
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: CHIEF CLERK LIZ ROLANDO
FROM: JENA MERL
SUBJECT: AMENDMENTS TO 9/2/20 PUBLIC UTILITY ROM MINUTES
DATE: 9/21/20
CC: C&C ASSISTANTS

Please make the following amendments to the September 2, 2020 Public Utility Regular Open Meeting Minutes:

P.27 Line 5: Replace "Motion to Withdraw" with "Notice of Withdrawal."

P. 31: Line 22 - Replace "order to" with "order cancels."

From: Robert Garcia <vegasrobert33@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 2, 2020 5:00 PM
To: ICC.Public.Requests <ICC.Public.Requests@illinois.gov>
Subject: Re: [External] Re: FW: Public Participation Request

Hello my name is Robert Garcia, I am with Progressive Voices of Central Illinois. We are a coalition of several different Progressive organizations throughout the central Illinois region. Many of our member organizations have already publicly spoken out in favor of extending the moratorium against utility shut-offs. There are many, many reasons to extend the shut off moratorium but I'm going to briefly highlight 3 of the many reasons.

First, let us consider our most vulnerable population. The individuals we need to be thinking of the most are those who are at high risk due to underlying medical conditions, chronic illness, or other life threatening medical needs that require durable medical equipment (DME) that are power dependent. On top of putting these residents in life threatening situations where they require medical assistance, many of them would also be stranded in the middle of a medical emergency. According to the Illinois Dept of Public Health, 1 in every 5 adults in Illinois has a disability. Many of these residents require power dependent mobility devices to simply have mobility. Imagine if your powered wheelchair suddenly has no power source, we are TRAPPING these individuals if we cut off their power. *To do so when we've cut off life saving DME is unconscionable.*

There's a myth online that not that many people are affected or fall into this category. According to the National Center for Biotechnology Information, over the past several decades, we have seen a significant increase of medical devices migrating into private homes and residences. This is due to rising health care costs, and hospital stays, and also because of shortages in health care facilities, nurses, and other skilled personnel. According to The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, between 1995 and 2004, we saw an increase of over 400% - - this is a dramatic migration of power dependent medical devices and durable medical equipment coming out of hospitals and into private residences. This equipment isn't just sitting in health care facilities. It's all over homes in Illinois. And this growth trend continues still today.

These individuals are considered high-risk because they have underlying medical conditions, specifically those that require power dependent DME for life saving treatment. From ventilators, to suction equipment, to oxygen concentrators and cpap machines, there is a long list of varying home medical equipment that all require power. IF they can't afford to pay their power, how are they going to afford to buy all new equipment that is battery powered?

Second, in the middle of a pandemic, we keep telling everyone that they need to wash their hands - this is the easiest and most effective thing that our families can do to help prevent the spread of covid-19. Obviously if we decide to shut off water for our families that's not possible.

Lastly, we're in the middle of a pandemic where our children are engaged in remote learning. It is not okay to say if you have money, you can keep learning. But if you're poor, we're going to deny your education. This is not okay! EVERY child in Illinois has a right to education, regardless of socioeconomic status.

Thank you for listening, and God bless you.

Kind regards,

-Robert Garcia
Progressive Voices of Central IL

-Robert Garcia, REALTOR®, Residential & Commercial
Buying or Selling? -- *YOU'RE GONNA WANT ME IN YOUR CORNER!*
The Robert Garcia Team at eXp Realty LLC
E: vegasrobert33@gmail.com
C: 309-24-HOMES (309-244-6637)