



CRS

center for
resource
solutions

May 6, 2013

U.S. Department of Energy
U.S. Energy Information Administration
Mail Stop EI-23, Forrestal Building
1000 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20585
Attention: Rebecca Peterson

Dear Ms. Peterson,

Center for Resource Solutions (CRS) appreciates the opportunity to provide these comments on the proposed revisions to the Energy Information Administration's (EIA) data collection practices. CRS administers the Green-e programs, which encourage the use of high-quality renewable electricity and carbon offsets as one means to combat and mitigate climate change. Through these programs, more than 600,000 individuals and companies in the US voluntarily purchased renewable electricity or carbon offsets in 2011.

The efforts of electric utilities in supporting and providing voluntary green electricity options for their customers is integral to our work and to the ability of individual Americans to take personal action against climate change. The EIA data collected on utility green electricity programs and renewable electricity is one of the few sources of hard information that can be used to demonstrate the growth and availability of such programs for American consumers. As such, CRS strongly encourages the EIA to continue to collect this data without interruption.

The EIA's data on renewable electricity is unique and far-reaching. By requiring reporting, data that is not widely available anywhere else will be maintained continuously, even if the data were only collected annually. An unbroken record is extremely important for showing trends over time and for providing a sound basis for decisions by technology producers, facility developers, corporate and individual purchasers, and electric utilities themselves. CRS and other entities, such as the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, rely on this data for annual reporting, projections, planning and communications in order to make the case for continued support and growth of renewable electricity in the US.

There is strong and broad interest in renewable electricity among consumers in the US, based on periodic surveys by the Natural Marketing Institute; their most recent data shows that 80% of respondents care about the use renewable energy, while only about one in six are aware that they can buy renewables from their electricity supplier despite half of consumers are able to. To bridge this gap in awareness, more data is needed, not less. In order for practical and effective communication of the availability of renewable energy, the EIA data must be maintained.

Announcements by high-profile companies such as Google, Apple and Facebook about their growing efforts to use renewable energy also show that there is increasing interest by corporates, who are also responding to demand from their customers. While there are multiple mechanisms to purchase renewable energy, the most straightforward for the average customer and most businesses is through their electricity provider. Again, we feel that this supports the need for continued data collection and the continued relevance of the data, to further support the efforts and interests of US companies and individuals.

If you have any questions or thoughts in response to our comments, please do not hesitate to contact me at 415-561-2100 or alex@resource-solutions.org.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alex Pennock". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Alex Pennock
Manager, Green-e Energy
Center for Resource Solutions