



State of Rhode Island

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

REPRESENTATIVE DEBORAH RUGGIERO, *District 74*
Chairwoman, Committee on Innovation, Internet and Technology
Committee on Finance
Committee on Special Legislation

July 31, 2022

Dear Chairman Gerwatoski and Commissioners Anthony and Revens,

I am writing in response to Rhode Island Energy's recent proposal to increase electricity costs by 47% because of the surging price of natural gas. This is too much for our working families, small businesses, and seniors to absorb. I urge the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to defer this increase to next year. This will be around \$50 a month for a residential customer. Perhaps you would consider spreading the higher rates over time to help mitigate the impact.

I am hopeful that the Attorney General's office will intervene. Rhode Island Attorney General Neronha was instrumental in negotiating with PPL Corporation to buy Narragansett Electric. Perhaps the \$50 million in rate payer credits can be used to ensure electricity is affordable during the winter months. This is yet another reason why the state must invest in renewables like wind energy. Wind is the strongest during the winter months of November through March when natural gas is the most expensive.

Thank you for your consideration that a 47% rate increase is too much for our working families, small businesses, and seniors to bear right now. I appreciate all of your work on the Public Utilities Commission.

Stay well,

Rep. Deborah Ruggiero