

State of Rhode Island

REPRESENTATIVE
K. JOSEPH SHEKARCHI
Speaker of the House

Room 323 State House
Providence, Rhode Island, 02903

401-222-2447



House of Representatives

October 23, 2025

J. Gregory Cornett, President
Rhode Island Energy
280 Melrose Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02907

Dear Mr. Cornett:

On behalf of the more than 11,000 dedicated federal workers and active military personnel in Rhode Island, I am writing to urge immediate implementation of voluntary measures to prevent utility shutoffs for households impacted by the ongoing government shutdown.

As you are no doubt aware, National Grid has announced a program to assist federal workers, contractors and military personnel residing in Massachusetts. I am respectfully calling on Rhode Island Energy to mirror these measures, especially the prevention of service interruptions. Other relief should include offering payment holds on active military and federal workers' accounts without the imposition of interest or penalty during the duration of the shutdown.

I have also written to the Public Utilities Commission respectfully urging the Commission to utilize the extent of its regulatory authority to impose similar utility protections in response to the needs of our Rhode Island federal workers and active military personnel who are not receiving a paycheck through no fault of their own.

The distress and hardship being felt by Rhode Island federal civil servants and members of the military should not be compounded by the fear of losing access to basic services like heat and electricity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "K. Joseph Shekarchi".

K. Joseph Shekarchi
Speaker of the House

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Ronald T. Gerwatowski, Chair
Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission
89 Jefferson Boulevard
Warwick, Rhode Island 02888

Dear Chair Gerwatowski:

On behalf of the more than 11,000 dedicated federal workers and active military personnel in Rhode Island, I have written to Rhode Island Energy requesting that the company impose a voluntary moratorium on utility terminations for households impacted by the ongoing government shutdown.

Specifically, I have requested that Rhode Island Energy offer resources to Rhode Island federal employees and active military personnel which would mirror the relief that has been voluntarily made available by National Grid to military and federal employees residing in Massachusetts. These resources should include offering payment holds on active military and federal workers' accounts without the imposition of interest or penalty and without the threat of shutoff.

In response to the needs of our Rhode Island federal workers and active military personnel who are not receiving a paycheck through no fault of their own, I write today to respectfully urge the Commission to utilize the full extent of its regulatory authority to impose similar protections. The distress and hardship being felt by Rhode Island active military and federal civil servants should not be compounded by the fear of losing access to basic services like heat and electricity.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of K. Joseph Shekarchi in blue ink.
K. Joseph Shekarchi
Speaker of the House