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Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2025

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MEJC and Rate Case Interveners Cautiously Optimistic of newly-appointed MPSC Commissioner

In the face of a DTE rate hike request Gov. Whitmer appoints her advisor, Shaquila Myers, whose environmental track record 'has not met the moment'

This week, Governor Gretchen Whitmer [appointed](#) her advisor, Shaquila Myers, to replace Commissioner Alessandra Carreon on the Michigan Public Service Commission. We are excited to see that Carreon will go on to be in a [position of influence in EGLE](#). This decision comes after the Michigan Environmental Justice Coalition alongside environmental justice advocates and orgs across the state rallied together to demand that the governor do their part to ensure environmental justice is central to the governor's choice.

Considering we're facing yet another rate hike request from DTE, the timing and choice of this appointment is concerning.

"The MPSC's intentions around accessibility and public engagement should produce a favorable outcome for resident ratepayers with this new appointment, if genuine," said Amani Sawari, advocate with We Want Green Too and Detroit Area Advocacy Organization, an intervener in the rate case. "Myers' appointment is as concerning as it is auspicious, and we are watching closely."

We find it worrying that so many of Myers' supporters, including Senator McCann, Rep. Amos O' Neil, and Governor Whitmer, are the same policymakers who've consistently put monopoly utility profits over the needs of everyday Michiganders - whether it's a Clean Energy Bill that fails to meet the moment by classifying trash incineration and factory-farm methane as "clean energy," or a massive handout to big-tech data centers that hurts ratepayers and ensures worsened pollution of our air and water.

"We welcome the chance for Myers to lead the PSC's break from the shadow of utility loyalty—but we won't wait quietly. Ratepayers are facing historic shutoffs, climate threats, and stagnation in community-owned clean energy access," said Shimekia Nichols, executive director of Soulardarity. "Myers will be judged by her votes, not her resume, network or identity. She must use her position to demonstrate justice over monopoly. and people over profit."

"We're glad to see she has a track record in public health, but we're concerned about her record as chief of staff for Speaker Tate - a speakership that squandered huge opportunities for energy and

environmental justice, all while monopoly utilities got nearly everything they wanted from our state government,” said Chris Gilmer-Hill, policy associate at MEJC. “As MPSC commissioner, working in favor of environmental justice communities will mean saying **no** to sweetheart rate deals for data centers across the state. It will mean saying **no** to a \$574 million rate hike request from DTE, and saying **no** to making sacrifice zones.”

In her most recent position, Myers was an advisor to a governor that pocketed \$1 million dollars from DTE and Consumers to Whitmer’s 501c3 Road to Michigan’s Future. Myers previously was an advisor to an administration that is more than partial to corporate monopoly utilities: Whitmer’s 2022 governor’s race raked in approximately \$235,900 dollars from DTE alone.

But with every change there is opportunity to do what hasn’t been done before.

There are chances to pick up the baton and continue the initiatives that Carreon had made core to their time on the board: centering ratepayers, making the MPSC process accessible, and listening to environmental justice communities and advocates.

“Now more than ever Myers’ impact on the MPSC will be measured, not only by the ongoing electric rate case, but by whether Carreon’s efforts in transparency and advocating for ratepayers will end with her short 2-year term,” said MEJC Policy Director, Andrea Pierce.

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The Michigan Environmental Justice Coalition (MEJC) works to achieve a clean, healthy, and safe environment for Michigan residents most affected by inadequate policies. We build power and unity within our community, so we all can thrive. www.michiganej.org