



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

### NOTICE OF FILING AND REQUEST FOR COMMENTS

D.P.U. 22-98

August 19, 2022

Petition of Liberty Utilities (New England Natural Gas Company) Corp. d/b/a Liberty for approval of its Revenue Decoupling Adjustment Factors for the 2022 Peak Period, November 1, 2022, through April 30, 2023.

On August 3, 2022, Liberty Utilities (New England Natural Gas Company) Corp. d/b/a Liberty ("Company") filed a petition with the Department of Public Utilities ("Department") for approval of its revenue decoupling adjustment factors ("RDAFs"), for effect November 1, 2022. This filing was made pursuant to Liberty Utilities (New England Natural Gas Company) Corp., D.P.U. 15-75 (2016), and the Company's revenue decoupling adjustment clause ("RDAC") tariff, M.D.P.U. No. 1025H. In 2008, the Department developed revenue decoupling by establishing a mechanism through the RDAC that allows the Company to modify, on a semi-annual basis, its base distribution rates as a result of changes in customer usage. Revenue decoupling severs the link between sales and revenues, and instead provides gas and electric utility companies with a target revenue level, thus removing the disincentive of implementation of energy efficiency and demand reduction programs that encourage customers to lower energy usage and demand. See generally Revenue Decoupling, D.P.U. 07-50-A (2008); see also NSTAR Gas Company, D.P.U. 14-150, at 22-23 (2015). The Department has docketed this petition as D.P.U. 22-98.

The Company proposes RDAF charges of \$0.0389 per therm for residential customers, \$0.0301 per therm for commercial and industrial ("C&I") low load factor customers, and \$0.0274 per therm for C&I high load factor customers, effective November 1, 2022 through April 30, 2023. As a result of the proposed changes to the RDAF, the average Fall River/North Attleboro residential heating customer (customer class R-3) using on average 122 therms per month during the peak period will experience a bill increase of \$0.09 or 0.03 percent as compared to the previously effective peak period RDAF. The average Blackstone residential heating customer using an average of 117 therms per month during the peak period will experience a bill increase of \$0.08 or 0.03 percent as compared to the previously effective peak period RDAF. The Company states that the average monthly bill impact for all rate classes at each class's average use during the peak period will range from a decrease of (0.09) percent to an increase of 0.09 percent as compared to the previously effective peak period RDAF. For specific bill impacts, please contact the Company as shown below.

Any person who desires to comment on this matter may submit written comments no later than the close of business (5:00 p.m.) on **Friday, September 30, 2022**. At this time, all

filings will be submitted only in electronic format consistent with the Commission's June 15, 2021 directive related to modified filing requirements. Ordinarily, all parties would follow Sections B.1 and B.4 of the Department's Standard Ground Rules (D.P.U. 15-184-A, App. 1 (March 4, 2020)); however, until further notice, parties must retain the original paper version and the Department will later determine when the paper version must be filed with the Department Secretary.

All written comments or other documents should be submitted to the Department in **.pdf format** by e-mail attachment to [dpu.efiling@mass.gov](mailto:dpu.efiling@mass.gov), [stephanie.mealey@mass.gov](mailto:stephanie.mealey@mass.gov), and [christine.dowling2@mass.gov](mailto:christine.dowling2@mass.gov). In addition, all written comments should be emailed to the Company's attorney, Ronald Ritchie, Esq., at [r.j.ritchie@libertyutilities.com](mailto:r.j.ritchie@libertyutilities.com). The text of the e-mail must specify: (1) the docket number of the proceeding (D.P.U. 22-98); (2) the name of the person or company submitting the filing; and (3) a brief descriptive title of the document. The e-mail must also include the name, title, and telephone number of a person to contact in the event of questions about the filing. The electronic file name should identify the document but should not exceed 50 characters in length. Importantly, all large files submitted must be broken down into electronic files that do not exceed 20 MB. All documents submitted in electronic format will be posted on the Department's website through our online File Room as soon as practicable (enter "22-98") at: <https://eeaonline.eea.state.ma.us/DPU/Fileroom/dockets/bynumber>.

At this time, a paper copy of the filing will not be available for public viewing at the Company's offices or the Department due to certain ongoing safety measures and precautions relating to in-person events as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The filing and all subsequent related documents, pleadings and/or filings submitted to the Department and/or issued by the Department will be available on the Department's website as referenced above as soon as is practicable. To the extent a person or entity wishes to submit comments in accordance with this Notice, electronic submission, as detailed above, is sufficient. To request materials in accessible formats for people with disabilities (Braille, large print, electronic files, audio format), contact the Department's ADA coordinator at [DPUADACoordinator@mass.gov](mailto:DPUADACoordinator@mass.gov).

For further information regarding the Company's filing, please contact the Company's attorney, Ronald Ritchie, Esq., at [r.j.ritchie@libertyutilities.com](mailto:r.j.ritchie@libertyutilities.com) or (774) 320-5801. For further information regarding this Notice, please contact Stephanie Mealey and Christine Dowling, Hearing Officers, Department of Public Utilities, at [stephanie.mealey@mass.gov](mailto:stephanie.mealey@mass.gov) and [christine.dowling2@mass.gov](mailto:christine.dowling2@mass.gov).