



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

NOTICE OF FILING AND REQUEST FOR COMMENTS

D.P.U. 23-GSEP-04

November 15, 2023

Petition of Liberty Utilities (New England Natural Gas Company) Corp. d/b/a Liberty for Approval of its 2024 Gas System Enhancement Plan, pursuant to G.L. c. 164, § 145, for rates effective May 1, 2024.

On October 31, 2023, Liberty Utilities (New England Natural Gas Company) Corp. d/b/a Liberty ("Liberty" or "Company") submitted to the Department of Public Utilities ("Department") its calendar year 2024 gas system enhancement plan ("GSEP") to replace aging natural gas pipeline infrastructure. Liberty states that its 2024 revenue requirement is \$24,361,130, which exceeds the three-percent revenue cap by \$4,626,483; the Company is not seeking a waiver of the cap. Thus, the Company seeks approval to collect \$19,734,647 through the gas system enhancement adjustment factors ("GSEAFs") to recover the cost to replace eligible leak-prone infrastructure through the end of calendar year 2024 and proposes to defer recovery of \$4,626,483. The Department has docketed this matter as D.P.U. 23-GSEP-04.

According to the Company, its proposed 2024 GSEP is consistent with the requirements of G.L. c. 164, § 145, which allows gas distribution companies to accelerate the replacement of eligible infrastructure to improve public safety or infrastructure reliability and to reduce or potentially reduce lost and unaccounted for natural gas. Liberty has also filed its second five-year update of the GSEP, in which it provides a summary of the progress the Company has made to date replacing leak-prone infrastructure, a summary of the work to be completed under its GSEP for the next five years, and a discussion of GSEP issues that Liberty and the other local gas distribution companies have identified as impacting the continued effectiveness of GSEPs.

The Company states that approval of the proposed GSEAFs will result in a monthly bill increase of \$11.14 or 4.31 percent for the average residential heating customer using 122 therms per month during winter months, and a monthly bill increase of \$2.69 or 4.01 percent for the average residential heating customer using 29 therms per month during summer months. Pursuant to G.L. c. 164, § 145, on May 1, 2025, the Company will submit to the Department the amount recovered through the GSEAFs for reconciliation with actual 2024 calendar year GSEP costs.

The Company proposes that the following GSEAFs for each customer class take effect on May 1, 2024:

Rate Class Sector	Proposed GSEAF (\$/Therm)
Residential	\$0.3379
Commercial and Industrial ("C&I") - Low Load Factor	\$0.2200
C&I - High Load Factor	\$0.1744

Any person interested in commenting on this matter may submit written comments no later than the close of business (5:00 p.m.) on Tuesday, December 19, 2023. Written comments from the public may be sent by email to dpu.efiling@mass.gov, carol.pieper@mass.gov, and the Company's attorney at kpenders@keeganwerlin.com. Please note that in the interest of transparency any comments will be posted to our website as received and without redacting personal information, such as addresses, telephone numbers, or email addresses. As such, consider the extent of information you wish to share when submitting comments. The Department strongly encourages public comments to be submitted by email. If, however, a member of the public is unable to send written comments by email, a paper copy may be sent to Mark D. Marini, Secretary, Department of Public Utilities, One South Station, Boston, Massachusetts, 02110.

Any other person who desires to participate in the evidentiary phase of this proceeding must file a written petition for leave to intervene with the Department no later than 5:00 p.m. on Monday, November 27, 2023. A petition for leave to intervene must satisfy the timing and substantive requirements of 220 CMR 1.03. All petitions for leave to intervene must be submitted by email only to dpu-efiling@mass.gov, carol.pieper@mass.gov, and the Company's attorney, kpenders@keeganwerlin.com. Receipt by the Department, not mailing, constitutes filing and determines whether a petition has been timely filed. A petition filed late may be disallowed as untimely, unless good cause is shown for waiver under 220 CMR 1.01(4). To be allowed, a petition under 220 CMR 1.03(1) must satisfy the standing requirements of G.L. c. 30A, § 10. All responses to petitions to intervene must be filed by email by the close of business (5:00 p.m.) on the second business day after the petition to intervene was filed.

On November 7, 2023, the Attorney General of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts ("Attorney General") filed a notice to intervene in this matter pursuant to G.L. c. 12, § 11E(a). Further, pursuant to G.L. c. 12, § 11E(b), the Attorney General filed a notice of intent to retain experts and consultants to assist her investigation of the Company's filing and has requested Department approval to spend up to \$150,000 in this regard. Pursuant to G.L. c. 12, § 11E(b), the costs incurred by the Attorney General relative to her retention of experts and consultants may be recovered in the Company's rates. Any party who desires to comment on the Attorney

General's notice of intent to retain experts and consultants may submit written comments to the Department not later than the close of business (5:00 p.m.) on Monday, November 27, 2023.

Documents provided to the Department must specify: (1) the docket number of the proceeding (D.P.U. 22-GSEP-04); (2) the name of the person or company submitting the filing; (3) a brief descriptive title of the document; and (4) the name, title, email address, and telephone number of a person to contact in the event of questions about the filing. The Company's filing and all related documents submitted to the Department or issued by the Department will be available on the Department's website as soon as is practicable at <https://eeaonline.eea.state.ma.us/DPU/Fileroom/dockets/bynumber> (enter "22-GSEP-04"). To request materials in accessible formats (Braille, large print, electronic files, audio format) for people with disabilities, contact the Department's ADA coordinator at Gabriella.Knight@mass.gov.

Any person desiring further information regarding the Company's filing or a paper copy of the filing should contact the Company's attorney identified above. For further information regarding this notice, please contact Carol Pieper, Hearing Officer, Department of Public Utilities, at carol.pieper@mass.gov.