

# INCORPORATING HIA INTO UTILITY REGULATORY PROCEEDINGS:

***Winning Economic and Consumer  
Protection Benefits for Vulnerable  
Utility Customers***

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**National HIA Meeting**  
**Washington, D.C. - September 24, 2013**  
***John G. Howat - [jhowat@nclc](mailto:jhowat@nclc)***

# Regulatory Forum Provides Opportunity to Win Real Benefits to Promote Health and Safety

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- ▶ Reduction of home energy burdens
  - ▶ Bill Payment Assistance
  - ▶ “Arrearage Management” Programs
  - ▶ Energy Efficiency Programs that Reduce Home Energy Costs
  - ▶ Reduction or Elimination of Late Payment Fees and Security Deposit Requirements
- ▶ Increase access to regulatory consumer protections
  - ▶ Shutoff protections
    - ▶ Seasonal and temperature-based disconnection restrictions
    - ▶ Disconnection protections for elders, infants and those with disabilities
  - ▶ More favorable deferred payment agreement terms

# Utility Regulatory Proceedings

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- ▶ State jurisdictional authority
  - ▶ Pricing
  - ▶ Procurement
  - ▶ Customer service
- ▶ Consumer protections and programs
  - ▶ Provision and denial of service
  - ▶ Security deposits and advance payment for service
  - ▶ Late payment fees
  - ▶ Termination, disconnection and restoration of service
  - ▶ Establishment of payment plans and agreements
  - ▶ Bill payment assistance and arrearage management
  - ▶ Energy efficiency programs
  - ▶ **Vast disparities between states in approaches to preventing service disconnections and providing affordable service for vulnerable consumers**
- ▶ Types of Proceedings
  - ▶ Ratemaking
    - ▶ Utility cost recovery
    - ▶ Price setting by rate class
  - ▶ Regulatory Consumer Protection Rulemaking
  - ▶ Public Policy Proceedings
  - ▶ Consumer Complaints/Disputes

# Impediments to incorporating HIA in State Level Proceedings

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- ▶ Ratemaking Tradition Based on Narrow Economic Factors
- ▶ Legal/Political Aversion to Cross-subsidies
- ▶ Legislation may be Necessary to Direct Regulators to Act
- ▶ Participation in Regulatory Proceedings Requires Time and Money

## A Few Recommendations for Getting Started

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- ▶ Think Long-term
- ▶ Encourage Dialogue Between State Public Health Departments and State Utility Regulators
- ▶ Establish Partnerships
  - ▶ State Utility Consumer Advocates
  - ▶ Non-profit Consumer Advocates
    - ▶ National Consumer Law Center
    - ▶ AARP
    - ▶ State Non-profits
  - ▶ Environmental Advocates interested in “Non-energy Benefits” in Utility Regulation
- ▶ Meet with Key Legislators, Regulatory Commissioners and Staff Outside of Open Proceedings

# You Can Have a Tremendous Impact!

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- ▶ You Bring to the Table:
  - ▶ Unique, Fresh Perspective
  - ▶ Unique Ability to Articulate Consequences of “Energy Insecurity”
  - ▶ Respected Voice
  - ▶ Unencumbered by Profit Motives of Many Utility Proceeding Stakeholders



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