Consumer Protection & Regulatory Issues

Low-income households need stronger consumer protections and regulatory policies to prevent service terminations and other threats to affordable and continuous utility services.

Administrative & Regulatory Outcomes

- 2013 DPH memo on Submetering of Electric and Gas, Sept. 5, 2013
- Model Program Helps Older Adults Avoid Utility Liens on Their Homes, December 2012
- California Adopts Order to Reduce Utility Disconnections of Vulnerable Households, April 2012
- Order: Vermont Public Service Board Approval of a New Low Income Electric Bill Assistance Program under the Administrative and Regulatory Outcomes, July 22, 2011
- Model Settlement Protects Vulnerable Consumers from Utility Disconnections, Dec. 27, 2010

Policy Briefs, Reports & Press Releases

- Issue Brief: Massachusetts Residential Utility Customers Still Owe Nearly $100M More in Arrears than at the Start of the Pandemic, February 2022
- Fact Sheet: What States Can Do to Help Consumers: Energy Insecurity, January 2020
- Policy brief: Model Utility Consumer Protections When Natural Disasters Strike, August 2018
- Report: Helping Low-Income Utility Customers Manage Overdue Bills through Arrearage Management Programs (AMP), September 2013
- Report: Rethinking Prepaid Utility Service: Customers at Risk, June 2012

Full Utility Credit Reporting

- Issue Brief: The Credit Score Pandemic Paradox and Credit Invisibility, Feb. 2021
- Policy Brief Full Utility Credit Reporting: Risks to Low Income Consumers, July 2012
- Presentation to National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissions, June 2010

Policy Analysis

- Group letter to the ACEEE rejecting characterization of prepaid utility service as an energy efficiency program, March 22, 2017
Group letter to the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee in support of the nomination of Ron Binz as Chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, July 9, 2013


Comments and Reply Comments of the Iowa Bureau of Energy Assistance regarding Prepaid Meters, August 2011

Using Nontraditional Credit Information: Boon or Bane? Do Alternative Credit Scores and Credit Reports Really Help Low-Income Consumers?, June 2009

Comments of Massachusetts Energy Directors Association and Low-Income Weatherization and Fuel Assistance Network – Investigation into Expanding Low-income Consumer Protections and Assistance, March 28, 2008

**Additional Resources**

- Presentation: Advocacy to Manage Low-Income Utility Debt in the Age of Covid-19, May 26, 2020
- Presentation: Disparate Energy Insecurity Impacts: The Need For Racial Justice in Utility Billing, Credit and Collections, April 14, 2020
- Research Resources Regarding Needs and Impacts Relating to Low Income Utility and Energy Consumers