



Office of the Mayor

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Mayor Rhodes-Conway's Letter to the Wisconsin Public Service Commission Requesting an Extension of the Moratorium on Utility Disconnections

Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for reconsidering the deadline for the utility shut-off moratorium. I am writing to ask you to extend the state moratorium on utility disconnections that is set to expire on September 1.

As you know, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused a significant economic downturn resulting in skyrocketing unemployment throughout the state. It has been economically devastating for many, and it is not nearly over. Unemployment remains high and evictions are rising. School will be online in Madison and many other communities this fall. The state is seeing a rising number of COVID-19 cases, and we have a long road ahead of us to manage both the pandemic itself and the resulting economic damage.

We are still in the middle of a public health and economic crisis, and we cannot end the programs and policies established to help people weather this storm. Utility access is a critical lifeline for those who have lost their jobs in this crisis and are looking for another job, and for children attending school online. Losing utility service only compounds the difficulties of an incredibly challenging time, and further marginalizes people who are already struggling to make ends meet. It also increases the risk of spreading COVID-19 as people who've lost electricity seek public places to cool down on hot days, charge their phones, and connect their computers.

Our communities are experiencing unprecedented and multiple crises. Maintaining utility services during this crisis is essential to sustaining and protecting the health and welfare of our residents and businesses. It is a critical part of the overall response to the COVID-19 pandemic. I respectfully ask that the PSC extend the moratorium on utility disconnections to a timeframe that reflects the duration of this pandemic. I am respectfully requesting that the moratorium be extended to spring 2021.

Sincerely,

Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway