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PUBLIC UTILITIES - MAINE

Snakeroot Solar, LLC v. Public Utilities Commission

Supreme Judicial Court of Maine - July 15, 2025 - A.3d - 2025 WL 1934508 - 2025 ME 64

Solar energy company brought petition before the Public Utilities Commission seeking a good-cause exemption from statutory deadline for qualifying its proposed photovoltaic generating facility for participation in state's net energy billing program.

The Maine Public Utilities Commission denied company's petition. Solar energy company appealed.

The Supreme Judicial Court held that:

- PUC's conclusion that "external delays" that would justify a good-cause exemption meant events that were "external" to, or outside of, the interconnection process was a reasonable interpretation of the statute;
- The record supported PUC's determination that delays in company's ability to complete a "cluster study" analyzing all energy projects in the area, and company's extended upgrade construction schedule, were routine parts of a typical interconnection process and thus not a external delay; and
- PUC did not abuse its discretion when it denied company's request for a good-cause exemption from operational deadline.