

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
before the
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Investigation into Effects of the COVID-19 Emergency on Utilities and Utility Customers

Docket No. IR 20-089

Motion to Join Eversource’s Motion for Rehearing and to Stay Reporting Requirements

Liberty Utilities (EnergyNorth Natural Gas) Corp. and Liberty Utilities (Granite State Electric) Corp., both d/b/a Liberty, respectfully move to join the motion for rehearing of Order No. 26,495 (July 7, 2021) (the “Order”) filed today by Eversource. Liberty similarly asserts that rehearing pursuant to RSA 541:3 is warranted because the Order was made without proper notice and an opportunity to be heard, and it is based on mistaken assumptions and conclusions that effectively preclude the Order’s apparent intent to allow utilities to seek recovery of incremental bad debt and waived late fees in a future rate case.

Liberty also requests a stay of the Order’s reporting requirements pending resolution of the motion for rehearing.

In support of this motion, Liberty states as follows:

1. Public Service Company of New Hampshire, d/b/a Eversource, filed a motion for rehearing of Order 26,495 this date, asking the Commission to reconsider its decision not to allow utilities to defer the Covid related incremental bad debt and waived fees. The Order precludes the creation of regulatory assets for those items and thus, in effect, precludes even the opportunity of some utilities to seek recovery in a future rate case.
2. Liberty agrees with, and thus incorporates by reference, the facts and legal arguments in the Eversource motion that are applicable to all utilities.

3. As for the two paragraphs that contain Eversource specific facts, Liberty offers the analogous Liberty facts.
4. Paragraph 4 of the Eversource motion includes the magnitude of the waived fees. Liberty has not collected in excess of \$700,000 in fee revenue.
5. Paragraph 10 describes how the timing of Eversource's next rate case effectively eliminates the opportunity for Eversource to seek recovery of the costs at issue. Liberty is in the same position.
6. As the Commission is aware, both Liberty entities recently completed rate cases in Docket Nos. DE 19-064 and DG 20-105. Pursuant to the orders in those dockets, the earliest that both Liberty affiliates would be able to file a new rate case would be in 2023 based on a test year ending December 31, 2022. Since 2022 is the earliest test year Liberty can use, and since the Governor permitted the State of Emergency to expire in 2021, Liberty's next test year would not include the expenses incurred to fulfill the Governor's and Commission's directives. Therefore, has effectively denied recovery of pandemic-related costs.
7. Thus, for the reasons stated above and in the Eversource motion, Liberty seeks rehearing and reconsideration of the Commission's decision not to allow the utilities to defer the incremental pandemic related costs.
8. The Order also imposed certain reporting requirements: "Staff also recommends additional record keeping and reporting requirements regarding potential offsets to COVID-19 related expenses in preparation for the next rate case, which we adopt." Order at 10.

9. Liberty respectfully moves the Commission to stay these new reporting requirements pending resolution of the motion for rehearing. It is administratively wasteful to require the collection and reporting of data that would not be used if reconsideration is denied, and that would be the utilities' burden to collect and produce if reconsideration is granted and the utilities seek recovery in their next rate case.

WHEREFORE, Liberty respectfully requests that the Commission:

- A. Grant rehearing and reconsideration as provided above; and
- B. Stay the Order's reporting requirements pending resolution of this motion;
- C. Grant such further relief as is just and equitable.

Respectfully submitted,
Liberty Utilities (EnergyNorth Natural Gas) Corp., and
Liberty Utilities (Granite State Electric) Corp.

By their Attorney,



Date: August 6, 2021

By: _____
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Certificate of Service

I hereby certify that on August 6, 2021, a copy of this Motion has been forwarded to the service list.



Michael J. Sheehan