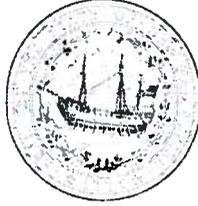


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March 7, 2016

Debra A. Howland  
New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission  
21 South Fruit Street, Suite 10  
Concord, NH 03301

RE: DE 14-078 Electric Assistance Program

Dear Ms. Howland:

On March 18, 2014, the Electric Assistance Program Advisory Board (Advisory Board) filed with the Commission a recommendation for temporary modifications to the Electric Assistance Program (EAP). In its recommendation, the Advisory Board asked the Commission to adopt the recommended modifications to address the accumulated balance in the EAP fund held by the State Treasurer's Office. The Advisory Board noted that the modifications considered the Commission's obligations under 369-B:3, IV, (b) (6) and RSA 374-F, VIII, (c) as well as the needs of the EAP program participants and low income households in general. The Advisory Board recognized that the program modifications were temporary measures and asked the Commission to adopt the proposed modifications for a period of twenty four months. The Advisory Board committed to monitoring the effect of any changes adopted by the Commission and submitting recommendations to the Commission in advance of the conclusion of the twenty four month period. On March 28, 2014, the Commission issued Order No. 25,463 which adopted the Advisory Board's modifications for the twenty four month period beginning April 27, 2014, thirty days from the date of the Commission's order.

The Advisory Board has considered various options to ensure the ongoing sustainability of the EAP and had also considered the timing of any programmatic changes. The initial impact of reducing assistance may be mitigated if the decrease in discount levels occurs during the summer months when total household expenses may be lower. The receipt of \$250,000 by the EAP fund in 2015, the result of a penalty assessed against Eversource by the Commission under 365:41, should enable the EAP to maintain the higher benefits levels and income eligibility level through the summer months and possibly into the fall.

Reducing the level of bill assistance will create difficulties for those low-income households participating in the EAP. Identifying those changes that best meet the needs of EAP program participants is challenging as the changes will result in lower assistance to some or all EAP participants. In recognition of this and in light of the ability of the EAP fund to sustain the current discount levels and income eligibility threshold, the Advisory Board requests the Commission extend the temporary, higher discount levels and the higher income eligibility level through June 30, 2016, allowing the Advisory Board additional time to submit recommendations to the Commission regarding program modifications. The Advisory Board would submit its recommendations to the Commission no later than May 1, 2016 with an effective date of July 1, 2016 for the implementation of program changes.

Sincerely,



Amanda O. Noonan  
Director, Consumer Services and External Affairs

DE 14-078 Electric Assistance Program  
Service List – March 7, 2016

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