

Opinion: Growth shouldn't come at customers' expense

PPL Electric Utilities building on protections already in place before new costs reach customers.

By Christine M. Martin, President, PPL Electric Utilities

Pennsylvania is seeing extraordinary growth in data centers and other businesses that use large amounts of electricity. That growth can bring jobs and investment to our communities. But it also raises a fair question for families and businesses: **Will my electric bill go up to pay for it?**

At PPL Electric Utilities, our answer is straightforward: we are doing everything we can to make sure that **existing customers are protected from costs created by new large energy users.**

That principle is at the heart of our **Customer Protection Framework**, which is designed to make sure large energy users pay their appropriate share of the costs needed to connect them to the electric grid.

And importantly, there are protections already in place today.

As interest from data centers grew, PPL Electric was the first electric utility in the state to proactively establish a separate rate class called LP-6 for qualifying large-load customers. It was approved by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission in June 2026 and is specifically designed to protect other customers from financial risks associated with serving projects that require significant electricity and infrastructure investments.

Under this rate class, large-load customers must make substantial financial and usage commitments before connecting to our system. They are responsible for infrastructure needed specifically to serve their projects, must provide significant financial security and are subject to strong protections designed to reduce the risk to other customers if their projects do not develop as planned or leave our system early.

In plain terms: **If a large customer creates the need for new infrastructure, our existing customers will not be left holding the bill if that project doesn't materialize as expected.**

But we believe customer protection should not stop there. Earlier this year, we identified another potential risk. Some transmission investments associated with connecting new large energy users have broader benefits and can become part of the electric system that serves everyone. Under the traditional way those costs are recovered, some costs can ultimately be shared across customers.

We believe there is a better approach.

That's why, on September 14, PPL Electric proactively asked the Pennsylvania PUC to approve an additional layer of our Customer Protection Framework, called the **Customer Protection Transmission Rider, or CPTR.**

Our proposal would give PPL Electric a way to directly assign certain transmission network costs associated with large-load development to our large-load customer class. It would also make transmission costs more visible on customer bills, giving customers greater transparency into what they are paying for.

Put simply, our large-load tariff protects customers from direct project costs and stranded investment risks. Our CPTR proposal goes further by addressing certain costs associated with upgrades to the broader transmission system. Taken together, these protections form our Customer Protection Framework.

There has been considerable discussion recently about how Pennsylvania should protect customers as data centers and other large energy users connect to the grid. We welcome that conversation.

We share the goal of protecting Pennsylvania consumers, and we welcome ideas that can make those protections even stronger.

But customers should also understand an important fact: **PPL Electric did not wait for this debate to begin protecting them.**

In fact, our LP-6 customer protections are already in place, and we filed our CPTR proposal in September to strengthen those protections further, *before* the transmission investments at issue are placed into service and could be reflected in customer bills.

There is another part of the affordability conversation that Pennsylvania cannot overlook: **making sure there is enough electricity to meet growing demand.**

PPL Electric delivers electricity, but we do not own power plants or control wholesale electricity prices. As demand for electricity grows, Pennsylvania and the broader region need enough power generation to keep pace while bringing down energy supply costs.

That's why customer protections and electricity supply must be addressed together.

We need rules that protect existing customers from costs created by new large loads. And we need sufficient electricity supply to reliably serve customers while keeping prices as competitive as possible.

Pennsylvania can do both.

For years, PPL Electric Utilities has raised these issues before the PUC and the legislature and has supported evaluating additional tools to encourage generation investment, strengthen reliability and reduce price volatility.

Growth can bring significant economic benefits to our communities. Large energy users can bring investment and jobs, while also contributing to the electric infrastructure needed to support Pennsylvania's future.

But that growth needs to happen responsibly.

At PPL Electric, that means protecting our existing customers, making sure those creating new costs pay their appropriate share, maintaining a safe and reliable electric grid and continuing to strengthen protections for existing customers as new risks emerge.

That's what our Customer Protection Framework is designed to do.

Our customers should expect nothing less.

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