



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
OFFICE OF CONSUMER COUNSEL
NEWS RELEASE**

Acting Consumer Counsel Richard E. Sobolewski

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**ACTING CONSUMER COUNSEL RICHARD E. SOBOLEWSKI SEEKS PURA
ORDER RETURNING OVER EIGHT MILLION DOLLARS IN RATE RELIEF TO
UNITED ILLUMINATING RATEPAYERS**

*Ratepayers' Share of United Illuminating's Overearnings Not Yet Credited Back to Customer
Bills Due to Ongoing PURA Review*

NEW BRITAIN, Conn. (July 30, 2020) – Acting Consumer Counsel Richard E. Sobolewski announced today that the Office of Consumer Counsel (OCC) has filed a [Motion](#) requesting that the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) immediately order the return of approximately \$8,161,088 in overearnings to the electric ratepayers of The United Illuminating Company. Under the earnings sharing mechanism in United Illuminating's approved rate plan, ratepayers are entitled to receive 50% of every dollar that the company overearns. Due to ongoing PURA review, however, PURA has not yet ordered that the customer share of United Illuminating's 2019 overearnings be credited back to ratepayers.

“As recent events have amply demonstrated, Connecticut ratepayers have little tolerance for increases in the cost of electric service,” said Acting Consumer Counsel Richard E. Sobolewski. “By withholding millions of dollars in rate relief that United Illuminating's ratepayers are legally entitled to, PURA is needlessly protracting the economic pain that working families and small businesses feel when trying to cover their energy costs, particularly during this unprecedented time. This money legally belongs to all United Illuminating ratepayers—I implore PURA to return it to them.”

United Illuminating originally requested PURA approval to return the customer share of overearnings to ratepayers in March of this year. In June, however, PURA issued an order attempting to divert the money otherwise due back to ratepayers to a third-party. OCC [swiftly objected](#), arguing that PURA's ruling was not in accord with United Illuminating's approved rate plan, contrary to Connecticut law, and would have the practical effect of increasing rates for all customers. In response, PURA reopened United Illuminating's most recent rate case for the sole purpose of reexamining the previously approved earnings sharing mechanism. In the months

since then, PURA has taken no additional action while the millions of dollars legally due back to ratepayers have been trapped in administrative stasis. Acting Consumer Counsel Sobolewski noted that OCC intends to continue fighting to ensure that United Illuminating ratepayers receive their designated share of the overearnings at issue.

PURA is considering the review of this matter in Docket Nos. 16-06-04 and 16-06-04RE03. Those United Illuminating customers desiring to comment on the return of overearnings to all ratepayers are encouraged to contact PURA via e-mail at pura.executivesecretary@ct.gov referencing the above docket numbers.

Increases in electric rates have been the subject of much public attention and scrutiny in recent weeks following the receipt of higher than anticipated bills by customers of Eversource Energy. In response, political leaders in the General Assembly have requested that PURA review recent rate changes proposed by both Eversource Energy and United Illuminating in Docket Nos. 20-01-01 and 20-01-02. Acting Consumer Counsel Sobolewski stated that the OCC intends to be an active participant in both PURA review proceedings.

Acting Consumer Counsel Sobolewski thanked his staff involved in this matter, especially Attorneys Andrew W. Minikowski and Julie Datres and Utilities Examiner Dave Thompson.

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The Office of Consumer Counsel (OCC) is the State of Connecticut's advocate for consumers on issues relating to electricity, natural gas, water, and telecommunications. For more information, visit www.ct.gov/occ.