

#3087

**PENNSYLVANIA CONSUMER ADVISORY COUNCIL'S COMMENTS TO PROPOSED
RULEMAKING PROHIBITING PUBLIC UTILITIES TO CHARGE CUSTOMERS A FEE IF THEY
CHOOSE TO RECEIVE A PAPER UTILITY BILL.
Docket Number L-2014-2411278**

A. GENERAL

These comments apply only to the Commission's Proposed Rulemaking to prohibit Public Utilities from charging a fee for printed bills.

B. COMMENTS

1. Support of PUC's Rulemaking to Prohibit Public Utilities from charging a fee for Printed Bills:

It is with firm conviction that the Public Utility Commission members be informed of the PUC's Consumer Advisory Council's stance in support of the proposed rulemaking prohibiting public utilities from charging customers a fee if those customers choose to receive a paper utility bill.

While modern technological advances may afford consumers the option of remitting their account payments using a web service, the choice should most certainly be the consumer's to make.

2. Rationale behind PUC's Consumer Advisory Council's stance:

The idea of instituting a paperless-only billing system relies heavily on the assumption that each and every Pennsylvania utility customer has a computer and has internet service. A second assumption would be that those with internet service are savvy enough using the computer to successfully ensure their monthly payments are submitted.

In Pennsylvania and according to the 2010 U.S. Census, approximately 28% of Pennsylvania households are occupied by a person 65 years of age or older. Many of these households also do not own a computer and have difficulty paying their monthly electric bills, let alone the costs of maintaining in-home Internet service. Those residents that fall into these categories would most certainly find hardship if faced with a paperless only method of paying their utility bills.

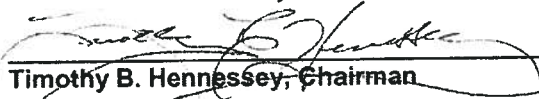
3. Unreasonable and Unjust Charges:

It is further acknowledged that the proposed fee, imposing an additional charge for paper billing, is unreasonable and unjust. Consumers pay for a service, which warrants their receiving an itemized bill for said services whether they chose to use the Internet or U.S. mail.

4. Encourage rather than penalize:

One might consider a discount for consumers that choose to remit payment electronically in this manner instead of penalizing consumers that do not or cannot utilize this paperless method of payment.

**Respectfully Submitted,
For: The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
Consumer Advisory Council**


Timothy B. Hennessey, Chairman

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