

August 10, 2024

To Whom it May Concern:

I was recently made aware of a proposal to limit an electric discount for *only* those whose income falls below at least 200% of the poverty level. My current income currently falls a bit above that level but by no means does that mean I can afford my utility expenses living in Concord. The thought of potentially losing this discount worries me and has prompted me to write this letter.

I apply for heat and electric assistance every year through Community Action for both myself and for my elderly parents due to financial need and this discount is typically 5%. Even though a 5% discount seems like an insignificant amount compared to the assistance I receive for heating, that little bit helps more than you realize (this discount was actually cut to 2% last year due to a lack of funding and that decrease in assistance was felt).

A bit about my situation: I had to go on medical disability in 2003 due to having been diagnosed with anorexia nervosa and major depression which has taken a large toll on both myself and my loved ones; At 48 years old, I have been struggling for well over twenty-five years with both illnesses which have robbed me of a fulfilling life. Having succeeded so well in both undergrad and graduate schools, this disability has humbled me in ways you can't imagine and has forced me to put any kind of career aside in favor of working on my health. Handling my expenses as a single woman on medical disability with a part-time job has proven to be quite challenging, to say the least. However insignificant a 5% discount may seem, every little bit helps when you factor the expense of paying for electric bills over the course of several months, especially when my bills are exorbitantly high in the winter months (and with cooling my apartment this past summer with the record high temperatures we had).

For whatever it is worth, I am pleading, as one voice in I'm sure thousands, to please reconsider this proposal and think with your heart rather than with your wallet. Eliminating this discount would only prove to hinder my progress in finally getting off of medical disability and in finally being able to reach my full potential that I worked so hard to achieve. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



Kristina Lombardi  
Concord, NH