



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

October 20, 2014

Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission
89 Jefferson Boulevard
Warwick, Rhode Island 02888

Dear Honorable Commissioners:

We write to support an emergency regulation from the Public Utilities Commission to restore gas and electric services to LIHEAP-eligible gas and electric utility customers. We respectfully ask the commission to modify the termination/restoration rules for the remainder of the 2014 calendar year to allow for a reasonable down payment for restoration (or to avoid termination) of utility service. This would afford the most-vulnerable consumers an achievable accommodation in order to ensure continued or renewed utility service heading into the winter months.

We want to thank you for your commitment to balancing the needs of all rate-payers. We encourage you to listen to the input of the consumer advocacy community to ensure a solution that prevents harm to Rhode Islanders who are struggling during these difficult financial times. Reasonable payment plan terms provide struggling households with an opportunity to responsibly repay back bills over time, saving other ratepayers the cost of account balances that would otherwise be written off by the utility company as uncollectible.

Many Rhode Islanders face the prospect of trying to survive the approaching winter without heat for their homes. Action is needed once again to help low-income households. We hope you will consider assisting financially-needy Rhode Island families, elderly persons, individuals with disabilities, and others who are living with limited incomes, to survive the approaching cold weather. Thank you in advance for consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Senate President Teresa Paiva-Weed

Speaker Nicholas Mattiello

cc: Thomas F. Ahern, DPUC Administrator
Henry Shelton, George Wiley Center

RECEIVED
2014 OCT 27 PM 11:11