
From: Kelly Mercer <kellykam1977@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 31, 2026 12:52 AM
To: Electricity Inquiries <electricityinquiries@irac.pe.ca>
Subject: Maritime electric rate increase application concern

Good morning,

Re: Maritime Electric – Application for a 7.4%+ Rate Increase.

I am a resident in Charlottetown and an electricity ratepayer in Prince Edward Island writing to provide formal comment/ complaint in relation to Maritime Electric's application for a 7.4% + rate increase. I respectfully submit that the proposed increase should be denied, reduced, or deferred, as it is not in the public interest and is not justified given current service conditions and the ongoing affordability impacts on Islanders.

1) Affordability impacts and ratepayer hardship

Electricity is an essential service, not a discretionary expense. Increases of this magnitude, particularly when layered on top of repeated recent increases, create measurable hardship for households across PEI.

In my own household, winter utility costs are already extreme. We use propane as our primary heat source, with winter propane costs often approximately \$500/every 3 -4 weeks, while electricity costs are approximately \$300/month. In a winter where we relied more heavily on two heat pumps, our electricity costs reached \$400/month (2 yrs ago), and at today's rates that same usage would reasonably be expected to be substantially higher. Many Islanders are reporting that their electricity bills have doubled compared to previous years.

When rate increases occur repeatedly with little time for household budgets to recover, the cumulative effect is not manageable for many ratepayers, including seniors, working families, and residents on fixed incomes.

2) Reliability and service quality concerns

Ratepayers have also experienced ongoing service reliability issues, including power interruptions and rolling outages. A utility seeking increased rates should be required to demonstrate that costs being passed on to customers are resulting in tangible performance improvements and enhanced reliability.

At present, many Islanders reasonably perceive a disconnect between escalating rates and the quality and continuity of service received. Ratepayers should not be required to fund continual increases while service reliability remains inconsistent.

3) Burden of proof and requirement for clear evidence

Maritime Electric, as the applicant, bears the burden of establishing that the requested increase is necessary, prudent, and supported by evidence, and that rates remain just and reasonable for consumers.

I request that IRAC require Maritime Electric to provide clear, detailed, and publicly understandable evidence demonstrating:

why a 7.4%+ increase is required at this time;

what cost drivers specifically necessitate this increase;

what steps have been taken to mitigate or reduce costs before passing them on to ratepayers;

how the proposed increase will translate into measurable improvements in reliability and system performance; and

what accountability mechanisms exist if reliability and service quality do not improve.

4) Executive compensation (force them to open their books) and public confidence.

While I understand that IRAC's mandate focuses on rates and regulatory oversight rather than individual compensation decisions, it is relevant to note that public confidence is being eroded when Islanders experience substantial rate increases, outages, and affordability stress while there is a widespread perception that senior leadership compensation remains excessive.

Whether or not compensation is deemed directly within scope, it contributes to legitimate public concern about whether all reasonable cost controls and governance measures are being exercised before costs are transferred to ratepayers.

5) Requested relief

In light of the above, I respectfully request that IRAC:

Deny, reduce, or defer the proposed 7.4% rate increase;

Require Maritime Electric to demonstrate that any rate increases are tied to measurable reliability targets, system performance improvements, and transparent reporting;

Consider the cumulative effect of repeated increases on the affordability crisis facing Islanders; and

Impose or recommend enhanced accountability measures to ensure ratepayers receive reliable service commensurate with approved rates.

Electricity regulation exists to protect the public interest and ensure that essential services remain affordable, reliable, and fairly priced. For these reasons, I urge IRAC to exercise caution and restraint and to reject or significantly limit further increases that place an undue burden on PEI ratepayers. We have had enough!

There is currently a huge disconnect between IRAC and island residents. Not many residents, if any believe IRAC is there to protect them. Life on the island is becoming so unaffordable that people are being forced make some terrible choices between having heat or having food to eat.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Respectfully

Kelly Mercer