

Chief ALJ Liebschutz,

At this time, Staff does not believe the appointment of a settlement judge in these proceedings is necessary, or that it would likely assist the parties. Thus far, the discussions between the Companies, Staff and the intervenor parties have been productive. At a future stage in negotiations, should the parties to the negotiations believe that the appointment a settlement judge would be helpful, the parties will discuss and make such a request at that time.

Thank you.

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