



RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No. 421

EFFECTIVE October 27, 2024

WHEREAS, On Thursday, September 19, 2024, the Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission approved a significant electricity rate hike, raising the residential electricity rate from 10.4 cents per kilowatt hour to 16.4 cents per kilowatt hour beginning in October; and

WHEREAS, This decision will increase residential costumers' electricity bills by 23%, which is about \$31 per month for Rhode Island households; and

WHEREAS, Despite the slight decrease from last year's winter rate of 17.7 cents per kilowatt hour, the current hike will still impose a financial burden on residents, particularly during a time where the cost of living is very high; and

WHEREAS, The rate increase will disproportionately impact low-income residents, seniors on fixed incomes, and working-class families, forcing many to choose between essential utilities and other basic needs; and

WHEREAS, Energy is a basic necessity and the decision to impose this substantial rate hike without sufficient measures to protect the most vulnerable households demonstrates a lack of commitment to ensuring equitable access to affordable energy for all Rhode Islanders; and

WHEREAS, While few financial relief programs are expected to be provided, they are insufficient to offset the significant burden that this rate increase will place on many households, especially during the cold winter months when heating and electricity demands are at their highest; and

WHEREAS, The Providence City Council aims to protect residents from unjust financial burdens and promote fairness and equity in the provision of essential services, including energy; and

WHEREAS, The residents of Providence and across Rhode Island deserve a utilities system that prioritizes affordability, reliability, and sustainability, without disproportionately impacting those who can least afford rate increases.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Providence City Council condemns the decision of the Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission to approve the residential electricity rate hike, recognizing the significant hardship it will cause for many residents of Providence and beyond; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Providence City Council calls on the Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission and Rhode Island Energy to reconsider this decision and explore alternative solutions that protect consumers from steep rate increases; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Providence City Council urges the state and utility companies to implement stronger protections and financial assistance programs for low-income households and vulnerable populations to ensure that no Rhode Islander is left without access to affordable energy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Providence City Council will continue to advocate for energy policies that prioritize the needs of residents and promote long-term, sustainable, and affordable energy solutions for all Rhode Islanders.

IN CITY COUNCIL
OCT 17 2024
READ AND PASSED


RACHEL M. MILLER, PRESIDENT.

CLERK

Effective without the
Mayor's Signature

Tina L. Mastroianni
City Clerk