


COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

Inquiry of the Department of Public Utilities )  
into Establishing Policies and Practices for )  
Electric and Gas Companies Regarding Customer )  
Assistance and Ratemaking Measures in )  
Connection to the State of Emergency )  
Regarding the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) )  
Pandemic. )

**GRANTED**  
  
Rachel Cottle November 2, 2020  
Hearing Officer

D.P.U. 20-58

**JOINT MOTION FOR AN EXTENSION OF TIME**

Fitchburg Gas and Electric Light Company d/b/a Unitil (“Unitil”), Massachusetts Electric Company and Nantucket Electric Company, Boston Gas Company and Colonial Gas Company, each d/b/a National Grid (“National Grid”), and NSTAR Gas Company and NSTAR Electric Company, each d/b/a Eversource Energy (“Eversource”), Bay State Gas Company d/b/a Columbia Gas of Massachusetts (“CMA”)<sup>1</sup>, Liberty Utilities (New England Natural Gas Company) Corp. d/b/a Liberty (“Liberty”), and The Berkshire Gas Company (“Berkshire”)(together, the “Distribution Companies”) pursuant to 220 C.M.R. 1.02(5) hereby request an extension to file the fifth update to the Working Group’s Customer Assistance Report (“Fifth Updated Report”).

On May 11, 2020, the Department of Public Utilities issued a Notice of Inquiry into establishing policies and practices for electric and gas companies regarding customer assistance and ratemaking measures in connection to the State of Emergency regarding the novel Coronavirus (“COVID-19”) Pandemic (“NOI”). The NOI directed the Working Group to create a Customer

<sup>1</sup> On October 7, 2020, the Department of Public Utilities approved the asset purchase of CMA. Joint Petition of Eversource Energy, NiSource Inc., Eversource Gas Company of Massachusetts and CMA, D.P.U. 20-59 (2020). CMA is now Eversource Gas of Massachusetts.

Assistance Report followed by a consensus ratemaking proposal to support customer assistance initiatives and to maintain the financial integrity of the utilities in response to COVID-19. The Working Group submitted the Customer Assistance report on May 29, 2020. On June 26, 2020, the Department issued D.P.U. 20-58-A directing the Working Group to update the Customer Assistance Report “identify such information as additional details, specific timelines, revisions, and any new approaches, including plans to progress to a new phase of the four-phase general plan at least ten business days prior to each progression” by July 30, 2020 (D.P.U. 20-58-A Order at 8).

In addition, the Department issued an order in D.P.U. 20-58-B, directing the Working Group to report to the Department in its next Update Report, as results are available, regarding timing of residential shut-off notices (D.P.U. 20-58-B at 17-18).

The Department directed the Working Group to file updates to the Customer Assistance Report at two-week intervals (D.P.U. 20-58-A Order at 8). The Working Group filed the first update to the Report on August 4, 2020. The Working Group filed subsequent reports on August 21, 2020, September 18, 2020, and October 16, 2020.

The Distribution Companies would like additional time to engage the full Working Group to develop the Fifth Updated Report, as contemplated by the Department’s directives. Given the time needed to coordinate among the Distribution Company members and the other members of the Working Group, the Distribution Companies respectfully request an extension of ten business days to submit the Fifth Updated Report to the Department. This extension will result in moving the current deadline from Friday, October 30, 2020 to Friday, November 13, 2020. The Distribution Companies are authorized to represent that the other members of the Working Group do not object to this request.

Respectfully Submitted,

**DISTRIBUTION COMPANIES**

By their attorneys,

**FITCHBURG GAS AND ELECTRIC  
LIGHT COMPANY d/b/a UNITIL**

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**LIBERTY UTILITIES (NEW  
ENGLAND NATURAL GAS  
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**NATIONAL GRID**

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Dated: October 30, 2020