



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 18, 2016

CONTACT: Sito Negron

915.351.3500 (o) // 915-227-0360 (m)

Sen. Rodríguez statement on PUCT approval of new El Paso Electric customer rates

AUSTIN - Today, the Public Utility Commission of Texas gave final approval to a settlement agreement between El Paso Electric and several interveners to revise the utility's electric rates, as well as approved El Paso Electric's application to institute a voluntary community solar program within its Texas service territory.

Sen. José Rodríguez released the following statement in response to approval of the settlement terms:

I'm pleased that the Commission quickly authorized the settlement terms. This settlement is the result of extensive discussions between El Paso Electric, the state's Office of Public Utility Counsel, and several passionate interveners representing homeowners who installed solar. I believe these final terms, which eliminate both a proposal for steep surcharges for solar customers, and a proposal to segregate solar customers into a higher rate class, ultimately benefit all ratepayers. El Paso should lead the country in solar energy development. This settlement will encourage solar job creation in our community, provide homeowners more options for limiting their electric bill, and lead to less demand on the electric grid during peak summer hours.

My office will continue to monitor this issue should El Paso Electric initiate another rate case in 2017.

The Senator also released the following statement in response to approval of El Paso Electric's community solar program:

The community solar program is a good option for customers who are unable to install solar on their own homes. This will be a good deal for renters, for

example. Although it's not clear to me that any customer will save money on their electric bill under this program like they would with net-metered solar panels, the program does give environmentally-conscious customers a choice if they want a portion of their energy requirements to be provided from our abundant solar resources in El Paso.

Senator Rodríguez currently serves as the Chairman of the Texas Senate Democratic Caucus, and is a member of the Senate Committees on Education; Health and Human Services; Veteran Affairs and Military Installations; Nominations; and Agriculture, Water, and Rural Affairs.