

**PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17120**

Public Utility Service Termination Moratorium -
Modification of March 13th Emergency Order

Public Meeting held October 8, 2020
3022301-CMR
Docket No. M-2020-3019244

DISSENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN DAVID W. SWEET

While I respect Chairman Brown Dutrieuille and the efforts she has made to develop her Motion today, I cannot support her Motion. My position throughout this pandemic has been consistent regarding how and when to end the moratorium on utility terminations that has been in place since March, and the action that the Commission takes today falls short of the requirements that I have articulated. Some of those requirements have been met, and I am happy to see that the moratorium will remain in place for those customers whose income is 300% or less of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. But the motion sets March 31, 2021 for the end of those protections, regardless of the state of the economy or the health of the populace at that time, and that I cannot support.

I firmly believe that the moratorium should remain in place for those vulnerable customers until an evaluation of the circumstances that exist at the end of winter, including but not limited to the state of the Commonwealth's health, the economy, particularly the unemployment rate, whether schools are open or classes are being held largely online, the availability of public resources to assist customers who cannot pay their bills, and whether citizens are free to move about without worrying about contracting the virus. This evaluation is crucial to protecting those customers who need it most. By choosing a date in the future without any sound economic or health information to guide us, we run a very real risk of ending that protection at a time when circumstances may be even worse than we have experienced up to this point. Without the evaluation, we simply do not know what we are facing, and the ramifications may be dire.

After March 31, 2021, there is no plan in place to protect the low-income customers under this Motion. Without continued protections for the most vulnerable customers in place until a thorough evaluation of circumstances persuades me that lifting the moratorium for that class is justified, I cannot support the motion. Accordingly, I will be voting no.

October 8, 2020
DATE



DAVID W. SWEET
VICE CHAIRMAN