



Real Possibilities in

Pennsylvania

December 14, 2016

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Rosemary Chiavetta
Secretary, Public Utility Commission
400 North Street, Keystone Bldg.
Harrisburg, PA 17120

**RE: PECO Energy Company's Pilot Plan for an Advance Payments Program
PUC Docket No. P-2016-2573023**

RECEIVED
2016 DEC 15 AM 10:13
PA PUC
SECRETARY'S BUREAU

Dear Secretary Chiavetta,

AARP Pennsylvania is writing to oppose PECO Energy Company's Proposal to offer residential customers Prepaid Electric Service, currently pending at PUC Docket No. P-2016-2573023. This issue is of particular concern to the hundreds of thousands of AARP members in Pennsylvania who receive their electric service from PECO.

Of particular concern to AARP are the provisions of this proposal which will result in the elimination of consumer protections for households who choose Prepaid Electric Service. These consumer protections include protection from termination in the wintertime and availability of payment agreements to restore service. While PECO suggests that it will exclude the poorest households, those under 150% of the Federal Poverty Level, we know many households with incomes above 150% of the Federal Poverty Level struggle to adequately meet their basic needs. In the case of older consumers who choose to prepay for their electric service but who would not meet the income protections, an ill-timed health crisis or misplaced renewal notice could result in termination of service.

AARP believes there are better ways to help ensure consumers are able to afford their electric bills and manage their energy usage. Budget billing is a way to stabilize the fluctuations in customer's bills between high and low energy use months. More customer education about ways to save on electric bills and the various assistance programs that are available can help consumers monitor their energy usage and make payments on time. AARP conducts numerous consumer outreach programs on utilities and energy conservation each year and we find they are effective in providing our members and the general public useful information on how to afford the costs of electricity.

At the very least the Public Utility Commission should hold hearings on PECO's petition for an Advance Payment Program. Public input is critical on this issue and the Commissioners should understand how this proposal could negatively impact some Pennsylvanians.

Thank you for your attention to this concern.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Johnston Walsh". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "B".

Bill Johnston-Walsh
State Director
AARP Pennsylvania