



NEWS RELEASE

from
STATE SENATOR

LISA M. BOSCOLA

18th Senatorial District

For Immediate Release

Senator Lisa M. Boscola
Senate Consumer Protection Committee, Minority Chair
State Capitol Office: (717) 787-4236

Contact person:
Bernard J. Kieklak, Jr.
(717) 991-8491 (cell)
(717) 732-1675 (home)
bkieklak@pasenate.com

IN THE FACE OF SENATOR'S CLASS-ACTION FORMAL COMPLAINT, PA PUC CLAIMS MISSING DATA WAS JUST AN "OVERSIGHT"

HARRISBURG -- May 11, 2009 -- One day after a State Senator filed a class-action formal complaint against the PUC on behalf of 1.4 million PPL electric ratepayers, the commission claims the information that disappeared from last week's official Electric Price Estimates was "an oversight" and they're "working" to correct it.

Last week the PUC released its April 2009 Electric Price Estimates update that did not include most data for PPL residential customers and contained no data at all for commercial and industrial customers in PPL's service territory.

At the time, the PUC claimed such data would "be confusing" to 1.4 million ratepayers and the five commissioners "informally" voted not to release it.

"The PUC doesn't miss collecting a penny when people have to pay rising electric bills," Boscola said. "But, somehow they just forgot to tell one million electric customers how much higher their electric bills will be in seven months when rate caps come off."

Not only did the PUC's action violate its own order to "educate consumers," but it also left small businesses, local school districts and hospitals completely in the

dark at a time when these "commercial" customers are trying to budget for huge rate increases as electric rate caps are set to expire, according to Boscola.

Rate caps will be lifted for five of Pennsylvania's largest electric companies beginning in 2010. This transition to fully deregulated electric rates will impact 85 percent of all ratepayers in the state.

According to Boscola, many large industrial customers were preparing to join her formal complaint if the PUC still refused to release information to them as well.

"This is public information that everyone is entitled to," Boscola said. "How are electric customers going to be able to make informed decisions if the PUC refuses to give them any information, any guidance or any data that could help them compare prices, shop around and save money? They're supposed to be working for the public, not for the big power companies."

If the five members of the PUC do not recuse themselves from voting on Boscola's complaint against the PUC, she will appeal directly to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) on behalf of "those small businesses that could go out of business," she said.

"I don't want to hear excuses," Boscola said. "I want the PUC to do its job and protect ratepayers from excessive rate increases, instead of hiding information that affects everyone's wallet and every business's bottom line."

#

Background Information:

May 9

State senator accuses PUC of hiding PPL price increases

Times Leader Staff

A state senator has accused the state Public Utility Commission of attempting to hide price increases some PPL Electric Utilities customers will experience, but the PUC calls it an oversight and PPL says the numbers have long been public.

Sen. Lisa Boscola, D-Northumberland, filed a class-action complaint with the PUC on Monday against itself, alleging that "anonymous sources" there have told her the "expected rate increase when caps expire (on Jan. 1) will be much higher than the company wants to admit" and the PUC attempted to hide that in a recent price update. It's unknown yet if the commissioners will have to recuse themselves.

The PUC's price update includes PPL's estimate of residential rates increasing 30.4 percent, but omits increases that small- and mid-sized businesses can expect. A PUC response to Boscola reports them as 18.9 percent and 36.8 percent, respectively. "We tend to gear our press releases . . . to the residential consumers and are working to

increase our outreach efforts to the other customer classes," explained PUC spokesperson Jenn Kocher.