



OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS AND ADJUDICATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

March 23, 2026

Sarah M. Martz, Commission Chair
Iowa Utilities Commission
1375 E. Court Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50319-0069
via email: sarah.martz@iuc.iowa.gov

RE: Rejection of EPA Complaint No. 06X-25-R7

Dear Commission Chair Martz:

As you are aware, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Office of Civil Rights and Adjudication (OCRA), External Civil Rights Division (ECRD) received the above-referenced complaint against Iowa Utilities Commission (IUC). The complaint raises allegations of discrimination by IUC on the bases of geographic area, socioeconomic status, and political representation by allowing Ranger Power to concentrate utility scale solar projects in small, rural, majority white but economically vulnerable communities, while bypassing urban communities with stronger political representation.¹

This letter serves to notify you that ECRD is rejecting the complaint.

Pursuant to EPA's nondiscrimination regulation, ECRD must conduct a preliminary jurisdictional review of administrative complaints to determine whether to accept, reject, or refer it to an appropriate federal agency. *See* 40 C.F.R. § 7.120(d)(1). To be accepted for investigation, a complaint must meet the jurisdictional requirements described in EPA's nondiscrimination regulation.

First, the complainant must submit a complaint in writing. *See* 40 C.F.R. § 7.120(b)(1). Second, the entity that the complainant identifies as allegedly engaging in discrimination must be an applicant for, or recipient of, EPA financial assistance. *See* 40 C.F.R. § 7.15.

Third, the complainant must describe an alleged discriminatory act that, if true, may violate EPA's nondiscrimination regulation. *See* 40 C.F.R. § 7.120(b)(1). An alleged discriminatory act is

¹ *See* Complaint Nos. 09X-25-R5, 10X-25-R5, & 06X-25-R5

one based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. Fourth, a complainant must file the complaint within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory act. *See* 7.120(b)(2).

After careful consideration, ECRD must reject this complaint because IUC is not a recipient of EPA's financial assistance. Accordingly, ECRD must reject this complaint for investigation for lack of jurisdiction.

Finally, EPA's nondiscrimination regulation prohibits applicants, recipients, and other persons from intimidating, threatening, coercing, or engaging in other discriminatory conduct against anyone because they have acted or participated in an action to secure rights protected by the civil rights requirements EPA enforces. *See* 40 C.F.R. § 7.100. Any individual that opines a recipient has engaged in such misconduct can file a complaint with EPA.

If you have any questions, please contact Case Manager Trameka Caldwell by email at Caldwell.Trameka@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Juan Carlos Hunt". The signature is written in a cursive style and is enclosed within a thin black rectangular border.

JuanCarlos M. Hunt, Director
U.S. EPA, Office of Civil Rights and Adjudication

cc: David Cozad, Acting Deputy Regional Administrator/Deputy Civil Rights Official
Leslie Humphrey, Regional Counsel
U.S. EPA, Region 7