

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

IN RE: REQUEST TO EXTEND THE WINTER MORATORIUM : DOCKET NO. 1725
:

ORDER

On March 27, 2017, the George Wiley Center filed a letter with the Public Utilities Commission (Commission) requesting an extension of the Winter Moratorium on utility shutoffs from April 15, 2017 to May 1, 2017, asserting that “any economic recovery has not yet trickled down to our most vulnerable neighbors” and the cold weather through April is “threatening their health and safety.”¹

On April 3, 2017, the Division of Public Utilities and Carriers (Division) filed a letter with the Commission noting that March 2017 had been a particularly cold month and that April weather is often cold. The Division, therefore, recommended approval of the requested extension, noting it “will afford the most vulnerable utility customers protection from termination during these likely adverse weather conditions.” The Division also offered that an extension would provide low-income ratepayers “additional time to obtain the necessary funding to avoid utility service termination.”²

On April 7, 2017, The Narragansett Electric Company d/b/a National Grid (Company) filed a letter with the Commission expressing concern for its vulnerable customers who find it difficult to pay their electric and gas bills during the colder months and indicating that the Company had no objection to the two-week extension of the winter moratorium period for protected status customers. The Company noted that it

¹ George Wiley Center Letter (Mar. 27, 2017); http://www.ripuc.org/eventsactions/docket/1725-WileyCtr-ExtendMoratorium_3-27-17.pdf.

² Division Letter (April 3, 2017); http://www.ripuc.org/eventsactions/docket/1725-DPU-Comments_4-3-17.pdf.

would continue to send out termination notices during the moratorium extension, but would not terminate service for protected status customers prior to May 1, 2017.³

On April 7, 2017, the Block Island Power Company (BIPCo) filed with the Commission a letter stating that BIPCo had no objection to the winter moratorium extension which “could assist our most vulnerable customers” and, therefore, would not terminate service for protected status customers prior to May 1, 2017.⁴

On April 11, 2017, the Pascoag Utility District (Pascoag) filed a letter with the Commission indicating that the utility had no objection to the extension of the winter moratorium period for protected status customers until May 1, 2017, but would continue to send termination notices.⁵

On April 12, 2016, at an Open Meeting, the Commission unanimously voted to extend the winter moratorium for a two-week period, through May 1, 2017. Relying on the reasons stated by the George Wiley Center and the Division, the Commission concluded it was reasonable and appropriate to extend the moratorium an additional two weeks.

Accordingly, it is

(22764) ORDERED

The “utility termination moratorium period” defined in the Commission’s Rules and Regulations Governing the Termination of Residential Electric, Gas and Water Utility Service, is hereby extended to 11:59 p.m. on April 30, 2017.

³ National Grid Letter (April 7, 2017); http://www.ripuc.org/eventsactions/docket/1725-NGrid-Comments_4-7-17.pdf.

⁴ BIPCo Letter (April 7, 2017); http://www.ripuc.org/eventsactions/docket/1725-BIPCo-Comments_4-7-17.pdf.

⁵ Pascoag Letter (April 11, 2017); http://www.ripuc.org/eventsactions/docket/1725-Pascoag-Comments_4-11-17.pdf.

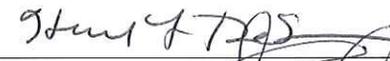
EFFECTIVE AT WARWICK, RHODE ISLAND PURSUANT TO AN OPEN MEETING DECISION ON APRIL 12, 2017. WRITTEN ORDER ISSUED APRIL 13, 2017.

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

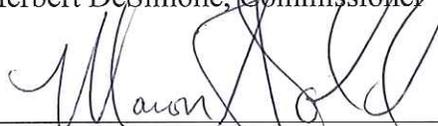




Margaret E. Curran, Chairperson



Herbert DeSimone, Commissioner



Marion Gold, Commissioner

NOTICE OF RIGHT OF APPEAL: Pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws §39-5-1, any person aggrieved by a decision or order of the PUC may, within seven days from the date of the order, petition the Supreme Court for a Writ of Certiorari to review the legality and reasonableness of the decision or order.