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June 2, 2020

Mark D. Marini, Secretary
Department of Public Utilities
One South Station, 5th Floor
Boston, MA 02110

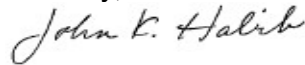
Re: Inquiry into Establishing Policies and Practices for Electric and Gas Companies –
D.P.U. 20-58

Dear Secretary Marini:

On behalf of the Customer Assistance Working Group¹ enclosed is a corrected Table 1 on page 4 of the Working Group's Customer Assistance Report ("Report"). A clean and redlined corrected page are provided for ease of review.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



John K. Habib, Esq.

Enclosures

cc: Rachel Cottle, Esq. – Hearing Officer
Elizabeth Anderson, Esq. – Office of the Attorney General
Robert Hoagland, Esq. – Department of Energy Resources
Charles Harak, Esq. - National Consumer Law Center
Jerrold Oppenheim, Esq. – LEAN
Robert Rio – Associated Industries of Massachusetts

¹ Fitchburg Gas and Electric Light Company d/b/a Unitil, Massachusetts Electric Company and Nantucket Electric Company, Boston Gas Company and Colonial Gas Company, each d/b/a National Grid, and NSTAR Gas Company and NSTAR Electric Company, each d/b/a Eversource Energy, Bay State Gas Company d/b/a Columbia Gas of Massachusetts, Liberty Utilities (New England Natural Gas Company) Corp. d/b/a Liberty Utilities, The Berkshire Gas Company, and Blackstone Gas Company; the Office of the Attorney General ("AGO" or "Attorney General", the Department of Energy Resources ("DOER"), the National Consumer Law Center ("NCLC"), the Low-Income Energy Affordability Network ("LEAN") and the Associated Industries of Massachusetts ("AIM") (together, the "Working Group")

strategies to create, expand or modify needed programs to assist both residential and commercial and industrial (“C&I”) customers in paying their bills over time or in obtaining relief from payment.

The need for these new or enhanced customer assistance options is supported by the Distribution Companies’ arrearage data, reflected in Table 1 below, since the commencement of the State of Emergency in Massachusetts. The significant arrears increase and usage decrease for C&I customers indicate a need to assist this segment of customers in a new way. Without delinquent balance communications or disconnect practices, the Distribution Companies are consistently seeing double-digit payment arrangement decreases.

Table 1: Gas Company Comparison of April 2019 to April 2020 (in dollars)

	Eversource	National Grid	Unitil⁴	Liberty	Berkshire	CMA
Residential Arrears	Up 6%	Down 3%	Up 11%	Up 18%	Total Res Up 3% LI-Down 21%	Down 6%
C&I Arrears	Up 64%	Up 29%	Up 27%	Up 93%	Total-C&I Up 12 % Sm-Up 54% Med-Up 61% Lg-Down 64%	Up 32%
Residential Load Use	Down less than 1%	Up 10%	Down 11%	Down 8%	Down 9%	Up 5%
Commercial Load Use	Down 9.25%	Down 18%	Down 7%	Down 12%	Down 10%	Down 10%
# of payment plans YOY	Down 18%	Down 60%	Down 50%	Down 84%	Down 47%	Down 81%
# of AMPs	Down 20%	Up 34 22%	Down 62%	Down 26%	Down 8%	Down 39%

⁴ Unitil’s arrearage increases by customer class is representative of April 17, 2020 to May 28, 2020. April 17th DPU weekly report was the first report that the company segregated arrearages by customer class.

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