



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

November 9, 2010

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PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

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

Dear Honorable Commissioners:

We write to request that the Public Utilities Commission extend its emergency restoration rules for gas and electric services from December 1, 2010, to January 1, 2011, for protected low-income customers. We appreciate the courtesy you provided at your October 7, 2010, meeting by extending the rules through December 1, but respectfully ask for an additional month's time to provide an opportunity for low-income households to re-establish utility service.

There is strong evidence that more Rhode Island households than in past years are struggling to pay their utility bills. Complicating matters is a delay in the implementation of this year's Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). This has left thousands of Rhode Islanders who would benefit from the program unable to access the funding before the December 1 deadline.

Due to the chronic recession, the hardship to many Rhode Island families will certainly increase without this extension. In addition, home heating oil prices are rising and this winter is projected to be colder than last year. Action is needed once again to help low-income households. Thank you in advance for consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Gordon D. Fox
House Speaker

M. Teresa Paiva Weed
Senate President

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