

► Definitions Subcommittee

Energy
Affordability
and Accessibility
Collaborative

3/16/2022



Agenda



WELCOME!



REMINDER OF
OUR CHARGE



PROGRESS
MADE



SURVEY AND
RESULTS



DISCUSSION



NEXT STEPS

Reminder of Our Charge

Establish

Establish common definition of energy security/self-sufficiency – begin with proposed definition by MEAP Workgroup Subcommittee 2

Develop

Develop proposal for an energy affordability standard and how the standard can be integrated into the regulatory environment.

Draft

Draft suggested requirements for consistent energy affordability-related information for utilities to submit to appropriate dockets: rate cases, IRPs, EWR cases.

4

Progress Made



Determined to pursue a definition of energy affordability



Discussed concepts inherent in self-sufficiency and energy security



Ruled out some concepts

Fuel types
Non-energy utilities



Narrowed down definition options



Designed survey to obtain stakeholder input into the meaning of included concepts

How Stakeholders Responded



Survey Distribution

15 Assistance Agencies

- 282 responses
- 40% applicants,
- 42% front line staff,
- 17% member organizations
- 1% utility

9 Utilities including trade organizations

- 16 responses
- 50% municipally owned
- 50% shareholder owned

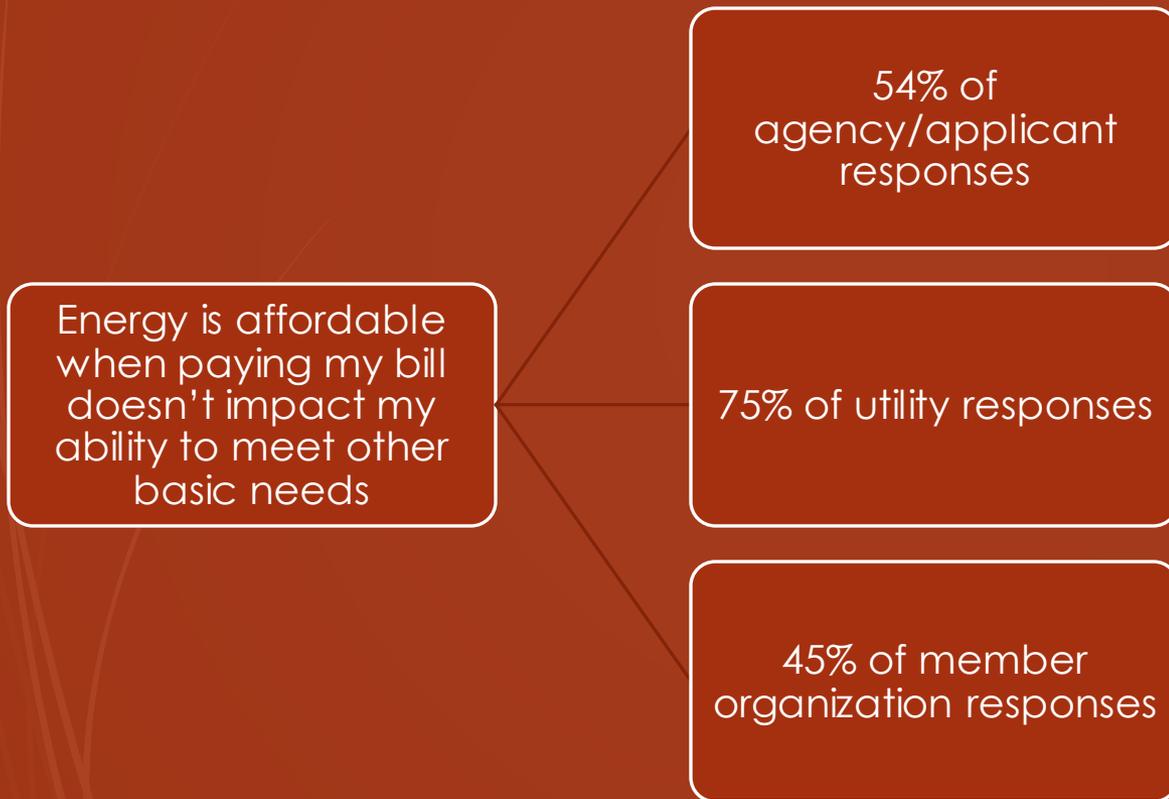
21 Member / Advocacy Organizations

- 32 responses
- 97% members of organizations
- 3% applicants

Q1: In thinking about how much energy costs, what is the best way to describe “having a cost that is not too high?” Choose the option you like best.

- ▶ Energy is affordable when I can pay my bill on time
- ▶ Energy is affordable when paying my bill doesn't impact my ability to meet other basic needs
- ▶ Energy is affordable when I get assistance to pay my bill
- ▶ Energy is affordable when I can keep my service connected
- ▶ Energy is affordable when I receive good value for the money I spend on my energy bills
- ▶ Energy is affordable when I can pay bills for things I really need and have a small amount for things I want
- ▶ Energy is affordable when I have better control over how much I use
- ▶ Other (please specify)

Q1 Responses



Q1: Other Responses from Agency Respondents

- ▶ All of the above!
- ▶ I always struggle to pay my energy bill. Should be based on income.
- ▶ My energy is almost 300 a month and I live in a house trailer. XXXXX power is the only supplier in our area and they over charge everyone
- ▶ Energy is not affordable in Michigan.

Q1: Other Responses from Agency Respondents

- ▶ 1,2,4,5,6 on time, no impact, keep connected, good value, have money left over
- ▶ Energy is affordable when I receive it at a good value and it doesn't break "the bank" or have to pick one bill to pay over another.
- ▶ Energy is affordable when the means to pay for it are no longer at the forefront of my worries, is affordable when I control consumption better and lastly, when paying for it doesn't mean having to choose between a roof, clean running water, nourishment, clothing and warmth.
- ▶ Energy is affordable when the heat, electric, water, housing are not more than 1/3 of total income

Q1: Other Responses from Advocates

- ▶ Most important is to not use any fossil fuels.
- ▶ This feels like a false choice - why is it just choose one when many of these matter? I think keeping service connected (which should be a basic human right that doesn't have anything to do with affordability but that's another conversation...) and not affecting the ability to afford other basic needs are a good combination of options.

Q2: Would you agree that having a home that is energy efficient can help with energy affordability?

Agencies – 96%
Yes

Utilities – 100%
Yes

Advocates – 100%
Yes

13

Q3: Which of the following things do you think helps with making utility bills more affordable for households? Please rank them with #1 having the greatest impact.

	Agencies	Utilities	Advocates
Having kitchen and laundry appliances that are energy efficient	2.94	2.19	2.84
Having good insulation in the roof and walls	5.03	5.56	5.34
Dialing down the thermostat during the winter or up during the summer	2.73	3.25	2.82
Having energy efficient windows and/or window coverings	4.20	3.38	3.94
Being careful in how to use heat, lights and electronic devices, and appliances	2.86	3.50	2.16
Having a good high efficiency furnace	3.55	3.13	3.09

Q4: Do you think that a discussion of energy affordability should include health and wellness?

Agencies:
80% Yes

Utilities:
57% No

Advocates:
97% Yes

Q5: Which of the following energy uses are important to make affordable? Choose all that apply.

	Agencies	Utilities	Advocates
Using energy or power for health needs. Examples include ventilation, cooling, running medical equipment, virtual medical appointments, etc.	73%	75%	91%
Using energy safely. Examples include avoiding things like cold drafts, carbon monoxide from damaged furnaces, faulty wiring, etc.	80%	81%	94%
Keeping a home at a reasonable temperature to stay healthy	73%	75%	82%
Keeping the temperature comfortable in a home	53%	31%	52%
Using energy in my home in a way that is safe for the environment	51%	25%	82%
Using energy without fear or anxiety about energy being disconnected or running out of home heating fuel	78%	41%	82%
Using energy for things that keep a family well. Examples include virtual schooling, communication, exercise equipment, and entertainment	54%	31%	70%
None of the above	1%	0%	0%

Q6: What does it mean to you to use energy in a sustainable manner? Choose all that apply.

	Agencies	Utilities	Advocates
That I am using energy in a way that is safe for the environment	56%	50%	91%
That my energy supply will not be shut off	41%	19%	44%
That I am not using fossil fuels	21%	13%	66%
That I will continue to be able to afford my energy	62%	13%	63%
When I operate appliances and lighting in my home, I take care to avoid wasting energy	69%	94%	72%
When I make appliance purchases, I choose the most efficient model to help save energy in my home. Examples include washer, dryer, furnace, air conditioning unit, stove, refrigerator, etc.	61%	63%	66%

Q6: Comments via Assistance Agencies

Sustainable to me means keeping it safe for the environment and the most efficient.

I am having some trouble paying for fuel oil.

Make sure my home is draft free and well insulated, so my energy consumption stays as low as possible.

Keeping my thermostat at 60 is too low.

Use energy efficient light bulbs

Not depleting source

Affordable efficient appliances

Lower energy costs. Charges are unattainably high.

Covering up and dialing down

Q6: Comments from Advocates



DRIVING MY CAR
LESS AND ONLY
WHEN
NECESSARY.



IT SEEMS LIKE YOU
WOULD LEARN
MORE FROM
THESE IF THEY
WERE RATING
SCALES RATHER
THAN EITHER / OR
CHECK BOXES.
WHAT IS THE
PURPOSE OF
QUESTION 7?

Q7: When considering home energy for heating, cooling, and other uses, which phrase do you think best describes energy as "able to be afforded?"

My household has the resources to meet their home energy needs

- Assistance Agency Respondents – 57%
- Utilities - 63%
- Member Organizations - 55%

My household's home energy needs are being met



Discussion

Next Steps

