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THE SENATE OF TEXAS
JUAN "CHUY" HINOJOSA
DISTRICT 20

COMMITTEES
JURISPRUDENCE
CRIMINAL JUSTICE
BORDER SECURITY

July 24, 2023

Ms. Kathleen Jackson, Chair
& Commissioners
Public Utility Commission of Texas
1701 N Congress Ave
Austin, TX 78701-1402

Dear Chair Jackson and Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support and join the efforts of the Texas Consumer Association and AARP Texas in respectfully requesting the immediate suspension of the current provisions of Substantive Rule §25.29(i), which pertain to the disconnection of electric service during extreme weather. As a state senator, I firmly believe that the Public Utility Commission has a crucial role in ensuring the safety and well-being of all Texans, particularly during times of extreme weather conditions.

In light of the recent extreme heat that has plagued our state, it has become evident that the current disconnection rule is inadequate in protecting the most vulnerable members of our society. I urge the Commission to impose a total moratorium on all electric service disconnections of residential premises for bill arrearages or lack of payment until, on, or after September 15, 2023, as a matter of public safety.

I also respectfully request that the Commission takes immediate action by directing the state's transmission and distribution utilities and retail electric providers to report on the number of electric accounts currently disconnected due to lack of payment. We believe that regular updates on these reports, at least on a weekly basis, should be provided through November 2023. This transparency will enable us to better understand the extent of the issue and work towards finding long-term solutions.

In support of this cause, I intend to introduce legislation during the next regular session to make the reporting requirement a state law. By doing so, we can ensure that this critical information is consistently available to the public and policymakers, fostering a more informed and proactive approach to addressing the challenges faced by our communities.

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I would like to express my appreciation to the Texas Consumer Association and AARP Texas for their unwavering dedication and leadership in advocating for the rights and well-being of Texans. Their efforts have been instrumental in bringing attention to this pressing issue, and I am honored to stand alongside them in making this request.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I trust that you will consider our request with the utmost seriousness and take the necessary steps to protect the well-being of our fellow Texans. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J-J. Hinojosa". The signature is stylized with large, flowing loops.

Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa
State Senator, District 20