

**THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

**Northern Utilities, Inc.
DG 18-____**

**Petition For Authority To Operate As A
Public Utility In The Town of Epping**

Pursuant to RSA 374:22, Northern Utilities, Inc. (“Northern” or “the Company”) respectfully petitions the New Hampshire Commission (the “Commission”) for authority to provide natural gas service as a public utility in the Town of Epping. In support of this Petition, Northern states as follows:

1. Northern is a public utility providing natural gas service to approximately 33,000 customers in 21 municipalities in the seacoast region of New Hampshire. Northern owns and operates natural gas distribution facilities pursuant to authority previously granted by the Commission, including the adjacent Towns of Brentwood and Exeter, New Hampshire.

2. By this Petition, Northern seeks authority to expand its natural gas distribution network into the Town of Epping. In 2014, the Commission approved the Company’s request to provide service in the Town of Brentwood. *Northern Utilities, Inc.*, Order No. 25,700 (Aug. 1, 2014). The expansion into Brentwood brought Northern’s distribution network to within a mile of the Exeter town line. The Company’s current plan is to install slightly less than six miles of new main to serve potential customers along Route 27 in Brentwood and Epping, as well as along Route 125 in Epping, including the commercial development that has clustered near the intersection of Routes 125 and 101.

3. Northern will construct, operate and maintain the gas main and associated

facilities in accordance with all applicable federal, state and municipal regulations. Upon the Commission's approval of this petition, Northern will obtain all necessary regulatory permits and approvals before commencing construction, including those required from New Hampshire Department of Transportation and the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services.

4. Northern has met with officials of the Town of Epping to inform them of the proposed main expansion and understands that they are supportive of the development of a natural gas distribution system to serve the Town's residents and commercial establishments. In addition, letters of support from the Exeter Area Chamber of Commerce (which represents businesses located in the Town of Epping) and New Hampshire State Senator William Gannon are submitted herewith as Exhibit CCDC-4.

5. The Company has the requisite financial, technical and managerial capability to own and operate the expanded natural gas main that is the subject of this Petition and to provide natural gas service within the Town of Epping. Northern has been a regulated public utility for many years in the seacoast region and has a strong record of providing safe and reliable natural gas service at just and reasonable rates. In addition to its New Hampshire operations, Northern also provides service in the State of Maine, and its affiliate Fitchburg Gas and Electric Light Company provides natural gas service in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

6. Granting the operating authority requested in this Petition would be for the public good because, among other things, the Town of Epping has experienced strong growth over the past decade and it would benefit from the availability of natural gas service. Compared to other fuels that have historically been used in New Hampshire, natural gas is a desirable alternative due to its abundance, domestic availability, lower cost, and lower environmental

impact.

7. Northern believes that it may be necessary to obtain certain licenses from the Commission to cross public waters and state-owned lands pursuant to RSA 371:17 *et seq.* The Company will file a separate petition with the Commission requesting those licenses.

For all of the reasons stated in this Petition, as well as the accompanying Direct Testimony of Cindy L. Carroll and David L. Chong, the Direct Testimony of Christopher J. LeBlanc and Kevin E. Sprague, and exhibits filed with these testimonies, Northern respectfully requests that the Commission:

- A. Find that the operating authority requested in this Petition pursuant to RSA 374:22 is for the publicgood;
- B. Grant Northern authority to expand its operations to provide natural gas service as a public utility within the Town of Epping; and
- C. Grant such other approvals and relief as may be just, necessary and appropriate in the circumstances.

Dated: June 4, 2018



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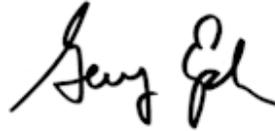
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Certificate of Service

I hereby certify that on this 1st day of June, 2018, a copy of this Petition has been sent by electronic mail to the New Hampshire Office of Consumer Advocate.

Dated: June 4, 2018



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