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Cincinnati to become first major U.S. city to offer 100% green electric as well as save money for residential customers

CINCINNATI – Cincinnati City Manager Milton Dohoney announced today he has selected FirstEnergy Solutions with a 100% renewable energy contract as the provider for the new electric aggregation program in Cincinnati. Cincinnati is the first major U.S. city to offer 100% renewable energy power to electric customers.

Voters passed an issue last November allowing the city to create a system that allows the city to buy electricity in bulk, which would offer to opportunity to reduce costs for customers as well as influence the source of the electricity.

“This is a very exciting announcement. We are so glad the city and administration listened to customers at the public hearings held in February. The message was loud and clear: customers want 100% renewable electricity for Cincinnati. The fact that customers will also save money should make everyone happy,” Rachael Belz, Ohio Citizen Action organizer said.

According to the City Manager’s office, the average eligible household will save approximately \$133 per year on their electricity bills. City Manager Milton Dohoney, Jr. selected First Energy from seven proposals submitted in response to a Request for Proposals.

“I went into the decision-making process with no pre-determined outcomes in mind,” said Dohoney. “This process provided the opportunity to promote renewable energy, and places Cincinnati as a national leader, at the forefront of green energy in this country. That is where we want Cincinnati to be.”

FirstEnergy Solutions offers that a portion of its green product will come from local sources, namely Renewable Energy Credits produced by the renewable fuel used to power, in part, the University of Cincinnati's generating facility and solar credits generated from the Cincinnati Zoo Solar canopy project.

The program is an “opt-out” program, meaning customers are in the community buying group and will be eligible to save money with the new program unless they tell the city they do not want to be included. All customers will still receive their electric bill from Duke Energy, and in case of power outages or problems, would still call Duke Energy as they do now.

Ohio Citizen Action has a long history of working on community aggregation in Ohio. The organization worked hard to successfully include the program in the 1999 Ohio deregulation bill. Belz testified before city council committee encouraging the members to allow voters the chance to vote on the issue just like dozens of other communities in the region had done. The organization, along with Greenpeace, worked tirelessly to explain the issue and inform voters about the November 2011 vote, as well as turning out dozens of participants in the two public hearings held in February.

Ohio Citizen Action is the state's largest consumer and environmental organization with 80,000 members statewide.

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