DeLaRosa, Stephanie (PUC)

From: Bonnie Arnold <bonniebalyndamarie@icloud.com>
Sent: Monday, September 8, 2025 5:21 PM
To: PublicComments, PUC
Subject: Final Public Comment Opposing Proposed Supply Rate Increase Re: Dockets 25-27-EL, 25-23-REG, 23-48-EL, 25-22-NG

To the Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission,

I am submitting this written comment as my formal public input regarding Rhode Island Energy's request to increase electric supply rates for the period October 1, 2025 through March 31, 2026. I am unable to attend the September 9 hearing in person or virtually, so I respectfully ask that this full letter be entered into the public record.

Let me be clear: I oppose Rhode Island Energy's proposed rate increases. This is not about "temporary adjustments." This increase is unjustified, unethical, and should be denied in full.

You are already allowing a utility to charge residential customers more to deliver electricity than to use it, and now you're proposing to raise the supply rate on top of that.

You are not protecting ratepayers. You are allowing this company to inflate bills with meaningless surcharges and bury the real cost under labels like "Last Resort Service," "Transition Charge," "Renewable Charge," "Efficiency Charge," and whatever other vague language gets approved. There's no transparency. No accountability. No relief.

This is not a small adjustment. It's a 16% increase on top of a billing model that is already manipulative. People are not just paying for usage, we are paying for a bloated, convoluted, and non-optional delivery model that piles charge after charge onto every kilowatt used. My household doesn't qualify for assistance. We don't run servers. We don't have electric vehicles. We're just trying to live in our home, run the A/C during a hot month, and we're getting hit with a utility bill that looks more like a car payment.

Under Rhode Island law, the Commission is not a passive bystander.

- Section 39-3-11 requires the Commission to hold a public hearing, investigate the propriety of any proposed change, and "make such order … as may be just."

- Section 39-3-12 places the burden of proof squarely on the utility to show that any increase is "necessary in order to obtain a reasonable compensation for the service rendered."
- Section 39-1-1 declares it is state policy to regulate utilities in the public interest and to provide "just and reasonable rates … without unjust discrimination, undue preferences or advantages, or unfair or destructive competitive practices."

In short, the law commands you to protect the public, not rubber-stamp corporate filings.

What Rhode Island Energy seeks is not just or reasonable. It is a cost shift from corporate shareholders and infrastructure spending onto household ratepayers. These surcharges are taxes without representation. They fund infrastructure, renewable projects, and efficiency programs that benefit the entire state and should be funded through the state budget, not quietly embedded in monthly bills we cannot dispute or decline.

If this spending is essential, then general revenue should be used, not ratepayer exhaustion. Asking the public to pay twice, once through taxes and again through utility bills, is inequitable and regressive.

<u>You have the authority and the duty to say no.</u>

Please consider the real-world harm these changes will cause. I'm not asking for vague assurances. I am urging you to reject this increase, freeze distribution charges, and initiate a full audit.

You are regulators. Regulate.
Don't enable corporate abuse.

Respectfully,
Bonnie Arnold
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