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Law Department

December 4, 2020

Aida Camacho-Welch,  
Secretary Board of the Public Utilities  
44 South Clinton Avenue, 3rd Floor, Suite 314  
P.O. Box 350  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0350

**RE: In the Matter of the Verified Petition of Rockland Electric Company for Approval of an Energy Efficiency Stimulus Program and Associated Rate Recovery  
BPU Docket No.: ER17080869  
Request for Extension of Program through June, 30, 2021**

Dear Secretary Camacho-Welch:

Please accept this Letter Petition as a request to extend the Low Income Audit and Direct Install Energy Efficiency III Program ("Low Income III Program" or "Program") of Rockland Electric Company ("RECO" or the "Company").

Currently the Low Income III Program terminates January 31, 2021. The Company requests that the Program be extended through through June 30, 2021, or until the budgeted funds have been expended, whichever occurs first.<sup>1</sup> The extension would not require any change in the Company's Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative ("RGGI") Surcharge.

The Low Income III Program was approved by the Board in the above-referenced docket on March 26, 2018<sup>2</sup> as a two-year energy efficiency program pursuant to section 13 of P.L. 2007, c. 340<sup>3</sup> ("RGGI Statute"). The Program provides the Company's low income customers a home energy survey, health and safety testing and the installation of cost effective energy efficiency measures at no cost to the resident.

Extension of the Program would be in the public interest. Pursuant to the schedule in the Board's June 10, 2020 Order in Docket No. Q019010040,<sup>4</sup> the co-managed Comfort Partners

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<sup>1</sup> The Company would complete any close-out activities by September 15, 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Decision and Order Approving Stipulation, *IMO Verified Petition of Rockland Electric Company for Approval of An Energy Efficiency Stimulus Program and Associated Rate Recovery*, BPU Docket No. ER17080869 (March 26, 2018) ("2018 Order").

<sup>3</sup> *N.J.S.A.* 48:3-87.9e(1).

<sup>4</sup> Order Directing the Utilities to Establish Energy Efficiency and Peak Demand Reduction Programs, *In the Matter of the Implementation of P.L. 2018, C. 17 Regarding the Establishment of Energy Efficiency and Peak Demand Reduction Programs*, Docket No. Q019010040 *et al* (June 10, 2020).

program will begin in July 2021. If the Company's Low Income Audit III Program terminates on January 31, 2021, low income customers in RECO's service territory will remain without an energy efficiency program from February 1, 2021 through June 30, 2021. Additionally, as noted in the Company's December 1, 2020 Program Report,<sup>5</sup> program activities were paused as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The extension also allows the Company to make up for program activities delayed by the pandemic.

As shown in the table below, currently the Company has a remaining budget of \$147,621.17. There are thirty-three customers in progress and thirty-eight new applications to be processed.

November 2020				
Approved Budget			Remain Budget	
\$455,400			\$147,621.17	
	Expended		Committed	Total
	2019	2020		
Marketing	\$3,651.39	\$5,235.35	\$2,000.00	\$10,886.74
Admin Support	\$1,800.00	\$400.00	\$500.00	\$2,700.00
Program Implementation	\$13,750.00	\$33,000.00	\$8,250.00 <sup>1</sup>	\$55,000.00
Incentives & Services		\$61,692.09	\$177,500.00 <sup>2</sup>	\$239,192.09
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$19,201.39</b>	<b>\$100,327.44</b>	<b>\$188,250.00</b>	<b>\$307,778.83</b>

<sup>1</sup> Based on the current contract end date of January 31, 2020, 3 months of Program implementation fee to be paid

<sup>2</sup> Committed Incentives & Services calculation is based on current numbers of customers in the queue and multiply by \$2500 per customer. There are 33 customers in progress and 38 new applications to be processed.

The Company requests that the Board act expeditiously on this request, so that if the Board approves this request, there will be no interruption of the energy efficiency assistance to the Company's low income customers in 2021.

Please contact me if you have any questions regarding this matter.

Respectfully,

*Margaret Comes*  
Margaret Comes  
Associate Counsel

c: Service list

<sup>5</sup> See attached Exhibit A.

## Service List

In the Matter of the Verified Petition of  
Rockland Electric Company for  
Approval of an Energy Efficiency  
Stimulus Program and Associated Rate  
Recovery  
BPU Docket No. ER07080869

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Spring Valley, NY 10977

Cheryl M. Ruggiero  
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## **Exhibit A**

# Rockland Electric Company

## Low Income Audit and Direct Install Program Energy Efficiency III program

July 1, 2020

### Participation, Savings and Expense Summary

Below are the results of Rockland Electric Company’s (“RECO”) Low Income Audit and Direct Install Program III (“Program”) activity for year one beginning March of 2019 through February of 2020. Although the program contract was executed in February, the program began in March of 2019. Further delays were experienced between RECO and its vendor, relating to the confidentiality of customer information. The data confidentiality issues were resolved in August of 2019. After two months of marketing and outreach, customer measure installations began in November of 2019.

Outlined below are number of participants, kWh and kW savings and program costs. Program costs include marketing and outreach, program administration, implementation, rebates and incentives, and are detailed below.

Program Year 1			
<i>March 2019 to February 2020</i>			
	Acquired*	Committed*	Total
<b>Number of Participants</b>	17	2	19
<b>KWH Reduction</b>	14,352	3,296	17,648
<b>KW Reduction</b>	1.1776	0.1106	1.2881
	Expended	Committed	Total
<b>Program Expenditures</b>	\$58,851.40	\$12,365.99	\$71,217.39

\*Acquired – represents projects are completed, invoiced and paid.

\*Committed - represents projects completed, invoiced but not yet paid

Category	Total
Marketing & Outreach	\$3,795.65
Administration Support	\$2,200.00
Program Implementation	\$24,750.00
Incentives & Services	\$40,471.74
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$71,217.39</b>

## **Customer Survey Results**

Paper copies of the customer survey were distributed by the implementation vendor to customers served, however no survey results were returned. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all program activities were paused in March of 2020. Customer survey efforts were also paused and will begin to ramp back up beginning July 1, 2020.

## **Outreach Activities**

RECO has continued to promote the program as identified below:

- Participation in the NJ Utilities Outreach Group.
- On RECO's website, NJ payment assistance program web page was developed to provide information and links to various assistance programs.  
<https://www.oru.com/en/accounts-billing/payment-assistance>
- A webpage was also developed to promote the program in August of 2019.  
<https://www.oru.com/njsaves>
- A program brochure, introduction letter and poster were developed in addition to the webpage (Attachment A).
- In November of 2019, an email campaign was launched promoting the program to all USF and Lifeline customers.
- Energy saving tips newsletters were sent to all customers with completed projects on a quarterly basis (Attachment B).
- A meeting was held with the Bergen County Social Workers on January of 2020 to explain RECO's low income programs and to solicit feedback.
- In February of 2020, program applications were mailed to all USF and Lifeline customers to allow customers without internet access to apply to the program.

## **Program Transition**

On June 10, 2020, the BPU issued its Order Regarding the Establishment of Energy Efficiency and Peak Demand Reduction Programs. In this Order, the BPU outlines the timeline for implementation of utility managed, Office of Clean Energy managed, and co-managed energy efficiency programs, which are scheduled to begin July 1, 2021. Recognizing the two-year Stipulation approving the RECO Program, the Program will end on January 31, 2021.

Low income customers in the RECO service territory could remain without program assistance from January 31 through July 1, 2021. As a result of Covid-19 pause, RECO expects to have remaining funding, and would like to extend its Program past January 31, 2021 to ensure low income customers are served until the transition of EE programs is complete effective July 1, 2021.

RECO would like to set up a call with Staff and Rate Counsel to discuss an extension of the program.

**Low Income III Annual Report Attachment A**

## Easy steps to improving your comfort and reducing your bill

- 1 Verify your eligibility at [oru.com/njsaves](http://oru.com/njsaves) or call Honeywell Utility Solutions at **1-877-308-8324**.
- 2 Once you're in the program, we'll have a qualified Energy Technician come to your home to perform an energy assessment.
- 3 The technician will make energy-saving recommendations, valued at up to \$2,500.
- 4 The selected energy-savings upgrades will be installed at **no cost to you**.
- 5 Start enjoying a more comfortable home, consuming less electricity and paying a lower bill.

### Why wait?

#### More info:

[oru.com/njsaves](http://oru.com/njsaves)

#### Call Honeywell Utility Solutions:

1-877-308-8324



Honeywell

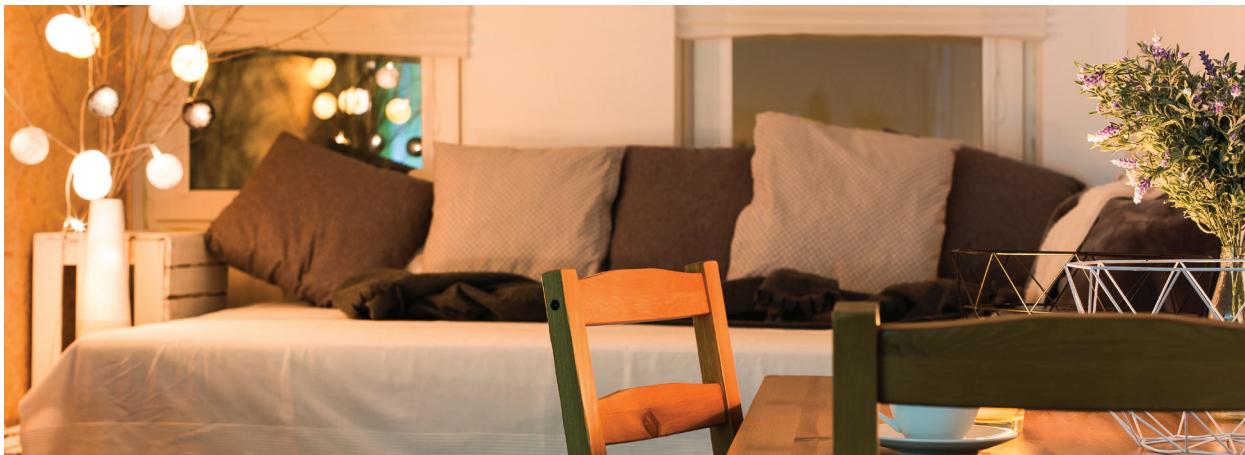
Use less electricity.

Lower your energy bill.

Increase your home's comfort level.

You may be eligible to participate in our free direct install program





Rockland Electric's free Direct Install program can help you save money on your utility bills, while increasing the comfort and safety of your home or apartment.

### Here's how it works

An Energy Technician, accredited by BPI\* from Honeywell will come to your house or apartment to perform an energy assessment, as well as health and safety testing. The technician will review many factors that affect your energy use and make energy-saving recommendations. These upgrades, valued at up to **\$2,500**, will be installed at **no cost to you**. In rental situations, landlord approval may be required.

\*Building Performance Institute

### The recommendations often include:

- Replacement of old inefficient appliances, such as refrigerators and air conditioners
- Installation of programmable thermostats
- Air-sealing and insulation
- LEDs and more

### Eligibility

Available to Rockland Electric customers whose household income levels fall at or below 250% of the federal poverty guidelines and/or receive the following financial assistance:

- Universal Service Fund (USF)
- Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)
- Federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Lifeline
- Pharmaceutical Assistance to Aged and Disabled (PAAD)
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families
- Section 8 Housing

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### Ready to enroll?

Please call Honeywell toll-free at **1-877-308-8324** between 8:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m., Monday to Friday, or visit **[oru.com/njsaves](http://oru.com/njsaves)** to verify your eligibility and enroll in the program.

## Use less electricity. Lower your energy bill. Increase your home's comfort level.

You may be eligible to participate in our free direct install program

### Hello!

Rockland Electric offers a **free** direct install program that can help you save money on your utility bills, while increasing the comfort and safety of your home or apartment. When you want to save money on your energy bill, a robust energy-savings plan can really help. It encompasses good habits (such as turning off lights and fans when you leave a room), as well as good insulation and the use of energy-efficient appliances and lighting. And you'll be able to have these installed for **free**.

This program, implemented by Honeywell, is available to Rockland Electric customers who are receiving financial assistance from the Universal Service Fund (USF), or households with an income level at or below 250% of the federal poverty guidelines and receive Federal Supplemental Security Income, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families or Section 8 Housing.

When you agree to participate in the program, we'll have an accredited Energy Technician come to your home to perform an energy assessment. The technician will recommend energy-saving upgrades, valued at up to \$2,500 at **no cost to you**.

#### Energy-saving improvements may include:

- Replacement of old inefficient appliances
- Installation of programmable thermostats
- Air-sealing and insulation
- LEDs and more

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### Interested in this free energy-saving program?

For more detail on the program, please refer to the enclosed brochure. To verify your eligibility and to enroll, call toll-free at **1-877-308-8324** between 8:30 am and 5:30 pm, Monday to Friday. Or visit **oru.com/njsaves**.



### Here's how it works

- 1 Verify your eligibility online at **oru.com/njsaves** or call Honeywell at **1-877-308-8324**.
- 2 A qualified Energy Technician comes to your home to perform an energy assessment.
- 3 The technician will make energy-saving recommendations valued at up to \$2,500.
- 4 The selected energy-saving improvements will be installed at **no cost to you**.
- 5 Start enjoying a more comfortable home, consuming less electricity and paying a lower bill.

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### Contact Us To Enroll

**More info:**  
oru.com/njsaves

**Call Honeywell:**  
1-877-308-8324



**Low Income III Annual Report Attachment B**



Rockland Electric Company

**Honeywell**

2019 4TH QUARTER

**Feature:**

- Energy tips
- Beware of scams
- Assistance programs

**In partnership with:**

Honeywell Utility Solutions  
1-877-308-8324

**Hours:**

8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.  
Monday to Friday

[oru.com/njsaves](http://oru.com/njsaves)



2019 4TH QUARTER | PUBLISHED FOR DIRECT INSTALL PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

**✓ Winter energy saving tips**

The following tips can help keep your heating expenses on track:

- Adjust your thermostat to 68 degrees during the day and 60 degrees at night, health permitting. Each degree over 68 can increase by three percent the amount of energy you use for heating.
- Keep furniture and drapes from blocking radiators, heat registers and vents.
- Seal up cracks around doors and window frames inside your home to keep warm air in and cold air out this winter.
- Our free Budget Billing program levels your payments throughout the year. This spares you from unpredictable bills that result from seasonal usage variations.

**⚠ How to spot a real Rockland Electric employee**

Steps you can take for peace of mind and protection against utility imposters:

- Ask for I.D. A real Rockland Electric employee wears a photo I.D. badge with his or her name and employee number on it.
- Confirm your service order number. A real Rockland Electric employee will be able to provide you with a number that matches the one given to you when you scheduled an appointment with us. A fake employee won't.
- Call us for verification if you're unsure. A real employee is comfortable when you call our toll-free number or a dedicated number 845-577-3526 to verify his or her identity.

**Need help paying your energy bill?**



**Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)** utility heating customers can typically receive an average of \$300 toward their electric or gas bill. For more information, visit [energyassistance.nj.gov](http://energyassistance.nj.gov).

**Universal Service Fund (USF)** electric or gas utility customers can receive from \$5 to \$150 per month toward their utility bill. Contact [energyassistance.nj.gov](http://energyassistance.nj.gov).

**Payment Assistance Gas and Electric (PAGE)** customers may benefit from combined assistance (gas and electric) for up to \$1,500 a year towards their past due bill in a 12-month period. Contact **1-855-465-8783** or [njpoweron.org](http://njpoweron.org).

**NJ SHARES (NJS)** customers can receive up to \$700 for electric and up to \$700 for gas, depending on the balance owed on their utility bills. Contact **1-866-NJSHARES** or [njshares.org](http://njshares.org).

**NJ Lifeline** seniors who are at least 65 years old, and disabled adults who are at least 18 years old and receiving Social Security Disability can apply. Call **1-800-792-9745**.