



## II. Basis for Intervention

Through this docket, The Narragansett Electric Company d/b/a Rhode Island Energy (“Rhode Island Energy” or the “Company”), petitioned the Commission for authority to forgive certain arrearage balances accrued on the accounts of electric and gas distribution customers who receive service under the low-income rate class and those who qualify as protected under Commission Rules 810-RICR-10-00-1, as agreed upon in a settlement agreement dated May 19, 2022 by and among PPL Corporation, PPL Rhode Island Holdings, LLC (collectively, “PPL”), and the Attorney General (the “Settlement Agreement”). As part of the Settlement Agreement, PPL committed to the following:

Within 30 days of closing, PPL shall seek PUC approval to forgive \$43.5 million in arrearages for low-income and protected residential customers, which represents 100% of the arrearages of over 90 days for those customers as of March 31, 2022.

*See Settlement Agreement* at Exhibit C, (1)(b). Accordingly, PPL-owned Rhode Island Energy has sought Commission approval for to forgive \$43.5 million in arrearages owed by certain low-income and protected customers. *See Request for Authority* at ¶ 15 (June 24, 2022), Commission Docket 22-08-GE.

The Rhode Island Attorney General intervenes to represent its own interest in ensuring that the \$43.5 million secured in the Settlement Agreement are used to forgive arrearages for low-income and protected customers as intended by the Attorney General at the time the agreement with PPL was made. Additionally, the Attorney General seeks to represent the interests of the ratepayers and the public as a whole, as the forgiveness of the subject arrearages stands to benefit all ratepayers and Rhode Islanders. He is in a unique position to represent these interests and

should be permitted to do so. Participation by the Attorney General in the instant proceeding is sanctioned by law and consistent with the public interest.

The Attorney General is, pursuant to § 42-9-6 of the General Laws of Rhode Island of 1956, as amended, the “legal advisor of all state boards, divisions, departments, and commissions and the officers thereof...” He is also the public officer charged with representing the State of Rhode Island, the public interest, and the people of the State. This includes representation with respect to environmental, electric or gas industry matters, as well as consumer protection matters. Additionally, the Attorney General “has a common law duty to protect the public interest.” State v. Lead Indus., Ass'n, Inc., 951 A.2d 428, 471 (R.I. 2008) (*quoting* Newport Realty, Inc. v. Lynch, 878 A.2d 1021, 1032 (R.I. 2005)).

It should also be noted that the Attorney General has been granted full-party status in prior proceedings before the Public Utilities Commission involving public utility operations and rates. Moreover, the legislature and courts have recognized role of the Attorney General as an intervenor on behalf of the state or its citizens as customers of the public utility. *See e.g.* R.I. Gen. Laws § 39-1-19(b), *see also* Narragansett Elec. Co. v. Harsch, 117 R.I. 395, 405 n. 6 (1977).

The forgiveness of arrearages that the Company seeks to provide in accordance with the Settlement Agreement represent monies secured for ratepayers to compensate for certain potential costs of the transition of the Company’s ownership from National Grid USA to PPL. The Attorney General seeks to intervene to ensure that the forgiveness agreed to in the Settlement Agreement is provided, and that their benefit is preserved. Additionally, the Attorney General wishes to represent his general interests as a party to the Settlement Agreement.

### **III. Conclusion**

For the reasons set forth herein, the Attorney General respectfully requests that the Public Utilities Commission grant his Motion to Intervene in this proceeding.

Respectfully submitted,

PETER F. NERONHA  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE  
STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

By his Attorneys,

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Dated: July 18, 2022

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on the 18<sup>th</sup> day of July 2022, the original and four hard copies of this Motion were sent via in hand-delivery to Luly Massaro, Clerk of the Division of Public Utilities and Carriers, 89 Jefferson Boulevard, Warwick, RI 02888. In addition, electronic copies of the Motion were served via electronic mail on the service list for this Docket on July 18, 2022.

/s/ Ellen Golde\_\_\_\_\_