

Good afternoon, my name is Kenny Maestas – I am the legislative coordinator for the Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition (CCDC). Thank you for the opportunity to testify and thank you representative Kennedy for bringing this very much needed legislation forward.

CCDC supports HB22-1018 - Electric and Gas Utility Customer Protections because it provides some commonsense disconnection standards to investor-owned electric and gas companies in Colorado.

Section 1 of the bill simply pushes back the disbursement date on which the energy assistance system benefit charges that investor-owned electric and gas utilities were directed to collect [under HB 21-1105] from January 1, 2022, to March 1, 2023.

Section 2 requires the public utilities commission to adopt rules prohibiting electric and gas utilities from disconnecting a customer's service:

- a. On weekends;
- b. On state or federal holidays; or
- c. After 11:59 a.m. on a weekday that is not a holiday.

...when it's either very difficult or nearly impossible to get reconnected.

CCDC firmly believes it serves no one well when a single mother or an elderly PWD has the gas cut off in the winter [leaving them cold], there electricity in the summer [leaving them with the fear of heat stroke] or any disruption of utility services that lead to having no meal preparation for hungry children or adults.

In addition, section 2 states: Under certain circumstances in which a customer makes a request for reconnection of service on a Monday through Friday that is not a holiday, the utility is required to reconnect the customer's service that same day.

Finally, We agree with the established 3 income standards for determining a household's eligibility for utility assistance (which will be funded by the energy assistance system benefit charges):

1. A household income at or below 200% of the federal poverty line;
2. A household income at or below 80% of the area median income; or
3. A household income that meets income eligibility criteria set by department rule.

Section 3 also clarifies that the commission may approve a year-round utility preference or advantage given to income-eligible customers.

CCDC commends Representative Kennedy for his steadfast leadership and this legislation that protects those most vulnerable Electric and Gas Utility Customers in Colorado.

Oh, and Cudos for HB 21-1105 and the usage of the energy assistance system benefit charges to fund most if not all of these benefits!

Thank you for your time and attention. If you have questions my email address is: kmaestas@ccdconline.org or you can call 1.719.231.2659.

My Best Regards,

Kenny Maestas