

From: [Pamela Cruze1](#)
To: [Massaro, Luly \(PUC\)](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] : Utility shut offs
Date: Monday, May 4, 2020 1:39:41 PM

RI PUC members,

In these unprecedented times, with thousands of hardworking Rhode Island families out of work and marooned at home for the duration of this global emergency, it is imperative that utility shut offs cease. It is imperative that the moratorium on utility shut offs continue for low income Rhode Islanders into the future as they struggle to put their lives and livelihoods on stable ground after this unexpected disruption. Do not penalize the working poor and poor, the most vulnerable families in our state, with reconnection fees. Make full use of available federal funds wherever possible to ease the devastation wrought by Covid-19. I urge you to do ALL that is possible to make sure every Rhode Islander has safe and secure utilities at this time when so little seems either safe or secure. So much is out of our control and direct actions regarding the virus are shots in the dark. What I ask of you isn't. It is extending light and power and capability so that when our state reopens we can all be ready to move forward. This is within our power and within your purview and we must attend to it now.

Thank you, Pamela Cruze, Providence

From: [Kirby, Lillian](#)
To: [Massaro, Luly \(PUC\)](#)
Cc: georgewileycenterri@gmail.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] : Utility protections
Date: Monday, May 4, 2020 12:16:51 PM

Dear PUC Clerk,

Although utility protections are set to expire May 8, the pandemic is far from over, and we need to extend protections indefinitely to ensure that people are taken care of.

We need to permanently continue the moratorium on shutoffs. It's absurd that anyone would be terminated right now in a moment of economic collapse and public health imperative.

The George Wiley Center is also advocating for the government to use federal and state recovery funds, CARE funds to relieve utility debt. Please do the right thing and take this opportunity to use these funds to help folks recover from long term debt.

In addition, we need no penalties for missed payments. At this time, with 30% Americans unemployed, it is far more likely that someone will miss a payment and it would be unfair to penalize folks for this. Especially if someone is on the AMP program and defaults, they won't be able to get back on the program for two years, so eliminating penalties are especially important for folks on AMP.

Finally, we need a long term plan to address the constant inequities in utility service and affordability. Let's support a PIPP in Rhode Island.

Please, hear the voice of the people and do the right thing. These are life and death situations for many Rhode Islanders.

Sincerely,
Lillian

From: [Marie Hennedy](#)
To: [Wiley Center](#); [Massaro, Luly \(PUC\)](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] : Utilities Restoration
Date: Monday, May 4, 2020 11:46:20 AM

RI's PUC NEEDS TO PROTECT LOW INCOME RI FAMILIES who cannot afford a 10% down payment to have their shut-off utilities restored. Do the chronically poor not qualify for human needs? If not, why not? What possible justification could enable our PUC to say no?

From: dixiejm@hotmail.com
To: [Massaro, Luly \(PUC\)](#)
Cc: georgewileycenterri@gmail.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] : Stop utility shut off
Date: Monday, May 4, 2020 11:36:19 AM

Dear PUC,

Please permanently ban utility shut-offs for all people. Please use a percentage of income payment plan to help low income people have continued access to utilities that are basic for maintaining healthy lives. Please use funds from the CARES act to support utilities for everyone. Please restore utilities immediately to all people without requiring down payments.

Thank you

Sincerely
Judith Dixon.

From: [James Vita](#)
To: [Massaro, Luly \(PUC\)](#)
Cc: georgewileycenterri@gmail.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] : Public comment for extension of utility protections during pandemic
Date: Monday, May 4, 2020 4:06:57 PM

To the RI Public Utilities Commission,

I am writing to ask you to continue the current protections people in Rhode Island have during this state of emergency and to expand those protections.

Many people in our state face terrible hardship right now, and having to go without essential utilities will only make those hardships worse. Continuing protections from shut-offs is necessary but it is only the start of what should be done. So many have lost their jobs or other sources of income, or face uncertainty due to health problems. Money is scarce under the best circumstances, which we are admittedly far from. The PUC can solve many of these problems. The PUC should restore utility service to everyone for whom it is currently shut off without requiring down payments; eliminate penalties for missed payments; keep people enrolled in programs like AMP; use federal aid to reduce utility debts for low-income households; and implement the Percentage Income Payment Plan (PIPP). These solutions strike at problems that have been exacerbated, but not created, by this pandemic. I hope you will take these steps. Thank you.

James Vita
Providence, RI

From: [Brittany Palumbo](#)
To: [Massaro, Luly \(PUC\)](#)
Cc: georgewileycenterri@gmail.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] : Protect Utility Service for Rhode Islanders
Date: Monday, May 4, 2020 1:17:33 PM

Public Utilities Commission,

I write this email to implore you to continue the moratorium on utility shut-offs during the Covid-19 pandemic as well as a permanent moratorium on shut offs for low-income households. The pandemic is far from over, as such May 8 is an implausible deadline for Rhode Islanders affected by this crisis as many are not even back to work yet. We need to continue to support our communities that are facing the worst of the economic hardship. I also write to ask for emergency utility restoration for all low-income households without any down payment, no penalties for missed payments and no dis-enrollment from AMP (arrearage management plan). No Rhode Islander should have to be punished with utility shutoffs or steep fines for restoration during a global health crisis, especially those of our community who were already struggling to survive. These are our neighbors and we must support them.

Please use the CARES Act funds to relieve utility debt for low-income households.
Please implement the Percentage Income Payment Plan (PIPP) for long term affordability and utility access for low-income households.
These measures are just and will offer some protection for our most vulnerable.

Thank you,

Brittany Palumbo (she, her)

From: [Zak Mettger](#)
To: [Massaro, Luly \(PUC\); georgewileycenterri@gmail.com](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] : Maintain moratorium on utility shut-offs during Covid-19 pandemic -- and beyond
Date: Monday, May 4, 2020 8:06:15 PM

Dear RI Public Utilities Commission:

I am writing to urge the commission to continue its moratorium on utility shut-offs during the Covid-19 pandemic, even after Governor Raimondo begins to gradually re-open the state's economy, and refrain from charging penalties for any missed payments during the period. I further request that you adopt Emergency Utility Restoration – without requiring a down payment -- for all low-income households, use funds provided to Rhode Island by the CARES Act to relieve utility debts accrued by these households, and implement the Percentage Income Payment Plan,

Ideally, I'd like to see the commission adopt a permanent moratorium on shutting off utilities for low-income households.

Families trying to survive without income, school or child care should not have to bear the additional burden of worrying whether their electricity (especially when their children must use computers to "attend" school) or water will be cut off.

Thank you.

(Ms) Zak Mettger

From: [Marianna Zotos](#)
To: [Massaro, Luly \(PUC\)](#)
Cc: georgewileycenterri@gmail.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] : Moratorium on utility shut offs
Date: Monday, May 4, 2020 7:42:35 PM

Dear Luly Massaro,

I am writing to express my concern for my RI neighbors in crisis during these unprecedented times, and particularly those that are faced with a potential upcoming disruption to their utility services when the moratorium on shut-offs is set to expire this Friday.

How one of us gets through this is how we all get through this, and basic utilities are critical to health and hygiene for all of us. We need to pull through the distress of all of this by working together and supporting our entire RI community. Let's make this a quick decision to show all RIers that they do not need to be waiting with anxiety to learn whether or not they will have a new crisis, a new stressor, to add to the mounting pressure that we all feel daily. Those that are in the most vulnerable and precarious situations need to have our support, love, and kindness now more than ever.

Please consider the following requests in your meeting on May 6th.

- Continued moratorium on utility shut-offs during state of emergency and pandemic. Permanent moratorium on shut offs for low-income households.
- Emergency Utility Restoration for all low-income households without any down payment.
- No penalties for missed payments, including no disenrollment from AMP (arrearage management plan) during pandemic crisis.
- Use CARES Act funds (federal money given to states for covid19-related expenses) to relieve utility debt for low-income households.
- Implementation of the Percentage Income Payment Plan (PIPP) for long term affordability and utility access for low-income households.

Many thanks for your kindness and attention to this matter. May you be blessed with good health and safety during these trying days.

Love and peace to you,
Marianna

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Marianna Zotos
Vice President



1305 Kingstown Road

South Kingstown, RI 02879
(401) 594-3500

From: [Ian Lawson](#)
To: [Massaro, Luly \(PUC\)](#)
Cc: georgewileycenterri@gmail.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] : Public Comment on Protecting Utilities Service
Date: Monday, May 4, 2020 7:39:15 PM

To the Public Utilities Commission,

My name is Ian Lawson, and I am a concerned resident of Warren. I am writing thank you for the emergency relief actions that have been taken so far, and to advocate for continued and expanded measures to protect the basic rights of vulnerable Rhode Islanders.

We need:

- Continued moratorium on utility shut-offs during state of emergency and pandemic. Permanent moratorium on shut offs for low-income households.
- Emergency Utility Restoration for all low-income households without any down payment.
- No penalties for missed payments, including no disenrollment from AMP (arrearage management plan) during pandemic crisis.
- Use CARES Act funds (federal money given to states for covid19-related expenses) to relieve utility debt for low-income households.
- Implementation of the Percentage Income Payment Plan (PIPP) for long term affordability and utility access for low-income households.

Thank you, and I hope to see these policies implemented.

Sincerely,
Ian Lawson

From: [Michael Roles](#)
To: [Massaro, Luly \(PUC\)](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] : Comment, Re: DOCKET NO. 5022
Date: Monday, May 4, 2020 4:25:43 PM

To Luly Massaro and members of the RI Public Utilities Commission -

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Docket No. 5022. Please see below:

We are still very much experiencing uncharted waters as our communities work to adapt to very unique and challenging circumstances emanating from the pandemic. These circumstances are forcing all of us to think creatively and nimbly, so that residents have the opportunity to make the proper adjustments and maintain resilience in these extremely strenuous times.

It is the role of the state to ensure the protection and well-being of communities as they work to adapt to the uncertain and rapidly-evolving economic, societal, public health landscape of this time. To bring about additional economic burdens onto people who are struggling most would further destabilize our communities at their most vulnerable, and any justification in so doing at this time is dubious.

I therefore respectfully request that the Public Utilities Commission take the following action:

- 1) Continue the moratorium on utility shutoffs during the State of Emergency.**
- 2) Place a permanent moratorium on shutoffs for low-income households.**
- 3) Provide emergency utility restoration for all low-income households without down payment.**
- 4) Cancel penalties for missed utility payments; prevent any disenrollment from the Arrears Management Program during the pandemic.**
- 5) Work with the governor's office to allocate CARES Act relief funds toward utility debt relief for low-income households.**
- 6) Implement a Percentage Income Payment Plan for long-term affordability and utility access for all low-income households across Rhode Island.**

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Michael Roles
Warwick, RI

From: [Max Binder](#)
To: [Massaro, Luly \(PUC\)](#)
Cc: georgewileycenterri@gmail.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] : Extend the utilities moratorium
Date: Monday, May 4, 2020 3:38:30 PM

Dear Clerk Massaro,

I'm writing to ask you to extend the moratorium on utilities shut-offs as the pandemic continues. We're in a crucial time of spreading where access to water and electricity can help people maintain their hygiene and health and contain the spread of the virus. Low-income and unemployed households, many of which include vulnerable low-wage workers, are already susceptible to the disease without their means of livelihood being threatened. It's crucial that utilities stay on through the state of emergency and pandemic.

Because of this I'm asking the state to:

- Continue the moratorium on utility shut-offs for the duration of the state of emergency and pandemic, with a permanent moratorium for low-income households liable to struggle with debt even after the state of emergency ends;
- Waive penalties for missed payments, and retroactively forgive missed payments since the pandemic, and no disenrollment from AM;
- Use federal CARES CoViD funds to relieve utility debt for low-income households;
- and implement a sliding scale, percentage of income-based payment plan (PIPP) so that utilities can be affordable ongoingly to the most in need. Even outside of the pandemic, no one should ever have to go without electricity, heating, and water—these are crucial for survival in our lives today, and those of us who can afford to pay more should gladly do so to support those who can't pay.

Thank you for your hard work through this crisis. Please do everything in your power to help the most vulnerable in our communities survive.

Sincerely,

Max Binder
32 Oak Hill Ave.
Pawtucket, RI, 02860

From: [Peter Nightingale](#)
To: [Massaro, Luly \(PUC\)](#)
Cc: [George Wiley Center](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] : In support of George Wiley Center's reiterated demands — docket 5022
Date: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 8:07:58 AM

Dear RI PUC commissioners:

Although I appreciate your moratorium on shut offs, I'm writing to reiterate my request that you to make this moratorium permanent and to implement the measures contained in my email of March 19 of this year, which is attached.

I would also like to draw your attention to the fact that the PUC web site is poorly maintained, incomplete and fails to serve public transparency. For instance:

1. This web page (<http://www.ripuc.ri.gov/eventsactions/publichearings.html>) contains a list of public meetings the most recent of which took place on January 9 of this year. That is clearly incorrect.
2. The 5022 docket, pertaining to the topic of this email (<http://www.ripuc.ri.gov/eventsactions/docket/5022page.html>), does not contain the agenda of the May 6 public hearing nor a deadline for submission of public comments.

Yours sincerely,
—Peter Nightingale
52 Nichols Road,
Kingston, RI 02881

Attachment: dated March 19, 2020

Dear RI PUC commissioners:

Poverty and inequality are responsible for about 245,000 premature deaths in the United States [1]. Our society considers this acceptable under "normal circumstances." We do not know what the current pandemic will do to these statistics. Being in a position of power, you have the moral obligation to do all you can to make sure that this unacceptable situation does not become even worse. I therefore urge you to put in place the following measures as demanded by the George Wiley Center:

1. A permanent moratorium on shut offs for low-income households;
2. Emergency utility restoration for all low-income households without any down payment; and
3. Immediate implementation of the Percentage Income Payment Plan (PIPP).

Thank you for your kind consideration of these vital issues,
—Peter Nightingale
52 Nichols Road,
Kingston, RI 02881

[1] [How Many U.S. Deaths are Caused by Poverty, Lack of Education, and Other Social Factors? \[mailman.columbia.edu\]](#)

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The next auto-quote (sent by free-ware from my commercial-free computer) is:

The paper reeds by the brooks, by the mouth of the brooks, and every thing sown
by the brooks, shall wither, be driven away, and be no more.

[The Peaceable Kingdom \[youtu.be\]](#) by Randall Thompson (Isaiah 19:7)

Sign up to [stay in touch \[actionnetwork.org\]](#) with Nature's Trust RI

[Peter Nightingale \[phys.uri.edu\]](#)

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