

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

IN RE: DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES :
PROPOSED LIHEAP ENHANCEMENT CHARGE :
FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2023 AND : DOCKET NO. 4290
REVIEW OF THE NARRAGANSETT ELECTRIC :
COMPANY d/b/a RHODE ISLAND ENERGY'S :
REVISED LIHEAP ENHANCEMENT CHARGE TARIFF:

REPORT AND ORDER

Pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 39-1-27.12,¹ on October 14, 2022, the Department of Human Services (DHS) filed with the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) its recommended Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Enhancement Charge for calendar year 2023 (2023 Charge), proposing a charge of \$0.81 per month for each customer.² The Narragansett Electric Company d/b/a Rhode Island Energy³ (Rhode Island Energy) reported the LIHEAP Enhancement Fund balance was \$5,289,735 as of August 31, 2022.⁴ The LIHEAP Enhancement plan requires the 2023 Charge to produce revenues between \$6.5 million and \$7.5 million from electric and gas customers, combined.

In response to a data request, Rhode Island Energy calculated that the recommended 2023 Charge, if made effective January 1, 2023, would generate approximately \$7.6 million in total revenues from electric and gas customers.⁵ Rhode Island Energy indicated that a charge of \$0.79 would result in approximately \$7.4 million in total revenues.⁶ As a result of this calculation, the

¹ R.I. Gen. Laws § 39-1-27.12(c)(3); <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/TITLE39/39-1/39-1-27.12.HTM>.

² DHS filing (Oct. 14, 2022). https://ripuc.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur841/files/2022-10/4290-DHS-LIHEAPCharge-FFY2023%2010-14-22_4.pdf

³ The statute currently applies only to The Narragansett Electric Company d/b/a Rhode Island Energy.

⁴ RI Energy's Reconciliation filing (Sept. 23, 2022). https://ripuc.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur841/files/2022-10/4290-RIE-LIHEAPReconciliation-Aug2022%209-23-22_5.pdf

⁵ RI Energy Response to PUC Data Request 1-2; <https://ripuc.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur841/files/2022-11/4290-RIE-DR-PUC1%2011-11-22.pdf>

⁶ RI Energy Response to PUC Data Request 1-3; <https://ripuc.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur841/files/2022-11/4290-RIE-DR-PUC1%2011-11-22.pdf>

Division of Public Utilities and Carriers (Division) recommended the 2023 Charge be set at \$0.79 per month.⁷

At an Open Meeting held on December 22, 2022, the PUC reviewed the filings in this docket and approved a rate of \$0.79 per month for each customer for calendar year 2023. While the PUC typically follows DHS's recommendation, in this case, that recommended charge would have resulted in collections that exceeded the statutory maximum. Therefore, the PUC followed the Division's recommendation to keep the collections within the statutory bandwidth. The PUC also approved Rhode Island Energy's tariff changes, finding them to be consistent with the 2016 statutory changes.

Accordingly, it is hereby

(24580) ORDERED:

1. The LIHEAP Enhancement Charge shall be \$0.79 per month for each customer for the calendar year 2023, with the term 'customer' defined as any person taking service from an electric or gas distribution company at a single point of electricity or gas delivery or electric or gas meter, is hereby approved on bills issued on and after January 1, 2023.
2. The Narragansett Electric Company d/b/a Rhode Energy shall include an explanatory statement on customers' bills regarding the LIHEAP Enhancement Charge.
3. The Narragansett Electric Company d/b/a Rhode Energy shall file with the Public Utilities Commission, with a copy to the parties to this docket, semi-annual reconciliations no later than May 31, 2023 and September 30, 2023.

⁷ Division Mem. at 2; <https://ripuc.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur841/files/2022-12/4290-DIV-PositionMemo%2011-30-22.pdf>

EFFECTIVE AT WARWICK, RHODE ISLAND ON JANUARY 1, 2023 PURSUANT
TO OPEN MEETING DECISION ON DECEMBER 20, 2022. WRITTEN ORDER ISSUED
MARCH 1, 2023.

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION



Ronald T. Gerwatowski, Chairman



Abigail Anthony, Commissioner



John C. Revens, Jr., 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 7 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.