

**ORDER NO. 89575**

Petition for Emergency Proceeding on  
COVID-19

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BEFORE THE  
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
OF MARYLAND

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CASE NO. 9649  
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**Issue Date: July 14, 2020**

**ORDER ON PETITION FOR EMERGENCY PROCEEDING**

On June 26, 2020, the Maryland Office of People’s Counsel (“OPC”) filed a Petition “to Docket an Emergency Proceeding Regarding the COVID-19 State of Emergency, the Impact of the COVID-19 Crisis on the Ability to Pay Utility Bills, Temporary Revisions to Credit and Collection and Payment Plan Practices of Utilities, and Data Collection” (the “Petition”).<sup>1</sup> In the Petition, OPC requested the Maryland Public Service Commission (“Commission”): (1) docket an emergency proceeding; (2) require utilities to implement a series of practices itemized on Exhibit 1 to the Petition; (3) begin collecting and reporting to the Commission certain types of data in order to measure the impact of COVID-19 on utility customer repayment, deposits, and disconnections; and (4) waive certain Commission regulations as necessary.

On July 8, 2020, the Commission initiated Public Conference 53 (“PC53”), an administrative docket to study the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>2</sup> Among other

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<sup>1</sup> Maillog No. 230905.

<sup>2</sup> Maillog No. 231041.

things, PC53 will examine the impact of COVID-19 on utility customer payment behaviors, disconnections/reconnections, and the legal protections owed to Maryland utility consumers.

The Commission finds that the proceeding in PC53 will provide a forum to address the concerns raised in OPC's Petition. As part of the PC53 proceeding, the Commission has invited interested parties, including OPC, to make proposals as to the monitoring and mitigation of the impact of COVID-19 on Maryland ratepayers.<sup>3</sup> The Commission will consider all such proposals as part of the PC53 proceeding.

By Direction of the Commission,

*/s/ Andrew S. Johnston*

Andrew S. Johnston  
Executive Secretary

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<sup>3</sup> Maillog No. 231041 at 3.