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March 5, 2013

The Sallan Foundation, Inc.  
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To Whom It May Concern:

I would like to take issue with the recent posting on this site by Bill Pentland and Tom Bourgeois. They are simply incorrect in their assessment that Con Edison's Smart Grid investments will not expand the electric grid's ability to accommodate distributed generation. Our Smart Grid initiatives have already increased the hypothetical "DG Amenability" metric introduced in this article and will continue to do so.

All our programs are aimed at modernizing the grid to provide situational awareness, improve responsiveness to grid events, and allow bidirectional power flow. To these ends we are deploying sophisticated communications and monitoring technologies that will make the grid more flexible, smarter, and more reliable. The extensive data we now have on transformer loadings already allow us to integrate DG export into our load flow modeling platforms and to analyze potential system impacts. Some promising engineering solutions have come out of Smart Grid efforts, including the Vault Data Acquisition System, which provides for two-way communication between transformers and distribution control centers. This technology, coupled with cyber-secure communications proven through another smart grid demonstration project, is being planned to allow large solar installations to export energy onto the grid where no export would have previously been allowed, helping us to enable our customers to maximize the size of their solar installations.

Additionally, we were just awarded an Electric Power Research Institute Technology Transfer Award for our efforts to improve the integration of customer-owned distributed generation into the grid under the Smart Grid Interoperability Grant effort. That program is exploring and demonstrating remote dispatch and secure-communications technologies while aggregating distributed resources.

Con Edison has a long history of improving the ability of the grid to incorporate distributed generation. Our Smart Grid efforts are enhancing this in demonstrable ways and will continue to do so.

Remember, DG is expensive and can be complicated to operate. Not every customer has a roof that is available for use in solar generation. Rather than upgrading our entire system to accommodate DG that may never materialize (and requiring customers to pay for those unneeded upgrades), a better approach would be to work with regulators and the DG community to target upgrades where we know DG resources will be located, and to assess the benefits *and* the costs of making upgrades to the system.

Margarett Jolly  
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