

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

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PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Senate Chamber

October 10, 2007

Public Utilities Commission
89 Jefferson Boulevard
Warwick, RI 02888

Honorable Commissioners:

I write in regards to Commission Docket No. 3876, which is scheduled for public comment on Thursday, October 11, 2007. It appears that Rhode Island is at a current record level of residential utility terminations for non-payment. We can expect this situation to get worse as energy prices increase. As a result, action is needed to help low-income households re-establish utility service prior to the upcoming heating season.

As you are aware, the legislature recently approved an Affordable Energy Plan (AEP) that would have provided relief to low-income households while minimizing the down payment requirements to restore service. However, because of the current budget shortfalls the financial benefits of the AEP were delayed.

With these facts in mind, I would request that the Commission consider modifying your rules such that the required percentage down payment for reconnection be reduced from 25% to 15%. This modification can apply for a specified period of time to provide an opportunity for low-income households to re-establish utility service prior to the onset of cold weather.

In review of these regulations, I hope you will be cognizant of the many Rhode Island families, elderly persons, and individuals with disabilities who are living with limited and insufficient incomes. Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Joseph A. Montalbano'.

Joseph A. Montalbano
President of the Senate

JAM/cbt

CC: Thomas F. Ahern, Public Utilities Commission
Henry Shelton, George Wiley Center