



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

NOTICE OF FILING, PUBLIC HEARING AND REQUEST FOR COMMENTS

D.P.U. 23-144

March 5, 2024

Petition of Fitchburg Gas and Electric Light Company d/b/a Unitil (electric) for Approval of a Mid-Term Modification to its 2022-2024 Three-Year Energy Efficiency Plan.

On November 21, 2023, Fitchburg Gas and Electric Light Company d/b/a Unitil (electric) (“Company”), filed a petition with the Department of Public Utilities (“Department”) seeking approval of a mid-term modification to its 2022-2024 Three-Year Energy Efficiency Plan (“Three-Year Plan”), which was filed in D.P.U. 21-127, and approved by the Department in 2022-2024 Three-Year Energy Efficiency Plans, D.P.U. 21-120 through D.P.U. 21-129 (2022). The Department docketed this matter as D.P.U. 23-144.

The Company proposes to modify its Three-Year Plan to increase its Department-approved energy efficiency budget in the Residential sector. Specifically, the Company seeks to increase the budget for its Residential New Buildings program by \$200,000 (or 47 percent) and increase the budget for its Residential Existing Buildings program by \$1,700,000 (or 24 percent).

For the Residential New Buildings program, the Company maintains that the proposed increase is driven by: (1) greater than estimated enrollment in the all-electric pathway within its Residential New Homes and Renovations core initiative and its failure to correctly apply projected customer rebates; and (2) a greater than anticipated number of low-rise new construction projects and associated incentives. The Company states that it will use the increased budget to fund participant incentives for electrification measures in the Residential New Homes and Renovations core initiative.

For the Residential Existing Buildings program, the Company maintains that the proposed increase is driven by greater than estimated demand for: (1) heat pumps in the Retail core initiative; and (2) residential weatherization services in the Residential Coordinated Delivery core initiative. The Company states that it will use the increased budget to fund participant incentives for electrification measures.

In order to present the full impact to customers of the mid-term modification proposal, the Company has calculated illustrative bill impacts comparing its original 2024 energy efficiency budget to a hypothetical 2024 budget that includes the entire amount proposed in the mid-term modification filing recovered over one year. Using this method, if the Department

approves the mid-term modification and associated budget increases as proposed, the Company estimates that customers would experience the following total bill impacts:

- An average residential customer (R-1) using 587 kilowatt-hours (“kWh”) of electricity per month will experience a monthly bill increase of \$10.25 (4.0 percent).
- An average low-income residential assistance (R-2) customer using 587 kWh of electricity per month will experience a monthly bill increase of \$11.60 (7.1 percent).
- Commercial and Industrial customers will not experience any bill impacts as a result of the proposed mid-term modification.

The Department will conduct a public hearing to receive comments on the Company's petition on **Tuesday, March 26, 2024, beginning at 2:00 p.m.** The hearing will be virtual and use Zoom videoconferencing. Attendees can join the public meeting by entering the link, <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86980471558>, from a computer, smartphone, or tablet. No prior software download is required. For audio-only access to the public hearing, attendees can dial in at **(646) 558-8656 or (309) 205-3325 (not toll free)** and then enter the **Meeting ID# 869 8047 1558**. If you anticipate providing comments via Zoom during the public hearing, please send an email by **Friday, March 22, 2024**, to stephanie.mealey@mass.gov with your name, email address, and mailing address.

Any person interested in commenting on this matter may submit written comments no later than the close of business (5:00 p.m.) on **Wednesday, March 27, 2024**. Please note that in the interest of transparency any comments will be posted to our website as received and without redacting personal information, such as addresses, telephone numbers, or email addresses. Therefore, consider the extent of information you wish to share when submitting comments. The Department strongly encourages public comments to be submitted by email using the methods described below. If, however, a member of the public is unable to send written comments by email, a paper copy may be sent to Mark D. Marini, Secretary, Department of Public Utilities, One South Station, Boston, Massachusetts, 02110.

Any person who desires to participate otherwise in the evidentiary phase of this proceeding shall file a petition for leave to intervene no later than 5:00 p.m. on **Friday, March 15, 2024**. A petition for leave to intervene must satisfy the timing and substantive requirements of 220 CMR 1.03. Receipt by the Department constitutes filing and determines whether a petition has been timely filed. A petition filed late may be disallowed as untimely, unless good cause is shown for waiver under 220 CMR 1.01(4). To be allowed, a petition under 220 CMR 1.03(1) must satisfy the standing requirements of G.L. c. 30A, § 10. All responses to petitions to intervene must be filed by the close of business (5:00 p.m.) on the second business day after the petition to intervene was filed.

To the extent a person or entity wishes to submit comments or a petition to intervene in accordance with this Notice, electronic submission is sufficient. All documents must be submitted to the Department in **.pdf format** by e-mail attachment to dpu.efiling@mass.gov and

stephanie.mealey@mass.gov. The text of the e-mail must specify: (1) the docket number of the proceeding (D.P.U. 23-144); (2) the name of the person or company submitting the filing; and (3) a brief descriptive title of the document. In addition, a copy of all comments or petitions to intervene should be sent to the Company's attorneys, Michael Hershberg, Esq., at mhershberg@keeganwerlin.com and Kevin Penders, Esq., at kpenders@keeganwerlin.com. All documents submitted in electronic format will be posted on the Department's website through our online File Room as soon as practicable (enter "23-144") at: <https://eaonline.eea.state.ma.us/DPU/Fileroom/dockets/bynumber>.

To request materials in accessible formats for people with disabilities (Braille, large print, electronic files, audio format), contact the Department's ADA coordinator at Andrea.R.Casul@mass.gov.

For further information regarding the Company's filing, please contact the Company's attorneys, identified above. For further information regarding this Notice, please contact Stephanie Mealey, Hearing Officer, Department of Public Utilities, at stephanie.mealey@mass.gov.