

Testimony of Gladys M. Brown
Senate Consumer Protection and
Professional Licensure Committee
March 27, 2018

Good afternoon, Chairman Tomlinson, Chairwoman Boscola and members of the Senate Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure Committee. It is an honor and privilege to appear before you today and provide testimony concerning my nomination to serve a second term on the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission.

I am grateful to Governor Wolf for this nomination and the opportunity to share with all of you some of the important work that the PUC has been doing over the course of my term. I would like to thank Senator John DiSanto, my home Senator, for his introduction of me and his support during this confirmation process. Let me also acknowledge the support of my family and friends that are here with me today, as well as my colleagues and staff members from the PUC that are here in attendance.

While I know many of you well and have worked with you professionally on a variety of issues, I wanted to provide background information about me and my qualifications to serve on the PUC. I am a central Pennsylvania native having graduated from Middletown Area School District. After graduation I went to the University of Pittsburgh where I received my Bachelor of Arts and Juris Doctor degrees. During my more than 22 years of legal and legislative experience with the Senate, I worked on most, if not all, of the major deregulation bills – including telecommunications, electricity, and natural gas. I have worked on Chapter 14 legislation, Act 129 of 2008, dealing with energy efficiency and procurement, as well as Act 11 of 2012 which involved the expansion of the Distribution System Improvement Charge (DSIC).

I came before you in the fall of 2013 for my first term to the PUC. During my testimony, I stated that I would carry the same commitment that I gave to many of you in my capacity as legislative counsel when I worked in the Senate for the Senate Democratic Leader's Office. That work ethic was important to me then, and it remains just as important to me now because with it comes the commitment to continue to protect consumers. I continue to try to find a fair and balanced approach in dealing with issues, with the understanding that the Commission's decisions greatly impact the everyday lives of the people of Pennsylvania.

My work on these issues continues, but from the viewpoint of a regulator, working diligently to adhere to the legislative intent of the statutory provisions we are responsible for implementing. New challenges have been numerous: Transportation Network Companies, energy issues such as resilience and wholesale energy market pricing, natural gas expansion,

energy efficiency issues such as integrating distributed energy resources, rail safety, and alternative ratemaking.

In my request to Governor Wolf for a second term, I stated that the Commission has many very important issues ahead and that I wanted to be a part of the resolution of these issues. They include the Commission's new responsibilities with the One Call Program, enforcement of transmission pipeline safety guidelines, regulatory oversight of the Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority, working to provide access to Broadband in unserved and underserved areas in the Commonwealth and the implementation of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017. In addition, in my role as Chairman, the Commission has put in place a "Jobs Campaign", working with our utilities and educational institutions, to provide information on the types of jobs available in the utility sector to ensure that the industry has a sufficient number of skilled workers in place, in anticipation of the retirement of a large number of "baby boomers" in the next five to ten years. As technology continues to evolve, it is important that we have a skilled workforce in place to maintain vital utility services for consumers.

Finally, let me acknowledge my continued commitment to working with the members of the General Assembly and our oversight committee such as the Senate Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure Committee. I will continue to provide necessary information and technical support that you or your staff may need when drafting legislation. My approach to working on these major legislative measures has remained consistent: educate myself about the details of the issue; gain a full and deep understanding of the arguments for and against each proposal; and address questions about the impact the legislation will have on the consumers we have a duty to protect and the businesses that we regulate.

Thank you once again for allowing me to come before you today, and for considering my nomination for a second term to serve on the Public Utility Commission. I look forward to answering any questions.