



**DEEPSOUTH
CENTER FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE**

Deep South Center for Environmental Justice
9801 Lake Forest Boulevard
New Orleans, Louisiana 70127
www.dscej.org

November 7, 2025

Via Electronic Mail
Clerk of Council
Council of the City of New Orleans
Room 1E09, City Hall 1300
Perdido Street New Orleans, LA 70112
Clerkofcouncil@nola.gov

Re: REPLY COMMENTS OF DEEP SOUTH CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE
ON PARTIES' PROPOSED REVISIONS TO CHAPTER 158 OF THE CODE OF
ORDINANCES AND TO THE UTILITIES REGULATORY MANUAL (UD-25-01)

Dear Clerk of Council:

Please find enclosed the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice's reply comments related to the above captioned docket. Please file the attached communication and this letter into the record.

The Deep South Center for Environmental Justice submits this letter electronically and will submit the requisite original and number of hard copies as you direct.

Thank you for your time and attention,

Beverly Wright
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**Before
The Council of the City of New Orleans**

**IN RE: RESOLUTION AND ORDER
ESTABLISHING A NEW DOCKET AND
PROCEDURAL SCHEDULE TO REVISE
CHAPTER 158 OF THE
CODE OF ORDINANCES**

DOCKET NO. UD-25-01

NOVEMBER 7, 2025

**REPLY COMMENTS OF DEEP SOUTH CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE
ON PARTIES' PROPOSED REVISIONS TO CHAPTER 158 OF THE CODE OF
ORDINANCES AND TO THE UTILITIES REGULATORY MANUAL**

I. Introduction

On July 24, 2025, the New Orleans City Council (“the Council”) adopted Resolution No. R-25-407, establishing this docket and inviting intervenors to submit redline revisions to Chapter 158 of the Code of Ordinances and the Utilities Regulatory Manual (“URM”). The Deep South Center for Environmental Justice (“DSCEJ”) respectfully submits these reply comments regarding redline revisions submitted by the Alliance for Affordable Energy (“AAE”), Delta New Orleans Gas Company, LLC (“Delta New Orleans”), and Entergy New Orleans, LLC (“ENO”).

DSCEJ appreciates the opportunity to provide input and commends the Council for its continued commitment to consumer protection, equity, and accountability in utility regulation.

II. Support for AAE's Proposals and Utility Access as a Human Right

DSCEJ strongly supports AAE's assertion that access to safe, reliable utility service is a fundamental human right. In South Louisiana, where residents experience extreme heat, cold snaps, hurricanes, and frequent boil water advisories, the loss of electric or natural gas service can pose immediate risks to public health and safety. Utility access must therefore be protected as a matter of basic human dignity. Accordingly, DSCEJ urges the Council to expand the moratoria on service disconnections and initiate an investigation into mechanisms to guarantee essential utility access without compromising affordability for customers.

Additionally, DSCEJ supports AAE's proposals to:

1. Streamline and clarify the customer dispute process to ensure it is efficient, accessible, and fair; and
2. Affirm the right of ratepayers to representation in regulatory proceedings, including fair compensation for reasonable costs of intervention.

These measures would enhance transparency, promote meaningful public participation, and ensure that ratepayer and community voices are adequately represented in regulatory decision-making. Strengthening participatory rights is consistent with principles of equity, due process, and consumer protection.

III. Concerns with Delta New Orleans' Proposed Revisions

A. Section 158-8(i) – Service Disconnections During Extreme Weather

Delta proposes restricting the prohibition on service disconnections during extreme heat to electric service only, arguing that natural gas customers do not rely on gas for cooling. DSCEJ opposes this change.

Frequent boil water advisories, which often accompany extreme weather, require residents to use gas or electricity to heat water for safe consumption. DSCEJ urges the Council to maintain disconnection protections for both electric and gas customers during all periods of extreme weather to safeguard public health and safety.

B. Section 158-8(l) - Same-Day Reconnection

Delta proposes replacing the current same-day reconnection requirement with a standard requiring reconnection “as soon as reasonably possible.” DSCEJ respectfully opposes this modification.

Utilities have historically met same-day reconnection obligations. Modern scheduling systems, digital communication tools, and advanced metering infrastructure make same-day reconnection both feasible and essential. Maintaining this requirement minimizes hardship, particularly for customers whose health and safety depend on uninterrupted service.

C. Section 158-8(p) - Disconnection Pending Complaint

Delta proposes that customers must lodge an “Initial Complaint” and make an agreed payment by 5:00 p.m. two business days prior to a scheduled disconnection. DSCEJ opposes both the new “Initial Complaint” definition and the shortened timeline.

These revisions would impose additional administrative and financial burdens on customers already struggling to maintain service. Once disconnection occurs, customers face increased fees, reconnection delays, and potential health risks. DSCEJ recommends retaining the existing complaint process and providing flexible timing to protect customers experiencing economic hardship.

IV. Concerns Regarding Entergy New Orleans' Comments

Entergy asserts that few customer complaints escalate to the Council Utility Regulatory Office, implying that the current process is sufficient and should largely be reinstated. DSCEJ respectfully disagrees.

A low number of formal complaints may reflect systemic barriers to access, limited awareness of customer rights, or lack of confidence in the process—not genuine satisfaction or efficiency. DSCEJ urges the Council to ensure the complaint and appeals process to ensure it effectively serves all customers, particularly those in low-income and marginalized communities.

V. Conclusion

DSCEJ respectfully urges the Council to adopt revisions to Chapter 158 that:

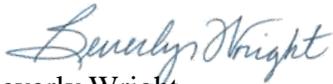
1. Affirm utility access as a basic human right;
2. Maintain and expand protections against disconnections for all customers;
3. Preserve the same-day reconnection requirement;

4. Ensure the complaint and appeals process is more accessible and equitable; and
5. Support ratepayer participation and representation in regulatory proceedings, including compensation for reasonable costs of intervention.

These steps will advance the Council's commitment to fairness, transparency, and justice in utility regulation, ensuring that Chapter 158 continues to protect the residents of New Orleans—particularly those most vulnerable to climate impacts, poverty, and utility insecurity.

DSCEJ appreciates the opportunity to provide these recommendations and urges the Council to ensure that New Orleans ratepayers receive the protections, service, and oversight they are entitled to.

Submitted respectfully,



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cc: Official Service List for UD-25-01 (via electronic mail)

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DOCKET NO. UD-25-01

NOVEMBER 7, 2025

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that I have this 7th day of November 2025, served the foregoing correspondence upon all other known parties of this proceeding by electronic mail.



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