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## **CONSUMER ADVOCATES CALL ON GOV. HOLCOMB TO REJECT UNPRECEDENTED UTILITY GREED**

### ***Investor-Owned Electric & Gas Monopolies Seek to Profit from Pandemic***

INDIANAPOLIS – Indiana’s large investor-owned electric and gas monopoly utilities filed a petition before the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (“IURC”) asking permission to allow them to categorize lower energy sales as an expense caused by the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (“COVID-19”) and to allow them to collect those lost revenues from consumers. In other words, the investor-owned utilities want to charge consumers for the energy that they did not sell because of the global pandemic.

“This action is yet another example of the utilities placing profit over people,” said Kerwin Olson, Executive Director of Citizens Action Coalition (“CAC”). “It is disgusting that during these unprecedented times, they are more concerned with quarterly stock reports than with the health, safety, and well-being of the Hoosier communities and consumers which they serve.”

The utilities making the filing included Duke Energy Indiana, Indiana Michigan Power Company (“I&M”), Indianapolis Power & Light (“IPL”), Northern Indiana Public Service Company (“NIPSCO”), and Vectren, a Centerpoint Energy Company. The five large investor-owned utilities were joined on the petition by a collection of smaller gas utilities.

“What Indiana should be doing is protecting Hoosier consumers by extending the shut-off moratorium and putting in place a freeze on rate increases until this economic and health crisis has ended,” added Mr. Olson. CAC has previously called on Governor Holcomb to create a [Utility Affordability Task Force](#) to address the financial cliff that is coming once emergency orders are lifted, specifically how can we ensure customers can stay connected and afford their utility bills once the moratorium on utility disconnects ends.

“In addition to maintaining our plea to the Governor to establish a Task Force, we now call on the Governor to reject this act of greed by the utilities and, instead, work to ensure that all Hoosier consumers have uninterrupted access to essential utility services and are able to remain comfortably and safely in their own homes,” concluded Mr. Olson.

[Note to press: The petition was quietly filed at 3:30 P.M. on Friday, May 8<sup>th</sup>. A copy of the petition filed by the utilities is available [here](#).]

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