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**NOPEC TO CHOOSE NEW ELECTRICITY SUPPLIER FOR 500,000 CUSTOMERS
FirstEnergy Solutions' Decision to Cancel Contract Early Prompts Change**

(Solon, Ohio) – The Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council (NOPEC) has begun discussions with new suppliers to provide electricity for 500,000 customers in 12 Northern Ohio counties following FirstEnergy Solutions' decision earlier today to terminate its contract with NOPEC three years early.

Chuck Keiper, NOPEC's executive director, emphasized that there would be no disruption in service for NOPEC electricity customers.

Keiper said the search for a new electricity supplier began immediately upon learning today of FirstEnergy Solutions' decision. NOPEC expects to have a new supplier in place in the immediate future, with power flowing to customers in the first quarter of 2017.

"I want to particularly emphasize that there will be no disruption in service to any NOPEC customer. NOPEC was shocked and dismayed by the sudden demand for unilateral contract concessions made by FES and disappointed by the equally sudden contract termination," Keiper said. "NOPEC has a demonstrated track record of saving customers over \$250 million and adding many other values that benefit our communities and customers. Our goal is to continue delivering savings and values to our customers and communities as we finalize arrangements with a new supplier."

NOPEC, a not-for-profit council of governments, was created in 2000 as a response to utility deregulation by a handful of Northeast Ohio mayors who wanted to create an energy "aggregator" that could help their communities negotiate better deals on electricity and natural gas.

On Jan. 1, 2010, FirstEnergy Solutions entered into a nine-year contract with NOPEC to supply electricity to NOPEC customers. As a result of that deal, NOPEC residential customers saved 6 percent and commercial customers saved 4 percent on the generation portion of their electric bills, compared with what they would have been paying to a utility.

Today, Keiper said, FirstEnergy Solutions notified NOPEC that it was terminating the contract three years early, because NOPEC would not agree to a number of demands.

Keiper noted, though, that FirstEnergy Solutions has not announced contract terminations, or similar concession demands, with any of the other public aggregations it serves.

Among the concerns cited by Keiper was the desire to continue holding adequate security for the supply of electricity to NOPEC customers. This was a particular concern amid numerous published news reports raising the possibility of FirstEnergy Solutions filing for bankruptcy.



“Our focus is on our NOPEC customers and getting them an excellent, financially strong electricity supplier and a deal that will allow them to continue to experience the many benefits NOPEC has become known for delivering to our customers,” Keiper said.

As of January 2017, NOPEC customers may be returned to the utilities’ standard service offer, meaning that they would pay the standard service offer price until they receive a new NOPEC opt-out offer and can be returned to the NOPEC program.

But Keiper emphasized that a new electricity deal will be in place as quickly as possible.

Within the next week, NOPEC will have more information available on its website www.nopecinfo.org.

ABOUT NOPEC

NOPEC is a nonprofit council of governments and a pro-consumer lobbying force dedicated to bringing reliable, stable and lower energy costs to families and businesses in Northeast Ohio.

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