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Memorandum

Date: December 30, 2010
To: All House Members
From: Curt Schroder, Member
155th Legislative District *CS*
RE: Co-sponsorship Electric Voltage Regulation

In the near future I intend to re-introduce legislation that will codify service voltage standards for public utilities in Pennsylvania. I am introducing this legislation to protect consumers from power surges that are caused by public utilities.

My legislation statutorily codifies in statute existing voltage standards that already are in place by regulation, with some changes. Those changes would now hold public utilities financially accountable for variations of voltage that exceed allowable limits if the public utility did not take prudent engineering measures to prevent the variations. Under current law, the electric utility dismisses as beyond their control any harmful power surge that occurs when power is restored after an outage. Further, the Public Utility Commission (PUC) would be authorized to impose civil penalties against the public utility in an amount equal to the cost of the actual damages incurred by a customer as a result of the power surge.

Under current regulations, when these situations arise, the PUC has no authority to impose any actual damages on a public utility in favor of a customer who was harmed. Unfortunately, there are times when customers are affected by voltage variations in excess of the current standards and cannot recover the costs associated with damage caused by these variations. My legislation would address this situation.

Public utilities have a responsibility to be accountable to the customers they serve. As such, I invite you to cosponsor this pro-consumer legislation, please contact my office by calling 783-2520 or e-mail Heather Epler at hepler@pahousegop.com.