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**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
BEFORE THE
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION**

Hill Top Energy Center, LLC	)	EC25-148-000
Hill Top Energy LLC	)	
	)	
	)	

COMMENTS OF THE INDEPENDENT MARKET MONITOR FOR PJM

Pursuant to Rule 211 of the Commission’s Rules and Regulations,¹ Monitoring Analytics, LLC, acting in its capacity as the Independent Market Monitor (“Market Monitor”) for PJM Interconnection, L.L.C. (“PJM”),² submits these comments responding to the filing submitted by Hill Top Energy Center, LLC (“Hill Top Energy Center”) and Hill Top Energy LLC (“Buyer”), together the “Applicants” on September 26, 2025 (“September 26th Filing”), requesting approval of a proposed transaction under Section 203 of the Federal Power Act. The September 26th Filing requests approval of the transaction (“Transaction”) in which Blackstone Inc. (“Blackstone”) will acquire from Ardian US LLC and Ardian France S.A. (“Ardian”), all the non-passive membership interests of HTEC Project Holdings, LLC (“HTEC Project Holdings”), the direct owner of Hill Top Energy Center, with the result that Hill Top Energy Center will become an indirect subsidiary of Blackstone.

The Market Monitor recommends that the Transaction be rejected and that Blackstone be required to resubmit its 203 application {BEGIN CUI PRIV} REDACTED {END CUI

¹ 18 CFR § 385.211 (2025).

² Capitalized terms used herein and not otherwise defined have the meaning used in the PJM Open Access Transmission Tariff (“OATT”), the PJM Operating Agreement (“OA”) or the PJM Reliability Assurance Agreement (“RAA”).

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PRIV} clarifying its role in Ivenergy Renewable Holdings, clarifying its role in FirstEnergy, and committing to not removing Hill Top Energy Center from the PJM market to serve co-located data center load. The Transaction as filed does not provide assurance that market power will not be exercised. The Transaction raises questions about Blackstone's ownership of both generation and data centers in the PJM market that have not been answered in the application, and, as filed, it is not consistent with the public interest.³

I. COMMENTS

Blackstone is a major owner of current and planned data centers in the PJM region. It has described the Transaction to purchase Hill Top as an investment in supporting data center load growth.⁴ Unless this investment includes expansion, the purchase of Hill Top's existing capacity does not support the PJM region's needs due to data center load growth. PJM needs data center owners and investors to provide new capacity, like Blackstone's planned project in West Virginia.⁵ New generation from new suppliers increases competition in the PJM markets. Buying existing capacity not only does not provide the benefits of new generation, it risks the removal of existing capacity from the market, making the other customers of PJM worse off through higher prices and reduced reliability.

With Blackstone's anticipated growth as both an owner of power generation and data centers, its market power will increase. The Commission's market power review process does not take into account the combined effect of multiple transactions. Blackstone already has one large combined cycle power plant in PJM, Potomac Energy Center. Through this

³ See 16 U.S.C. § 824b.

⁴ See "Blackstone Announces Agreement to Acquire Hill Top Energy Center in Western Pennsylvania for Nearly \$1 Billion," September 15, 2025 <<https://www.blackstone.com/news/press/blackstone-announces-agreement-to-acquire-hill-top-energy-center-in-western-pennsylvania-for-nearly-1-billion/>> .

⁵ See "Blackstone Energy Transition Partners Announces \$1.2 Billion Investment to Build First-ever Natural Gas Power Generation Facility in West Virginia," November 13, 2025 <<https://www.blackstone.com/news/press/blackstone-energy-transition-partners-announces-1-2-billion-investment-to-build-first-ever-natural-gas-power-generation-facility-in-west-virginia/>> .

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Transaction, they would acquire a second. With the recently announced project in West Virginia, they will own a third.

Blackstone also owns five percent of FirstEnergy Corp. (“First Energy”) and can appoint one person to the Board of Directors of FirstEnergy who will represent Blackstone’s interests. In PJM, a subsidiary of FirstEnergy, Monongahela Power Company (“Mon Power”), wholly owns a total of 3,082 MW of coal fired generation. A subsidiary of Mon Power owns 16.25 percent of the Bath County Pumped Storage Project (“Bath County Facility”), a 3,003 MW pumped storage hydroelectric facility. Through power purchase agreements, Mon Power is also entitled to an additional 73.87 MW of coal fired generation. In total, FirstEnergy is affiliated with generation facilities totaling 6,158.87 MW in PJM. If the Transaction is approved, Blackstone should provide assurance that their influence over FirstEnergy will not be used to exert market power in combination with Blackstone’s other assets.

Applicants assert (at 22) that Blackstone also holds “certain passive interests” in Invenergy Renewables Holdings LLC (“IR Holdings”) and its subsidiaries.⁶ The exact nature and share of this ownership interest is not clear. In the filing cited by Applicants, IR Holdings states (at 3) that IR Holdings is owned 26.8464 percent by the managing and only active member, Invenergy IRG Holdings LLC (“Invenergy IRH”), 25.5674 percent by passive member CDPQ Renewable Holdings Inc. (“CDPQ Holdings”), 23.7887 percent by passive member CDPQ Investments (U.S.) Inc. (“CDPQ Investments”), 22.5032 percent by passive member Green Renewables Holdings, LLC (“GR Holdings”), and 1.2943 percent by passive member Green Renewables VCOC, LLC (“GR Holdings VCOC”).⁷ Invenergy IRH is a wholly owned subsidiary of Invenergy Investment Company LLC (“Invenergy”). CDPQ Holdings

⁶ September 26th Filing at 22.

⁷ See *Beech Ridge Energy LLC, et al.*, Notice of Change in Status, Docket No. ER10-2137-027 (October 28, 2022).

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and CDPQ Investments are wholly owned subsidiaries of Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec (“CDPQ”).⁸ Blackstone is not mentioned in the filing cited by Applicants in reference to Blackstone’s interests in IR Holdings. GR Holdings and GR Holdings VCOC are, presumably, wholly owned subsidiaries of Blackstone: In a press release for the investment, Blackstone states that Invenery and CDPQ will remain the majority owner of IR Holdings and no other owners are specified.⁹ IR Holdings wholly owns or controls generation owning companies totaling 483.2 MW of solar, wind, and battery storage in PJM. The Transaction should not be approved without clarification of Blackstone’s involvement in IR Holdings.

Blackstone’s website describes it as owning the “largest and fastest growing data center business in the world.”¹⁰

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A major issue currently under consideration in the PJM stakeholder process (CIFP) regards the growth of data center load with no new capacity to support it. The PJM Capacity Market cleared short of the required reserve level for the 2026/2027 Base Residual Auction.¹¹ This means that every owner of capacity has market power. Every capacity resource will clear the auction at the maximum price. Almost all proposed CIFP solutions to managing data

⁸ See *Beech Ridge Energy LLC, et al.*, Section 203 Application, Docket No. EC19-20-000 (October 31, 2018).

⁹ Blackstone, Inc., “Invenery Announces Approximately \$3 Billion Investment from Blackstone Infrastructure Partners to Accelerate Renewable Development Activities.” January 7, 2022. <<https://www.blackstone.com/news/press/invenery-announces-approximately-3-billion-investment-from-blackstone-infrastructure-partners-to-accelerate-renewable-development-activities/>>. Accessed November 24, 2025.

¹⁰ Blackstone, Inc., “Cutting Through the Noise: The Long Term Case for Data Centers,” (May 1, 2025), <<https://www.blackstone.com/insights/article/cutting-through-the-noise-the-long-term-case-for-data-centers/>>.

¹¹ See Monitoring Analytics, LLC, 2025 State of the Market Report for PJM: January through September Section 5: Capacity Market (November 13, 2025) at 340-341.

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center load growth involve including data centers as demand response resources.¹² If new data centers participate as demand response resources, then those data center owners will be market participants and will have market power.

There has been strong interest in data centers purchasing existing PJM capacity resources and taking them off the grid to provide power to data centers as an alternative to selling capacity in the PJM market.^{13 14} This co-location/PPA approach harms the PJM market by withholding existing PJM capacity resources from the PJM market. If that is Blackstone's intention for Hill Top, it will represent an exercise of market power based on physical withholding, cause the capacity market to be short, reduce reliability, increase capacity market and energy market prices and harm the public interest as a result. The Commission recognized, in the Potomac Energy Center transaction, that removing the resource from the market to serve a data center would constitute "a material change in circumstance that departs from the facts or representations that the Commission relied upon in authorizing the Proposed Transaction."¹⁵ The same circumstance applies to this Transaction. The Market Monitor requests that the Commission apply the same condition in this case.

The Market Monitor recommends that the Transaction be rejected and that Blackstone be required to resubmit its 203 application {BEGIN CUI PRIV} REDACTED {END CUI PRIV} clarifying its role in IR Holdings, clarifying its role in FirstEnergy, and committing to not removing Hill Top Energy Center from the PJM market to serve co-located data center

¹² See Critical Issue Fast Path – Large Load Additions, Stage 4 Meeting Materials (November 19, 2025), <<https://www.pjm.com/committees-and-groups/cifp-lla>>.

¹³ For example, Talen at its Susquehanna nuclear station. See *PJM Interconnection, L.L.C.*, Docket No. ER23-1043 Amendment to ISA, SA No. 1442; Queue No. NQ-123 (amend) (February 3, 2023).

¹⁴ See Motion for Expedited Action of Constellation Energy Generation, LLC, Docket No. EL25-29 (November 21, 2025).

¹⁵ *Potomac Energy Center, et al.*, 192 FERC ¶ 61,091 at P 103 (July 31, 2025).

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load. The Transaction as filed does not provide assurance that market power will not be exercised. The Transaction raises questions about Blackstone's ownership of both generation and data centers in the PJM market that have not been answered in the application, and, as filed, it is not consistent with the public interest.¹⁶

II. CONCLUSION

The Market Monitor respectfully requests that the Commission afford due consideration to this pleading as the Commission resolves the issues raised in this proceeding.

Respectfully submitted,



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Dated: November 25, 2025

¹⁶ See 16 U.S.C. § 824b.

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that I have this day served the foregoing document upon each person designated on the official service list compiled by the Secretary in this proceeding.

Dated at Eagleville, Pennsylvania,
this 25th day of November, 2025.



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