



State of Connecticut
SENATE

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FINANCE, REVENUE & BONDING COMMITTEE

NOTICE OF COMPLAINT

Feb. 9, 2018

Public Utilities Regulatory Authority
Ten Franklin Square
New Britain, CT 06051

Re: **DOCKET NO. 14-07-19RE01**

Dear Public Utilities Regulatory Authority regulators,

I believe Eversource (and potentially United Illuminating) has been knowingly disseminating incorrect information to thousands and thousands of ratepayers on their electric bills – mine included. I am referring specifically to the “Next Cycle Rate” which has been incorrect, seriously understating the rate that I am being charged in the next “cycle” (month).

This letter serves as my formal complaint with PURA.

My Eversource billing, every month since September 2017, has led me to believe that my “next cycle rate” was going to be \$0.07 kWh. When I received my next bill, my rate was \$0.1299kWh.

To make matters worse, I have learned that Eversource did not receive the information from the third-party provider but inserted the incorrect rate anyways. Based on the September 6, 2016 response from United Illuminating, SEU-003, to the PURA, “If a change to the rate has not been provided by the supplier, the current rate is printed as Next Month’s rate”, UI may be populating the Next Cycle Rate with incorrect information as Eversource appears to be doing, thereby transmitting rate information that may be misleading to residential rate payers.

I contend that Eversource knowingly inserted rate information that it didn't have. It dumbfounds me that the Company doesn't have any internal controls to prevent this kind of misleading information in its billing information to consumers and that it appears to be indifferent to the potential abuse by suppliers and the financial consequences for rate payers.

Even more alarming, is the “response” of the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority, which appears to have knowingly tolerated the dissemination by the EDC’s of inaccurate information on residential energy bills for at least a year. Documentation within the Docket No. 14-07-19RE01 files clearly shows the Authority had in its possession information (see Q-SEU-004, dated February 14, 2017) provided by Eversource indicating that 39 “Suppliers” were not providing information in the “Next Month’s Price” field on residential electric bills. Moreover, the Docket files contain various exchanges of letters between one supplier, Spark Energy, and the PURA regarding Spark Energy’s ongoing noncompliance with respect to “Phase II Summary Information requirements” dating back to September 2016. The Authority, knowing that suppliers were failing to provide to the EDC’s accurate information (described by the OCC and the AG as “vital” in their July 2015 joint letters to the PURA about this topic) as required by statute and decisions of the Authority did not appear to grasp the urgency of the situation nor the potential immediate and ongoing consequences for residential rate payers.

The Office of Consumer Counsel and the Attorney General, in their July 2015 joint letters to the PURA emphasized the importance of this information as follows, *“That would mean that electric suppliers cannot, under any circumstances, post a Next Rate that is one price and then actually charge a different rate the following month”*. Both the OCC and the AG recognized the vital importance of the “next rate” information, but the lethargic enforcement process of the Authority as exhibited by the Docket files suggests no sense of urgency by the Authority while thousands of residential rate payers continued to receive inaccurate information for a year or more, and in at least in one case, (Spark Energy), for 2 years.

- The Authority should issue a cease and desist order to the EDC’s effective immediately and concomitantly order that under no circumstances can a residential rate increase without the residential rate payer receiving accurate “next rate” information as required by the Authority’s Decision of August 12, 2015.
- The Authority also should order the utility companies to refund any overpayments by rate payers who were charged a higher rate in their monthly supplier charge than the “next cycle rate” that had been indicated in their previous bill
- The Authority should fine suppliers who continue to either not provide next cycle rate information or provide incorrect information
- The Authority should fine the EDC’s for knowingly disseminating incorrect “Next Cycle Rate” information

I also request the Office of Consumer Counsel and the Attorney General to investigate the apparent widespread violation of the August 12, 2015 Decision by the PURA.

We already have among the highest energy bills in the country. Bills are slated to go even higher. I represent many working families, seniors and individuals on fixed income. They are overburdened already. This issue could impact families throughout Connecticut (Eversource and United Illuminating both issue bills for electricity provided by other suppliers), and many families may have been overcharged by a considerable amount. If this is true, they all deserve a

refund. This problem appears to have been going on for 2 years. Enough is enough. It's time to treat this misinformation as a high priority, to stop it and to correct the situation now!

Thank you for your prompt attention to this pressing matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Len Suzio". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Len Suzio
State Senator

cc:
The Honorable George Jepsen, Attorney General
Consumer Counsel Elin Swanson Katz