

STATE OF VERMONT
PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

Case No. 20-0203-INV

Investigation into the establishment of)
reduced rates for low-income residential)
ratepayers of Vermont electric utilities)

REPLY COMMENTS OF
AARP

AARP submits the following reply to comments filed by other parties to this investigation.

AARP has reviewed the comments submitted by Burlington Electric Department, Department of Public Service, Green Mountain Power, Hyde Park Village Electric Department, Stowe Electric Department, Vermont Electric Cooperative, Vermont Public Power Supply Authority, and Washington Electric Cooperative. After reviewing the parties' comments, AARP suggests that it would be useful for the Commission to convene one or more workshops devoted to the following issues:

- **Legal issues:** Exploring the scope of the Commission's existing legal authority to implement low-income assistance programs for some or all of Vermont's regulated electric utilities.
- **Poverty, income distribution, and electricity burden:** Reviewing and fine-tuning U.S. Census data on poverty, income distributions, and other relevant factors, including data from the Vermont Energy Burden Report prepared by Efficiency Vermont in October 2019, and understanding how these data might inform the Commission's decisions regarding the need for, and design of, programs to assist low-income electricity consumers.
- **Program design options:** Exploring and developing possible program design options, with a particular focus on methods to provide assistance to low-income

consumers in Vermont's smaller non-profit (municipal and cooperative) electric utilities.

- **Impact of pandemic:** Understanding any increase in poverty due to the increase in unemployment and other factors due to the COVID 19 pandemic

This list is not meant to be exhaustive, and AARP welcomes input from the Commission and other parties to refine and expand the list of topics. As we stated in our comments, there is a pressing need for relief for all of Vermont's low-income utility consumers – not just those served by GMP. We would urge the Commission, therefore, to move forward as quickly as possible to conduct these workshops and implement programs to assist consumers in need.

In conclusion, AARP appreciates having the opportunity to provide the Commission with input on these vitally important issues. We look forward to working with the Commission, utilities, and other interested parties to help all Vermonters better afford their electricity service.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Philene Taormina

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