

THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
BEFORE THE
NEW HAMPSHIRE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

DOCKET NO. DE 20-XXX

Public Service Company of New Hampshire d/b/a Eversource Energy
Technical Statement of Katherine Peters

April 29, 2020

A. Purpose of this technical statement

This technical statement is being provided in accordance with the requirements of New Hampshire Code of Administrative Rules, Chapter Puc 1605.02. The statement will describe revised tariff language that Public Service Company of New Hampshire d/b/a Eversource Energy (“Eversource” or the “Company”) believes will properly address the need of customers for leniency in repayment of energy efficiency loans due to widespread and likely persistent economic hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic where an amendment to the Company’s tariff is appropriate.

B. Background

As the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to grow in both scope and severity, Eversource has been vigilant to take proactive measures to ensure that reliable electric supply and service is a reality for all its customers. Maintaining such reliability requires implementing policies that are both sensitive to customer needs and financially sound for the Company. Eversource has determined that extending the repayment period for residential energy efficiency loans strikes this imperative balance.

Eversource is taking internal steps across the relevant departments (customer service, billing, and energy efficiency) so that it can support extending the repayment term for residential customers with energy efficiency loans secured through on-bill financing. However, in addition to internal coordination of various departments within the Company, Eversource’s current tariff must also be revised to accommodate the financial need of our customers. The Company’s current tariff, in relevant part states: “Residential Participating Customers may specify the repayment term of the Customer Loan Amount subject to the maximum repayment term limit of 24 months.” Energy Efficiency Loan Program, 1st revised page 96, tariff NHPUC No. 9. Eversource requests through this petition that the tariff be revised to extend the maximum repayment term from 24 to 36 months, at the Company’s discretion.

While disconnection and late payments have been suspended for New Hampshire customers during the state of emergency,¹ nothing specifically addresses repayment of energy efficiency loans, and suspension of penalties does not extend past the state of emergency. The requested tariff revision accounts for both. The additional 12 months, if needed, can alleviate economic hardship for residential customers by making the loan repayment more feasible and consequently minimizing or eliminating potential arrearages that would otherwise arise in the face of ongoing economic hardship stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic.

C. Impact of the tariff revision on Eversource revenues

Eversource anticipates a de minimis impact on revenue from the requested extension of a maximum 12-months for residential energy efficiency loan repayment: loans that range from \$500 to \$2,000. Currently, there are just over 100 residential energy efficiency loans outstanding for a total of \$203,049. If the Company has the ability to collaborate with customers to extend repayment of residential energy efficiency loans for up to an additional 12 months according to customers' budgetary constraints, then those customers will be empowered to timely pay their utility bills. Accommodating customers' need to temporarily defer or extend the repayment term of these loans can lessen the strain of financial hardship during this uncertain and volatile time, without creating any correlating volatility for the Company.

D. Revised tariff pages

Eversource has attached two versions of the revised tariff page, both clean and with redline edits, incorporating the revised terms described above. Eversource requests that the Commission allow the tariff page to become effective on May 1, 2020, or on such a date as ordered by the Commission, but nonetheless as soon as can be accommodated by the Commission as this request has arisen from extreme circumstances and customer need.

¹ See Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #3 Pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, issued March 17, 2020: <https://www.governor.nh.gov/news-media/emergency-orders/documents/emergency-order-3.pdf>