

**PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION**  
**Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120**

**Duquesne Light Company  
Universal Service and Energy  
Conservation Plan for 2020-2025**

**Public Meeting of June 18, 2026  
3008227-BCS  
Docket Nos. M-2019-3008227, P-2026-  
3061673, R-2024-3046523**

**Petition to Amend Duquesne Light  
Company Universal Service and Energy  
Conservation Plan for 2020-2025**

**Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission,  
*et al.*, v. Duquesne Light Company**

**STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN STEPHEN M. DeFRANK**

Before the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (Commission) today is Duquesne Light Company's (Duquesne) Petition to Amend its Universal Service and Energy Conservation Plan (USECP) for 2020-2025 (Petition). In the Amended Petition, Duquesne seeks approval to (1) automatically enroll Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) data sharing participants with an arrearage balance of \$250 or more into its Customer Assistance Program (CAP); and (2) to offer a streamlined, expedited CAP enrollment process for LIHEAP data sharing participants with a balance below \$250.

Overall, I support Duquesne's efforts to make its CAP more accessible to customers by expediting and streamlining the enrollment process. However, I am not supportive of Duquesne's proposal to implement an opt-out CAP enrollment process. Additionally, I have concerns regarding the Company's proposal to auto-enroll customers who are being served by an electric generation supplier (EGS).

As I recently explained in my statements responsive to the proposals of UGI Utilities, Inc. (UGI)<sup>1</sup> and Peoples Natural Gas Company, LLC (Peoples)<sup>2</sup>, opt-out CAP auto-enrollment requires customers to forfeit their ability to be awarded a Commission-approved payment arrangement on CAP arrearages.<sup>3</sup> Duquesne's Petition fails to clarify

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<sup>1</sup> See Statement of Chairman Stephen M. DeFrank, entered in *UGI Utilities, Inc.'s Universal Service and Energy Conservation Plan for 2026-2030*, Docket Nos. M-2025-3054362 *et al.*, entered on June 4, 2026.

<sup>2</sup> See Statements of Chairman Stephen M. DeFrank, entered in the *Petition of Peoples Natural Gas Company LLC to Amend 2019-2024 Universal Service and Energy Conservation Plan*, Docket Nos. P-2024-3052324 *et al.*, entered on October 9, 2025 and March 26, 2026.

<sup>3</sup> See former Section 1405 of the Public Utility Code, previously codified at 66 Pa.C.S § 1405(c); *see also Sunset of*

whether and how customers subject to opt-out auto-enrollment would be notified of their payment arrangement forfeiture in advance of enrollment. I do not support any framework that may require customers to unwittingly assume the risk of forfeiting payment arrangements because they are denied the opportunity to make an informed decision.

Additionally, I am concerned that Duquesne's proposal fails to clarify whether and how it will obtain affirmative consent to move eligible customers with EGS contracts to default service prior to auto-enrolling them into CAP. Informed consent should always be a condition of enrollment, and especially here where customers with an existing EGS may have existing contractual obligations with the EGS. While I am aware that Duquesne's approved supplier tariff prohibits EGSs from charging termination or cancellation fees to CAP applicants who return to default service upon entry into CAP,<sup>4</sup> Duquesne's Petition does not address it.

As a result, it remains unclear how Duquesne will coordinate with EGSs to ensure that auto-enrolled CAP customers are not charged any EGS fees. It is equally unclear whether Duquesne will provide auto-enrolled CAP customers with any guidance about the prohibition against EGSs charging them termination or cancellation fees. I expect Duquesne to address these issues as necessary to avoid customer confusion and the potential for auto-enrolled CAP customers to have their CAP benefits diminished by EGS fees and contractual obligations. I cannot support such an outcome. I urge Duquesne to revisit its proposal to auto-enroll CAP customers with EGS contracts to ensure that the Company has appropriate processes in place to protect customers. .

Consistent with my identified concerns, I am voting to defer approval of Duquesne's Petition pending the filing of additional information by the Company and responsive stakeholder comments. I strongly urge Duquesne to use this additional opportunity to address the auto-enrollment concerns I raise here today.

**June 18, 2026**  
**Date**



**Stephen M. DeFrank**  
**Chairman**

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*Chapter 14, Title 66 of the Pennsylvania Public Utility Code, Docket No. M-2024-3052328 (Statement of Policy entered December 24, 2024).*

<sup>4</sup> *Petition of Duquesne Light Company for Approval of a Default Service Program for the Period of June 1, 2025 through May 31, 2029, Docket No. P-2024-3048592 (Opinion and Order Opinion entered January 14, 2025).*