

Good evening Chair and members of the Committee,

My name is Moshood Lawal, and I live in North Providence. I am a husband, a father, and a small business owner. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak today.

I am here in support of the Governor's utility bill relief proposal contained in Article 11, Sections 3 through 11 of the budget — not just as a business owner, but as a father who worries about the monthly bills that come into my home.

Like many families across our state, opening our utility bill has become stressful. It's no longer just another envelope in the mail — it's a moment of anxiety. We try to conserve energy. We turn off lights. We adjust the thermostat. We teach our children not to waste electricity. Yet when the bill arrives, it feels like no matter how careful we are, the total keeps climbing.

What is especially frustrating is seeing how much of the bill is made up of delivery charges and additional fees — sometimes equal to or more than the energy we actually used. It's difficult to explain to your family why you're paying so much for something that feels out of your control.

For families like mine, high utility bills mean real sacrifices. It can mean putting off home improvements. It can mean stretching grocery budgets. It can mean delaying savings for our children's education. During the winter and summer months, when energy use is unavoidable, the pressure becomes even heavier.

As a small property owner, I also see how these costs impact tenants — working families who are already struggling with housing, food, and healthcare expenses. Utility bills shouldn't be the tipping point that pushes families into financial distress.

I understand and respect the goals of building a cleaner energy future. But we cannot ignore the reality that these embedded state charges — now making up a significant

portion of bills — are adding to the burden on everyday households. And with more increases scheduled in the coming years, many families are worried about what's ahead.

Lowering delivery charges and addressing these added costs would provide immediate and meaningful relief. It would give families breathing room. It would restore some fairness and transparency to the system. Most importantly, it would help ensure that basic necessities like heat and electricity remain affordable.

This is not about politics. It's about families sitting at their kitchen tables trying to make the numbers work.

I respectfully urge you to support the Governor's utility bill relief plan and help bring real relief to households across our state.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best regards,

Moshood Lawal