

**PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION  
HARRISBURG PENNSYLVANIA 17120**

**Peoples Natural Gas Company LLC  
Proposed Universal Service & Energy  
Conservation Plan for 2019-2024**

**Public Meeting Held August 27, 2020  
3003177-BCS  
Docket No. M-2018-3003177**

**STATEMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN DAVID W. SWEET**

Before the Commission for consideration and disposition is the Proposed 2019-2024 Universal Service and Energy Conservation Plan of Peoples Natural Gas Company and Peoples Gas Company (collectively, the Peoples Companies).

I applaud the Companies for offering modifications to their Customer Assistance Program (CAP) that align with the Commission's recently amended CAP Policy Statement. These changes, in addition to the proposed increase to their Hardship Fund budget will better serve current and future customers eligible for assistance.

My remarks today are with respect to the proposal to permanently adopt the Extended CAP (or E-CAP) Pilot, a program that provides CAP benefits to customers with household incomes between 151%-200% of the Federal Income Poverty Guidelines (FPIG).<sup>1</sup> In the Order originally approving the implementation of the E-CAP Pilot,<sup>2</sup> the Peoples Companies were instructed to provide the Commission with annual program details such as customer participation, costs, and payment compliance. The Commission received this data for years 2016 and 2017; however, the Peoples Companies have not filed any information for 2018 or 2019 and have not indicated any trends for 2020.

As part of the Tentative Order requesting additional information about the Companies' plan, I request the Companies also provide more data on the E-CAP Pilot's performance from previous years, as well as projections for the remainder of 2020 through 2024. Specifically, I am interested to know whether adopting this program will impact CAP outreach or benefits for customers with household incomes at or below 50% of the FPIG. While I am generally supportive of this proposal, I am concerned that it has the potential to divert resources from those who have the greatest need of assistance.

Again, I commend the Peoples Companies for proposing amendments to its universal service plan, particularly its CAP that will further assist its low-income customers. I look forward to reviewing more information on this matter when it is filed.

August 27, 2020  
DATE



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David W. Sweet, Vice Chairman

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<sup>1</sup> Customers with incomes between 151%-200% FPIG must also: (1) have at least one broken payment arrangement and a balance of \$800 or more; and (2) apply for a Hardship Fund grant before enrolling in CAP, if available.

<sup>2</sup> See Peoples 2015-2018 USECP Final Order, Docket No. M 2014 2432515 (order entered on December 17, 2015)