

PURPA Fight Could Sway Solar's Future in GA

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Steve Hewitson, a partner in Troutman Pepper's state energy regulation group, is quoted in the *E&E News* article, "[PURPA Fight Could Sway Solar's Future in GA](#)."

"If the restudy is not done, the required network upgrades are not completed, then the integrity of the system is put at risk," said Steven Hewitson, an attorney from Troutman Pepper, which represents Georgia Power. "That is simply not a risk that Georgia Power is willing to take for its customers."

...

"It doesn't seem fair to ask [Georgia Power] customers to absorb more costs so that developers can generate more revenue at the end of the [long-term] agreement," said Hewitson, the attorney representing the utility.

For Georgia Power's part, the original engineering study is done to coincide with the length of the long-term agreement, "no less but also no more," Hewitson said. The electric company does not make upgrades to the power grid as if the solar system would be delivering power after that because the decision to do so would be up to the developer, he said.

To do so "could lead to overplanning the system, overbuilding the system, and result in costly upgrades that were never needed," Hewitson said.

PSC Vice Chair Tim Echols, a Republican, asked Hewitson whether he thought the argument from the solar companies was a legitimate one.

"That the companies weren't expecting this, and now this is something that's going to affect their project, strand their project, do you think that's fair?" Echols asked.

Hewitson said the solar developer never asked the question.

"I understand their point ... that they didn't consider this an issue," he said. "But it wasn't Georgia Power's [responsibility] to say, 'What are you going to do with this?'"

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