

**From:** [Dorothea Hrossowyc](#)  
**To:** [Staff, CAO \(PUC\)](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment submission Issue B, Docket #'s 16-521  
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I would like to submit a comment regarding Issue B, Docket #'s 16-521 addressing interconnection queue challenges we have experienced as a consumer of Xcel Energy in regard to our customer sited solar array.

In April of 2020 we contracted with TruNorth Solar to build a solar array for our house. TruNorth was very reliable in setting everything up and submitted all required to Xcel. In the meantime, we applied for a loan through CEE, Center For energy and Environment. Over that entire year Xcel delayed the process several times, including at times when it was inappropriate to delay. TruNorth tried to intervene several times to require Xcel to properly move forward to no avail. Finally, at the end of the year, when interest was due on our loan but we had no commitment from Xcel that the project could go through, we had to cancel the loan and lost over \$750.

Finally, in **February of 2021, almost a whole year later**, we found out that to do the small solar array, Xcel was going to charge us \$9,000 to upgrade our line! Our array would be an 11kVA, we already have a 15 kVA line, but Xcel insists on charging us to upgrade to a 25 kVA line. We wonder what kind of engineer in Xcel would specify a system larger than what is required, and replace the system that is satisfactory already to carry the power both ways, or is it just a way to dissuade the customer by incurring a cost that is 25% more than the original system cost. This is a private farm in the countryside that rural farm property at its limit for residential dwellings so there would be no more demand on the service line already existing.

Since then we have heard that Xcel is charging people all over Northfield between \$3,000-\$16,000 to put solar on their houses. It is so bad around here now that solar developers don't even want any Northfield customers because it takes so long

to get everything lined up and at the last minute Xcel comes up with these enormous extra charges. The City of Northfield's Environmental Quality Commission is also very concerned about what Xcel is doing with these enormous charges. I heard an Xcel engineer in his presentation to the Commission about the challenges for individual solar in Northfield, actually admit that Xcel doesn't want any more solar in Northfield. This is just so wrong for Xcel to get in the way of renewable energy the way they are.

Also please think of all the time it took for TruNorth to deal with Xcel about all of this, all the time we had to put in to keep this project going, all this time and effort really being unnecessary. And is all this just a way for Xcel to discourage renewable energy commitments.

We filed a complaint with the PUC, but the person I was working on it with could not really help us, did not really seem interested in helping, or knowledgeable enough to make a difference, and Xcel just held its ground and the complaint was dismissed. I do not want our complaint to be dismissed which is why I am submitting this comment.

It might be also useful to know that **years** ago when the law was passed requiring Xcel to meet a higher percentage of renewable energy by 2020 our farm was approached by several community solar garden companies and we agreed to install 2 5-MW solar gardens on our farms, and later another 3 MW. Xcel at that time put in so many delays and **roadblocks** so **that** it took 3 years for the construction to be able to begin. Again, these were inappropriate delays, as we met every requirement thrown our way.

We urge the PUC to find solutions for homeowners who want to include solar renewable energy, and also to find solutions for homeowners who have been charged in what I believe are inappropriate and extremely expensive ways to go ahead out of their commitments to climate change. Homeowners who have suffered these financial expenses could be supported and helped for their commitment to renewable energy. And **MN can't very well get to the carbon free economy we're working toward if it's this challenging to make changes to the distribution grid.**

Sincerely, with hope for meaningful change and support to consumers,

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