



CITIZENS UTILITY BOARD

Fighting for Illinois Consumers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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CUB STATEMENT ON GOV. PRITZKER SIGNING HEAT ACT

We thank Gov. J.B. Pritzker for signing into law the strongest consumer protections in the history of Illinois' energy markets. This is one of the toughest consumer protection laws in the nation, and it is a major victory for Illinois residents. Too many alternative supplier sales representatives have declared it open season on Illinois consumers, using misleading marketing and bad deals to prey on seniors and others on fixed incomes. A healthy energy market has common-sense rules and regulations that give consumers the tools they need to make good choices.

CUB thanks Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul for his hard work leading the charge in favor of this reform legislation. We are dedicated to working with the Illinois Commerce Commission and Attorney General Raoul to help enforce these new rules and build a better market for Illinois consumers.

We also thank the bill's chief sponsors, Sen. Kimberly Lightford and Rep. Jehan Gordon-Booth, as well as House Speaker Michael Madigan, House Leader Jim Durkin, Senate President John Cullerton, and Senate Leader Bill Brady, for their leadership on this issue. In conclusion, we thank Rep. Anna Moeller, Sen. Laura Ellman and Sen. Iris Martinez for their ongoing efforts to support consumer protections for Illinois energy customers.

Background:

On Tuesday, Aug. 27, Gov. J.B. Pritzker signed the Home Energy Affordability and Transparency (HEAT) Act. (On May 30, the Act passed the Illinois House 116-0. On May 31, it passed the Illinois Senate 59-0.) The Act:

- Stops alternative electric and gas suppliers from automatically renewing a contract from a fixed rate to a variable rate (a rate that changes monthly), and then jacking up the price. The bill would require companies to get a customer signature before those contracts renew.
- Ends termination fees on supply contracts for residential and small-business customers.
- Protects Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) funds from supplier overcharges, making sure the money available can help as many people as possible.
- Requires alternative supplier marketing materials as well as utility bills to clearly state the utility's price, so consumers can make an apples-to-apples price comparison.

CUB is celebrating its 35th anniversary as Illinois' leading nonprofit utility watchdog. Created by the Illinois Legislature, CUB opened its doors in 1984 to represent the interests of residential and small-business utility customers. Since then, it has saved consumers more than \$20 billion by helping to block rate hikes and secure refunds. For more information, call CUB's Consumer Hotline, **1-800-669-5556**, or visit its award-winning website, www.CitizensUtilityBoard.org.

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