

Lieutenant Governor Dan McKee



PRESS RELEASE Office of Lt. Governor Dan McKee

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Lt. Gov. McKee, General Assembly Call for Immediate Relief on Energy Bills

PROVIDENCE, R.I. – Lt. Governor Dan McKee and the Rhode Island House of Representatives are calling for immediate rate relief on energy bills to reflect the reduction in the corporate tax from 35 to 21 percent.

In late January, local legislators approved [House Resolution 31](#) that calls on the Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to promptly reexamine and reduce current energy rates in relation to the reduction in the corporate tax. Representative Brian P. Kennedy sponsored the resolution in the House. Senator William J. Conley, Jr. will submit a companion resolution in the Senate this week. The resolutions are a follow up to McKee's January 5th letter to the PUC calling for an immediate rate reduction.

McKee commends the House for joining him in this effort in the wake of [Massachusetts' recent decision](#) to order utility companies to promptly set new rates based on the federal tax cuts.

In January, the utility company answered McKee's call to lower its proposed 6% rate increase set to go into effect on September 1. McKee and the House applaud the effort, but believe additional consumer savings are still being left on the table. McKee estimates that between January 1 and September 1, the utility company will enjoy millions in corporate tax windfall that should be passed on to Rhode Islanders in the form of an immediate rate reduction.

“Rhode Islanders are being kept in the dark about additional, immediate rate relief they are entitled to on their energy bills. It's simple, the utility's tax relief should match the consumer's rate relief. The utility company received tax relief beginning January 1. Rhode Islanders should receive rate relief beginning January 1.” McKee said. “This money belongs in the pockets of hardworking Rhode Islanders, not in the coffers of corporate shareholders. Gaining the support of the House, and soon the Senate, should send a strong message to the utility company.”

“As a State Representative, it’s my job to fight for any savings that could benefit the people in my district and throughout our state,” Rep. Kennedy said. “The swift passage of this resolution lets Rhode Islanders know we are listening.”

“The high cost of energy is a top concern for my constituents in East Providence and Pawtucket. It’s an issue that impacts nearly every family and every business,” Senator Conley said. “I look forward to championing this resolution in the Senate and I thank Lt. Governor McKee for his leadership on this issue.”

Representative Kenneth A. Marshall, a co-sponsor of House Resolution 31 also notes the significance of its passage.

“We’re taking action to shine a spotlight on potential energy savings for Rhode Islanders. I know too many families that struggle to pay their utility bills,” said Rep. Marshall. “I look forward to keeping this issue at the forefront and fighting for the savings Rhode Islanders deserve.”

Copies of the resolutions will be delivered to the PUC, the Division of Public Utilities and Carriers and the Governor’s Office.