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Statement on PURA's Approval of a $66M Rate Increase for United Illuminating Customers

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Acadia Center raises affordability concerns over PURA's approval of a significant $66M increase in rates for United Illuminating (UI) electricity customers and calls for sustained implementation of rate reforms

Nonprofit urges PURA to "remain focused on affordability and rapidly implement the draft Performance-Based Ratemaking framework to reduce customer costs."

Hartford, CT – The Connecticut Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA), issued a final decision in the United Illuminating (UI) rate case granting the utility a $66 million rate hike. This increase is $2.3 million ***larger*** than a proposal UI had previously said was "just and reasonable."

In fact, according to **Noah Berman, Senior Policy Advocate and Utility Innovation Program Manager** at Acadia Center, "The approved $66M rate increase is **more than double** what was approved in the draft decision under previous leadership. With the approved rates, the average UI customer can expect an annual bill increase of $120 to $156."

"Connecticut already has some of the highest electric rates in the country," noted **Kate McAuliffe, Senior Policy Advocate for Connecticut at Acadia Center.** "PURA and intervenors have spent the last several years working on tools that the Authority can use to control high rates in the performance-based ratemaking (PBR) docket. We urge PURA to remain focused on affordability and rapidly implement the draft PBR framework to reduce customer costs, make better use of low-cost technologies, and plan the distribution grid in a more integrated way."

"PURA faces a large body of ongoing casework that intervenors and Authority staff have invested substantial time and effort into," said **Berman**. "That the Authority voted to approve an additional $37M in rate increases for UI as compared to the Authority's prior draft decision is concerning – particularly since $66M is over $2M more than UI itself said was sufficient for it to operate in a filing made only 11 days before the vote."

On September 10, 2025 – during former Chair Marissa Gillett's tenure – PURA issued a draft decision in UI's rate case, which would have granted the utility a $28.6M rate hike. Afterward, UI and other intervenors began settlement talks to determine if a stipulated agreement would be feasible. When those talks failed to reach consensus, UI submitted an Alternative Resolution Position (ARP) stating that a $63.7M rate increase would lead to "a just and reasonable result." (UI's Motion to Adopt and Approve the United Illuminating Alternative Resolution Position at 2). On October 28th – after former Chair Gillett's resignation and recusal from the proceeding – PURA approved a final decision in UI's rate case, granting UI a $66M rate hike. The approved $66M rate increase is more than double what was approved in the draft decision under previous leadership, and substantially mirrors the positions included in UI's ARP. With the approved rates, the average UI customer can expect an annual bill increase of $120 to $156.

PBR is a common-sense, alternative utility regulatory framework that ties financial incentives for utilities to measurable performance outcomes rather than simply allowing recovery of costs for capital investments. The Authority was expected to release its final decisions in the three PBR reopeners in mid-October but has delayed the release of those decisions for an indeterminate amount of time. The swift implementation of the framework provided for in the three draft decisions would bring substantial benefits to Connecticut electricity customers by containing the electric utilities' costs and shifting their incentives to align with the public policy priorities of the state — such as lower electric bills, better reliability, improved resilience during storms, and reduced pollution. A well-designed PBR framework, which PURA still has in its Draft Decisions, can provide meaningful relief to ratepayers, and PURA should consider moving forward with all due haste.