

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

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November 23, 2021

Daniel Goldner, Chair
New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission
21 South Fruit Street, Suite 10
Concord NH 03301

Re: **Docket No. DE 21-133, Joint Petition for Approval of the 2021-2022
Electric Assistance Program Budgets / Request for Expedited Order**

Dear Chair Goldner,

On September 30, 2021, the Commission issued Order No. 26,530. In that order, the Commission approved the October and November 2021 Electric Assistance Program (EAP) budgets filed by Unitil Energy Systems, Inc., Eversource Energy, Liberty, and the New Hampshire Electric Cooperative, Inc. on an interim basis only, subject to any adjustments that might be made in a final order. The order did not, as is customary, approve the utilities' EAP budgets for the full program year.

The Commission requested that the Department of Energy conduct its usual review and analysis of the proposed budgets, and any necessary discovery, and file a recommendation within 40 days of the order, with responses from other parties file within 10 days thereafter. The Commission stated that it would issue a subsequent order convening an adjudicative proceeding and set a final hearing date.

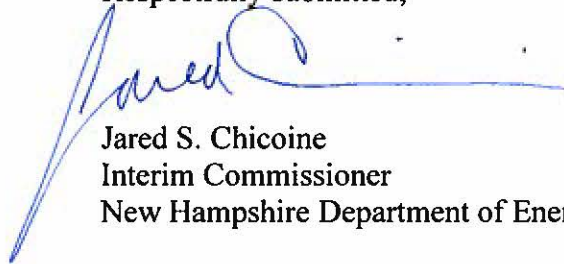
As the Department had conducted its usual review and analysis before making its filing on September 29, the Department filed a recommendation that the Commission approve the budgets on October 4. The following day, the utilities filed a request that the Commission promptly approve the budgets without additional process, as there is agreement by all parties on all issues. On October 6, the Office of the Consumer Advocate filed a response raising procedural irregularities, agreeing with the utilities, and asking for the swift approval of the budgets.

December approaches, and the Commission has neither issued an order approving the budgets, as requested by all parties, nor set this matter for hearing. Given the impending increase in electricity rates for the winter season, the Department respectfully

requests that the Commission issue an order approving the budgets in full in early December.

Last, the Department notes that Pradip Chattopadhyay served on the EAP Advisory Committee and will likely recuse himself from this docket if he is confirmed. The Department is unaware whether Carleton Simpson will need to recuse himself once confirmed. If Mr. Chattopadhyay and Mr. Simpson must both recuse themselves, the Department requests that the Chair immediately request a special commissioner pursuant to RSA 363:20 to establish a quorum.

Respectfully submitted,



Jared S. Chicoine
Interim Commissioner
New Hampshire Department of Energy

Cc: Service List Docket No. DE 20-123 (Electronic Only)