

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEDIA RELEASE

The Department of Public Service Announces a public hearing on distribution of federal “Grid Resilience” funding under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act

Montpelier, VT – The Vermont Department of Public Service (PSD) seeks feedback from stakeholders and ratepayers on the objectives and metrics by which the state should distribute federal funding provided under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).

The IIJA creates funding opportunities open to Vermont to facilitate electric grid modernization for the purpose of preventing outages and enhancing the resilience of the electric grid. [Section 40101\(d\) of the IIJA](#) allows for states and Indian tribes to receive grants over a five-year period in an amount consistent with a pre-determined formula – approximately \$3 million per year for Vermont – for uses that meet certain criteria.

On **Wednesday, September 7, 2022** the PSD will convene an online public hearing from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. to provide opportunities for interested parties to learn about the IIJA funding opportunity and requirements, and share their perspectives on how the federal funds should be used to improve the resilience of the electric grid.

“Vermont’s electric grid faces many challenges including weather-related disruptions and rapidly evolving expectations for the grid by consumers and policy makers” commented June E. Tierney, PSD Commissioner. Further, “With the potential for more frequent, intensive, and widespread disturbances, greater investment is needed to forestall future disruptions and foster improvements to the grid for the long-term benefit of ratepayers. This funding opportunity presents an opportunity to direct federal funding to meet critical objectives as outlined in our recently published [Comprehensive Energy Plan](#), and as informed by consumers.”

Activities supported via this proposal must demonstrate measurable improvements in resilience and weather-related risk mitigation for the grid. The U.S. Department of Energy, which oversees the IIJA, requires grant applications that include criteria on which projects are selected for funding, and where “priority will be given to projects that will generate the greatest community economic benefit (whether rural or urban) in reducing the likelihood and consequences of disruptive events.”^[1] In addition to these criteria, the Department seeks input from Vermonters on other potential criteria that may be used to distribute the funds.

Examples of projects permitted for funding under the IIJA include utility pole management; hardening of power lines, facilities, substations, and of other systems; undergrounding of electrical equipment; replacement of old overhead conductors and underground cables; and use or construction of distributed energy resources for enhancing system adaptive capacity during disruptive events, including microgrids and battery-storage subcomponents.

^[1] See [“Biden Administration Announces \\$2.3 Billion for States and Tribes to Strengthen and Modernize America’s Power Grid.”](#)

Individuals interested in attending the public hearing on September 7th may find the login details on the PSD's Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act – Grid Resilience webpage (<https://publicservice.vermont.gov/content/infrastructure-investment-and-jobs-act-grid-resiliency>) or may attend in person at the Department of Public Service, 3rd floor Giga Room, 112 State Street, Montpelier, Vermont, by submitting an RSVP to PSD.IIJAGridResilience@vermont.gov .

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