

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

**IN RE: SUSPENSION OF SERVICE TERMINATIONS :
AND CERTAIN COLLECTIONS ACTIVITIES : DOCKET NO. 5022
DURING THE COVID-19 EMERGENCY :**

NOTICE TO SOLICIT WRITTEN PUBLIC COMMENTS

On March 16, 2020, the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) voted to enter the first emergency order related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The order included various restrictions on the utilities, many of which have subsequently been lifted. In its July 15, 2020 order, the Commission extended the prohibition on the assessment of certain fees. Specifically, the Commission stated, “Utilities subject to this order shall continue to suspend late fees, interest charges, credit card fees, debit card fees, and ACH fees.” (Order No. 23866).

On August 12, 2021, the Commission sought information from the utilities related to the effect of these prohibitions and whether they should be lifted. The utilities’ responses can be found on the PUC’s website (link below).

Prior to the Commission considering at a future open meeting whether to lift the above-referenced prohibitions, the Commission will accept written comments from the Division of Public Utilities and Carriers and other interested parties. The comments should specifically comment on whether the prohibition should be lifted, the amount of notice to be given to customers prior to the lifting of the prohibition, and the rationale for the position. The Commission will address cost recovery issues related to the waived fees separately.

The PUC invites written public comments which may be submitted to luly.massaro@puc.ri.gov or Luly E. Massaro, Commission Clerk, RIPUC, 89 Jefferson Blvd., Warwick, RI 02888. The PUC requests comments be submitted **on or before October 21, 2021**.

The docket and related information are available for examination at the PUC's office. The docket can also be accessed at: <http://www.ripuc.ri.gov/eventsactions/docket/5022page.html>.

Cynthia G. Wilson-Frias
Chief of Legal Services
September 29, 2021