



Mr. Luther McDonald  
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Sep 25, 2017

Irene Kim Asbury  
44 South Clinton Avenue, 3rd Floor, Suite 314 CN 350  
Trenton, NJ 08625

BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

OCT 05 2017

MAIL RECEIVED

Subject: Protect Utilities Customers from Unfair Charges!

Dear Irene Kim Asbury,

Re: Proposal Number: PRN 2017-165 and  
Proposal Number: PRN 2017-164

I am writing to oppose PRN 2017-165 and PRN 2017-164. These proposed regulations will harm utility consumers. Allowing utilities to increase rates provisionally, before the company has proven they even need a rate increase and that the price is reasonable, weakens important consumer protections. Because utility companies often file for rate increase well above what they are actually granted sometimes 65-70% higher - the BPU's proposal would allow utility companies to receive a financial windfall at my expense. Customers should not be used as a bank to make lucrative loans to their utility companies.

The proposed rule to weaken regulations and oversight by allowing utility companies to increase bills by adding a new surcharge, on top of what we are already paying, for infrastructure programs also hurts consumers. The proposed regulation would allow rates to be hiked without a comprehensive, independent review of all utility costs and investment decisions to determine if our rates are reasonable. Utilities have an obligation to make all necessary infrastructure investments without new surcharges and without weakening oversight. This is what we are already paying for. Failing to carry out this obligation amounts to holding consumers hostage, rather than fulfilling its obligation to serve. This proposal will fast-track rate increases and is not needed to ensure a strong utility infrastructure.

Sincerely,  
Mr. Luther McDonald