

## EAAC Meeting #4 Chat – 07/21/21

Jones, Wanda (LARA) -- Good morning

Dan Blair – MECA -- has temporarily joined the chat.

Katrina Metzler, NEUAC -- Morning everyone! Having a chat with Wanda while waiting for others to arrive. :)

Amy Rittenhouse (LARA)-- <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VX7758X>

Amy Rittenhouse (LARA)-- Briana Parker Bio, In her position at Elevate, Briana designs and implements programs that reduce costs, protect the environment, and ensures the benefits of clean and efficient energy use reach those who need them most. She also co-chairs the Diversity Racial Equity & Inclusion (DREI) committee and works to ensure diversity in the energy efficiency workforce in Michigan.

Before joining Elevate Energy, she studied law, worked as a social worker and volunteered for almost a decade as an organizer/ advocate at Michigan Welfare Rights Organization, a union for public recipients and low-income workers in the state of Michigan with the goal to fight to eliminate poverty in the United States. While volunteering income communities, Briana learned to advocate for affordable energy, water, and housing.

Amy Rittenhouse (LARA) -- Briana DuBose Bio, Briana specializes in project management and program administration with experience in development of marginalized communities. She also has extensive experience as a principal consultant with municipalities and the private sector. Briana has a passion for children's advocacy and is an officer of the caring for Kids Foundation.

Jones, Wanda (LARA) -- Excellent and timely information

Armstrong, Anne (LARA) -- There is a link earlier in the chat to sign up for subcommittees

Kasey McNeally -- The link isn't showing up for me, maybe because I joined late. Can you reshare?

Rittenhouse, Amy (LARA) -- [EAAC Subgroup Sign-up Survey \(surveymonkey.com\)](#)

Kasey McNeally -- Thank you!

Shimekia Nichols – Souladarity – Please share the link to the Press Release

Armstrong, Anne (LARA) – MPSC Public Data Site for Arrearage and Shutoffs  
[https://www.michigan.gov/mpsc/0,9535,7-395-93309\\_93438\\_93459-561128--,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/mpsc/0,9535,7-395-93309_93438_93459-561128--,00.html)

Annika Brindel -- How is it determined that the customers are non-low-income? Does that just mean the Company does not have income information for that customer?

Armstrong, Anne (LARA) -- We will answer questions after the run through of the site

Wende Randall -- This is fascinating! Thank you!

Wende Randall -- Can any of the data be viewed by county or region?

Wende Randall -- Great! We are working on a new data-sharing agreement with CE for Kent County. Would love to discuss this more.

Armstrong, Anne (LARA) -- For additional questions, please put them in the chat and we will answer them as soon as we can.

CERA funds for re-connection to utilities by Unknown User

Wende Randall -- CERA funds for re-connection to utilities

Shimekia Nichols - Soulardarity. Is Jake willing to do a similar presentation with Q&A for grassroots groups outside of the EAAC?

Phillips, Tremaine (LARA) -- COVID Emergency Rental Assistance:  
<https://www.michigan.gov/mshda/0,4641,7-141-5555-533463--,00.html>

Armstrong, Anne (LARA). Yes. Jake can present to groups on the data

Ben Due eke -- Thank you Maureen. Truth

Martin Kushler -- I'm wondering if anyone is making sure that needy customers are receiving their \$1,400 Covid relief checks, and also the new \$250 - \$300 per child monthly payments that just started?

Rose, Kelly (MSHDA) -- Maureen--please email me the clients details to rosek2@michigan.gov I can see if the household has applied for CERA and do my best to accelerate the processing of the case.

Curtis, Jamie (LARA) -- <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PLGKBYQ>

Shimekia Nichols – Soulardarity -- has a utility assistance program. I will email you the link asap.

Goldberg, Laura -- Thank you Maureen! This group needs to think in new, innovative ways - what policies went into place during this pandemic (that we're seeing from this data are no longer in place) that should be continued. how can we think even bigger. how can we eliminate shutoffs - and implement energy access as a human right. I hope one of the many work groups can tackle this. and think about the systems change that is needed. and figure out ways to better connect policy and program work to daily needs

Sakinah N Howard -- Maureen - please share the details with me at DTE as well so we can escalate your situation and investigate further.

Rittenhouse, Amy (LARA) -- Karen Gould Bio, Manager, Energy Waste Reduction Section, Michigan Public Service Commission. Karen acquired her accounting degree at Davenport University and began her career as an auditor for the grants department at the MPSC in 2006. She has spent the last 12 years regulating the utilities' Energy Waste Reduction programs since

the inception of Public Act 295 requiring these programs and is currently the manager of the Energy Waste Reduction section at the MPSC.

Rittenhouse, Amy (LARA) -- Kelly Rose, Chief Housing Solutions Officer, Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA).

Matthew Bandyk (CUB) -- The very good presentation from Elevate and EcoWorks made me think of a proposal to at least begin addressing some energy injustice issues that CUB and a lot of other stakeholders had really focused in on, which is the idea of reforming bill credits to customers for long power outages. The staff had endorsed a number of the proposals from CUB and others. But I haven't seen any further action in the last few months since the staff issued its report, which I believe was about six months ago. Could you give an update on where are we at with implementing these bill credit reforms?

Briana Parker -- Sakinah - what's your email

Armstrong, Anne (LARA) -- Marty, that is a good suggestion to ask customers if they have received the child credit. We have seen in the past with stimulus and Covid unemployment benefits, that customers have used these funds to pay utility bills.

Briana Parker -- Per Ms. Taylor "the CERA group is paralyzed at present, not responding expeditiously. I have folks that have been on waiting list for months." We have a member that lost her utility service and we have tried all avenues to get her assistance but to no avail.

Armstrong, Anne (LARA) -- Matthew - I will get back to you on the status of the revisions.

Armstrong, Anne (LARA) -- Kelly Rose can answer Briana Parker's question after all the presentations.

ANTONETTE D. NOAKES -- If the customer has entered into a payment agreement of some type with their utility, does this preclude them from receiving any form of assistance for utility bills?

Sakinah N Howard -- [Sakinah.howard@dteenergy.com](mailto:Sakinah.howard@dteenergy.com)

Armstrong, Anne (LARA) -- Toni, are you referencing MEAP or utility specific payment plans?

ANTONETTE D. NOAKES -- I am asking about any of them.

Briana Parker -- Per Ms. Taylor "Ms. Lester in Detroit has been waiting for CERA to respond to her request for rental assistance since March. I have reached CERA twice who promised to contact her. Nothing has happened. Is there a committee that reviews program services that guarantees implementation?

Rittenhouse, Amy (LARA) -- Tammy Bair Bio, Departmental Manager, Economic Stability Administration, Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA). Tammy graduated from Michigan State University with a Bachelor's degree in Social Relations from James Madison College. She has worked for the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) for over twenty-one years. She spent the first ten years as a caseworker in Kent and Ionia counties before working in MDHHS' Central Office as the manager of the State Emergency Relief (SER) program, the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) as well as the Michigan Energy Assistance Program (MEAP).

Armstrong, Anne (LARA) -- If a customer has received CERA utility assistance funds, they can receive other forms of energy assistance as long as they are eligible.

Armstrong, Anne (LARA) -- Customers can learn about and apply for energy assistance at MI Bridges [https://newmibridges.michigan.gov/s/isd-landing-page?language=en\\_US](https://newmibridges.michigan.gov/s/isd-landing-page?language=en_US)

or call 211 or go to 211.org

Armstrong, Anne (LARA) -- Federal Poverty Level guidelines:  
<https://aspe.hhs.gov/topics/poverty-economic-mobility/poverty-guidelines>

Armstrong, Anne (LARA) -- The slide deck with the links and background will be available later this afternoon at the EAAC Webpage: [https://www.michigan.gov/mpsc/0,9535,7-395-93307\\_93312\\_93320\\_94834-558075--,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/mpsc/0,9535,7-395-93307_93312_93320_94834-558075--,00.html)

Rittenhouse, Amy (LARA) -- Wanda Jones, Manager, MEAP Grant Section, Michigan Public Service Commission, Wanda began her career as an auditor for technical services at the MPSC in 1987. Since that time, she has acquired extensive knowledge in regulation and compliance and is currently the manager of the MEAP Grant Section.

Armstrong, Anne (LARA) -- To answer Matthew Bandyk's question on the revision of the credits for long outages is currently at the beginning of the rules revision process. The MPSC held stakeholder meetings to align stakeholders on the policies proposed for the rules change. The process can take 1 to 2 years.

Martin Kushler -- It is a little disappointing that out of all of these funding sources, such a tiny amount would go for improving energy efficiency in homes... to help reduce all future energy costs (not to mention, improve health and safety, and help with state energy savings and climate objectives). It seems like there is a missed opportunity here.

Annika Brindel -- Marty, I think a higher % of LIHEAP \$ is going to WAP in this state budget, but not completely sure if that was in the final budget. Someone else may be able to confirm...

Ben Dueweke -- At the very least we should be ensuring that every recipient of any SER or HHC dollars receives a home assessment to understand their needs.

Armstrong, Anne (LARA) -- Michigan Energy Assistance Program link:  
[https://www.michigan.gov/mpsc/0,9535,7-395-93308\\_93327\\_93336---,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/mpsc/0,9535,7-395-93308_93327_93336---,00.html)

Ben Dueweke -- this would go a long way to start to triage this situation instead of proliferating the cycle

Armstrong, Anne (LARA) -- MDHHS, MPSC are working on trying EWR services to energy assistance. Stay tuned.

Ben Dueweke -- This would also present a huge opportunity to put people to work in the state.

Martin Kushler -- It would be very useful to see an overall summary of all these funding sources, including a breakout of how much is devoted to bill payment assistance of various types, & how much to EE.

Ben Dueweke -- In addition to Marty's comment I'd also like to see how many recipients of assistance actually end up receiving Energy Efficiency interventions.

Armstrong, Anne (LARA) -- Customers can receive MEAP once they have received State Emergency Relief. The agencies distributing MEAP provide a needs assessment and work with the customer holistically as they receive the Assistance. These can be referrals to other services such as housing and childcare as well as EWR services and financial counseling

Matthew Bandyk (CUB) -- Thank you Anne. I understand it can be a long process (regarding bill credit reforms). Could you tell us what the next step in process is, as I have not seen any calendar or action item since the last staff report?

Wende Randall -- Yes! Easier to have statewide collaboration through virtual format!

Armstrong, Anne (LARA) -- Thanks Marty and Ben, we will work on this. Our goal is to tie SER and MEAP assistance to the utilities' EWR/weatherization programs and WAP and maximize actual bill payment.

Rittenhouse, Amy (LARA) -- Elaina Braunschweig, Departmental Analyst Rates and Tariff Section Michigan Public Service Commission As an analyst in the Rates and Tariff section of the Michigan Public Service Commission, Elaina has specialized in ratepayer-funded low-income assistance credits alongside her normal participation in rate cases as a rate designer. She is also an active member of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee at the MPSC.

Armstrong, Anne (LARA) -- We will not have time for Q&A on this session. Please put any questions in the chat and we will get back to you.

Armstrong, Anne (LARA) -- Matthew - we are at the application process. I will have someone follow up with you.

Martin Kushler -- Glad to hear you are focusing on the EE aspect, Anne. I'd be happy to help on identifying best practices.

Tanya Paslawski -- Does staff know how many eligible customers do not receive RIA due to the cap?

Brittany Turner -- What is the age requirement for the senior credit?

Braunschweig, Elaina (LARA) -- There is no cap on the RIA



Rajan M Telang -- Seems like there should be an income limit to a senior credit, no?

Tanya Paslawski -- what was the 17% figure?

Braunschweig, Elaina (LARA) -- 65+ years or older for the senior credit.

Rittenhouse, Amy (LARA) -- Tanya Paslawski, Senior Consultant, 5 Lakes Energy. Tanya specializes in energy policy development, analysis, and advocacy. She also serves as Director of Strategic Initiatives for the Institute for Energy Innovation and Michigan Energy Innovation Business Council, specializing in cutting-edge research. For nearly two decades in the energy industry, Tanya has worked in both the public and private sector on behalf of the MPSC, Direct Energy, ITC Holdings, the Organization of MISO States, and most recently as President of the Michigan Electric and Gas Association. She has held positions working with state regulatory commissions and legislatures, MISO, FERC, and various stakeholder industry groups. She also served in formal business and administrative roles as an advisor to two chief executives. Tanya currently serves as Secretary of Advancing Women in Energy and Vice President of the Midwest Chapter of the Energy Bar Association.

Annika Brindle -- It seems like the RIA is probably missing MANY eligible customers--who then end up subsidizing those customers who DO manage to find their way into the program. What new strategies can utilities deploy to identify ALL their income-eligible customers?

Rittenhouse, Amy (LARA) -- David Carroll, Managing Director, Apprise, Inc. David serves as the project director for energy program evaluations. He works with the Federal LIHEAP Program Office on low-income energy research and policy issues, and designs and implements survey research projects that deliver high quality and reliable information for decision makers. He has more than 30 years of experience in energy research with an expertise in evaluation study design and implementation, performance measurement, policy analysis, and survey research. His most recent project is directing the Performance Management Technical Assistance for the Federal LIHEAP Program office, overseeing research and policy studies for NYSERDA, and conducting program evaluation and survey research for state agencies, utilities, and nonprofit organizations.

Braunschweig, Elaina (LARA) -- 17% of RIA customers will be routed to the LIA credit. The LIA is capped because it is a pilot. We keep pilots capped to decrease volatility in rates.

Rittenhouse, Amy (LARA) -- Katrina Metzler, Executive Director, National Energy and Utility Affordability Coalition (NEUAC), Katrina has dedicated her career to community service and advocating for those most in need. She has a wide range of experience in the fields of energy, education and poverty-fighting programs spanning more than 20 years. As an advocate at the local, state and now federal level, she has supported legislation for programs such as LIHEAP, WAP, CSBG and SEP. Previous positions include the Family, Adult and Children First Council, and the National Association for State Community Services Programs (NASCS). She also worked for the State of Ohio and managed one of the largest Weatherization programs in the country. Ms. Metzler was appointed to the State Energy Advisory Board in 2013 serving the Assistant Secretary for Energy, where she provided critical assistance to improve access to services and program delivery. She also was the Director of New Business Development at Pickaway County Community Action Agency and coordinated an adult education program at the county level for 14 years.

Annika Brindel -- I would support having longer meetings in the future, as it seems that we are frequently unable to save time for questions, discussions, and small group brainstorming.

Julie Cassidy, MLPP -- I agree with Annika!

Braunschweig, Elaina (LARA) -- The utilities run their own RIA and LIA. Annika, you would have to reach out to the utilities to address that, Annika

Armstrong, Anne (LARA) -- Thank you Annika and Julie, we will strive to have longer panels with fewer in a meeting so we can have longer Q&A

Phillips, Tremaine (LARA) -- For those also assisting families with telecoms/ broadband access and assistance, please also refer to the FCC's Emergency Broadband Benefit program: <https://www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit>

Braunschweig, Elaina (LARA) -- Presentations do seem to always run long, Annika, but I would encourage you to join the AAA subcommittee that Jamie, Tanya, Amy and I will lead. Since this meeting is geared toward education, it will be up to the subcommittees to address these issues and come up with solutions.

Armstrong, Anne (LARA) -- LIHEAP Performance Management Website:  
<https://liheappm.acf.hhs.gov/>

Anika Brindel -- I did join that subcommittee. I'm always going to advocate for slowing down in meetings, though! With more time during these meetings, we could make them more interactive and ensure that the flow of information is two-way, not just one-way. And also make space for people to ask "dumb" questions that they might not feel comfortable asking when they feel like there isn't time.

Noah Purcell -- It does feel like each of these program that presented today could have been their own panel and discussion.

Braunschweig, Elaina (LARA) -- Oh I agree. There was a lot of information. If there is hesitancy to ask a question, I do encourage anyone to contact me regarding my presentation at [braunschweige@michigan.gov](mailto:braunschweige@michigan.gov)

Armstrong, Anne (LARA) -- Noah, that is a great suggestion. I will follow up on this.

Wende Randall -- This is a great resource. I appreciate being informed of what other states are doing.

Maria E Christian -- Annika Brindel, feel free to contact me regarding the RIA implementation/application as it relates to DTE. [maria.christian@dteenergy.com](mailto:maria.christian@dteenergy.com)

Martin Kushler -- Thanks for the data on MI vs. OH and IL on Weatherization portion of LIHEAP. Looks like we could hopefully make some improvement in that area.

Armstrong, Anne (LARA) -- Next Steps: Next meeting is on August 18, 10 to noon. A save the date will be sent by Brad Banks with a follow-up email later with meeting links. Commissioner Tremaine Phillips will speak at this meeting. We will also have a pane with other state regulators speaking to their programs, including PA.

Bethany Stutzman -- That's really good perspective.

Armstrong, Anne (LARA) -- In the slide deck there are additional information resources at the end.

Curtis, Jamie (LARA) -- Here are the survey results: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/stories/SM-PXL2LYWJ/>

Wende Randall -- I need to log off -- GREAT meeting. Thank you all!

Jones, Wanda (LARA) -- Thanks David

Armstrong, Anne (LARA) -- We will get the links for these sites from Katrina.

Armstrong, Anne (LARA) -- Salt River Project: <https://www.srpnet.com/>  
SRP: Salt River Project power and water  
As one of Arizona's largest utilities, Salt River Project has delivered low-cost, reliable power and water for more than 100 years.

Armstrong, Anne (LARA) -- Thank you to all our speakers and moderators for sharing your time and expertise with the EAAC and Michigan stakeholders.

Katrina Metzler, NEUAC -- Thanks for having me here today - I think I can speak for David as well i thanking everyone for all you do. :)

Noah Purcell -- Thanks everyone!

Rittenhouse, Amy (LARA) -- re-posting for your convenience: [EAAC Subgroup Sign-up Survey \(surveymonkey.com\)](https://www.surveymonkey.com) EAAC Subgroup Sign-up