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Lt. Gov. Austin Davis Brings Together Utility Industry Experts to Highlight Solutions to Rising Energy Costs

As utility shutoffs increase, the Shapiro-Davis Administration is taking action to provide real relief for Pennsylvania consumers and pushing for utility industry reform

HARRISBURG, PA – As utility costs escalate and utility shutoffs hit record highs in Pennsylvania, **Lt. Gov. Austin Davis** is focusing on how the Shapiro-Davis Administration has delivered real relief for consumers, while emphasizing the need for utility industry reforms that will drive costs down for hard-working Pennsylvanians.

“The corporations that power most Pennsylvanians’ homes are huge, publicly traded companies with footprints in multiple states, and they’re making money hand over fist,” said **Davis**, who hosted a roundtable discussion with utility industry experts at the Capitol today. “Pennsylvania consumers are paying for the utility industry’s highest profit margins in the country. This is pure, unadulterated greed – and it has a huge impact on Pennsylvania families and seniors, who are just trying to get by. The Shapiro-Davis Administration is laser-focused on bringing down costs and putting more money back in Pennsylvanians’ pockets.”

“Utilities often talk about putting their customers first while seeking rate increases that mainly benefit their shareholders,” said **Mark Szybist, the Shapiro-Davis Administration’s special counsel for energy affordability**. “The Shapiro-Davis Administration has not only demanded change – we’ve he's identified specific actions that utilities should take to prioritize customers and enhance affordability. I look forward to helping hold the utilities accountable.”

Delivering on a promise made in this year’s budget address, [Governor Shapiro appointed Szybist](#), a Pennsylvania native and energy and utility law attorney with more than 20 years of experience, to the new role in April. That same month, [the Governor announced that PECO – the state’s largest utility company – had decided to withdraw their case before the Public Utility Commission](#), preventing 1.7 million Pennsylvanians from having their utility bills go up by \$510 million total.

[The Shapiro-Davis Administration has also delivered \\$45 billion in savings](#) for the 67 million customers covered by PJM Interconnection, the region’s power grid operator.

That translates to approximately \$800 in savings for the average Pennsylvania household over the next four years.

Elizabeth Marx with the Pennsylvania Utility Law Project explained how rising utility costs are pricing families out of the market and leading to [record-high shutoffs – more than 387,000 households in 2025](#).

“Pennsylvania families are struggling profoundly to afford basic home energy services in the face of rapidly rising rates,” said **Marx**. “Yet, even as involuntary shutoffs soar to record levels, energy companies continue to post record profits. This deeply inequitable dynamic must end.”

Governor Shapiro’s latest actions on energy costs target two causes for rate hikes: demand from data centers and excessive profits.

- [The Administration’s new GRID \(Governor’s Responsible Infrastructure Development\) standards](#) will require data center developers to provide a plan detailing how it will provide for the project’s energy needs without imposing costs on Pennsylvanians and other utility ratepayers. Last week [state Rep. Joe Webster introduced legislation that would put GRID into law](#), and earlier today [the House approved the bill](#) by a bipartisan vote.
- [Governor Shapiro has proposed reforming how utility companies operate in Pennsylvania](#), preventing these monopoly companies from sticking customers with massive bills, so they can give windfall profits to their shareholders.

[Pennsylvania consumers are paying for the utility industry’s highest profit margins in the country](#), according to testimony before the state House Energy Committee. Those excessive profit margins, also called “return on equity” or ROE, cost Pennsylvanians about \$2 billion each year.

Robert Routh from NRDC highlighted [a new report](#), released earlier this month, that spells out three actions that Pennsylvania leaders can take that would save Pennsylvania households more than \$840 annually – an estimated \$2.4 billion in total savings – on their electricity bills. Those actions include:

- Meeting new demand from data centers with new, low-cost clean energy
- Limiting monopoly utility companies’ excess profits (as proposed by Governor Shapiro)
- Deploying more customer-owned clean power and increasing grid efficiency

“Rising electricity prices are not inevitable,” said **Routh**. “Clean energy is the cheapest and fastest to deploy on the market. Utilizing more of it doesn’t just combat climate change and address data centers’ growing energy needs, it brings costs for Pennsylvania households down. The recent Synapse report makes it clear that enacting smart state policies can save people significant money by lowering utility bills.”

Lt. Gov. Austin Davis listens at today's roundtable discussion; additional photos/video are available at PACast.com.

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