Granting Additional Time](#) of 5 business days to EML to respond to the Motion to Investigate and Review. **Entergy Mississippi LLC** filed its [Rebuttal in Support of Motion to Dismiss the Formal Billing and Services Complaint of City of Clinton](#).
- ✎ **Delta City Utility District** has made a filing with the Commission for a [Supplemental Certificate to Construct, Operate and Maintain a Water System](#) in **Sharkey County**. The [Project](#) consists of water line extension of 44,000 linear feet to provide water service to up to [15](#) new and prospective customers.
- ✎ As a condition of its recent Approval of its Water Service Certificate, the **Town of Edwards** provided the Commission a [Statement of Budget for FY2021](#) and [Income/Expense Summary for FY2020](#).
- ✎ **Fannin Water Association, Inc.** has filed an [Application for a Supplemental Certificate to Construct, Operate and Maintain a Sewer System](#) in **Rankin County**. The [new wastewater collection system](#) will serve up to 17 new customers in the new Northshore Landing Phase 6 residential development.
- ✎ **T-Mobile USA, Inc.** has filed a [Petition for Relinquishment of its Mobility Fund I Eligible Telecommunications Carrier \(ETC\) Designation](#) effective Dec. 31, 2020. T-Mobile used Mobility Funds to expand coverage. T-Mobile claims it has met all its funding obligations in Mississippi.



Last week, our
Consumer Complaint
Specialists handled a
total of **13**
complaints in the
Central District.

Telecommunications	6
Electric Companies	4
Water/Sewer	2
Natural Gas	1

Last week, the Central District received a total of **280** complaints from consumers against potential telemarketers through our no call app, website and mail-ins. The top three general issues reported by consumers are related to auto warranties, health products/prescription drugs, and insurance.

We encourage consumers to file telemarketing complaints with the Federal Trade Commission at <http://www.donotcall.gov/> in addition to filing complaints with the Mississippi Public Service Commission.