

Utility Workers Union of America LOCAL #601

Affiliated with A.F.L.-C.I.O



244 SOUTH CHARLES ST.
HOPELAWN, NJ 08861
TEL: 732-486-8613
FAX: 732-486-8817



November 27, 2017

Honorable Linda R. Greenstein
1249 South River Road
Suite 105
Cranbury, New Jersey, 08512

RE: Senate Bill 3467

I am writing this letter in **opposition to Senate Bill 3467**, The Utility Workers Union of America Local 601 and New Jersey State Council of Utility Workers Union of America and its 3500 members in customer service for Public Service Electric and Gas, Bus claims department for New Jersey Transit, Atlantic City Contact Center located in the old Claridge Casino, New Jersey America Water, United Water, Elizabeth Town Gas Company, Bergen County Sewerage Authority, Safford Township Water Authority, Berkeley Township Water Authority, Keily Construction and JD Covely Contstruction **Vehemently Oppose Senate Bill 3467.**

The general make up of our members are meter readers, field and office collections, billing and payment centers, customer Service call centers and walk-In centers, new construction, gas and water contractors and gas and water utility street workers. I will not take up much of your time but my testimony today is to talk to you about the important role our field, office and customer service members play.

There are 3 specific issues I would like to touch on such as **Economic opportunity, diversity in the Utility Industry and the positive presence Utility Workers provide in the communities we serve.**

Economic Opportunity

Utility companies provide good middle class Jobs. With utility companies trying to eliminate these jobs through technologies such as automated metering and smart metering those opportunities for many minorities and women will disappear, Especially for those who do not have the means to further their education for whatever their circumstances has afforded them.

Diversity

For whatever diversity exists currently in Utility Companies are a direct result of the jobs I described above. Without those jobs **Diversity and Inclusion** will be almost **Extinct.**

Safety Presence in the Community

Those Jobs above perform important Emergency Duty Work. This could not have been more prevalent than when Severe Storms such as Hurricane Sandy and Irene reared their ugly heads. Our members sat on down live power lines, reported cracked and downed utility poles and blocked off the dangers to the public. This was done by meter readers, and other non-emergency positions which are now trained for this until the emergency repair crews arrive and to supplement police and fire units that are limited in those times. In addition because of our field presence we can detect dangerous conditions such as gas leaks, tampered gas and electric meters and lines. We also report illegal apartments to the county sheriff departments etc. Without these services residents can tamper with Electric and Gas lines and meters and put themselves and the public in **serious danger!**

We also train on invaluable programs that serve the community that has nothing to do with our Jobs such as **child watch** offering safety to the most vulnerable in our society-our children. In the normal course of our job duties we have come across countless emergencies ranging from customers having heart attacks, elderly that have fallen, babies walking out in the street unattended, pregnant women and countless others that if I mentioned them I would have to add another page to this letter.

Thank you for reading our position and hopefully getting a better picture and understanding of the role a Utility Worker plays in our communities and in your lives!

If you have any questions you can contact me at the above phone number or e-mail address.

Sincerely,



Noel J. Christmas

President, UWUA Local 601

Chairman NJ State Council of UWUA

New Jersey AFL-CIO Board Member

UWUA National Executive Board Member

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November 27, 2017

Honorable Samuel D. Thompson
2501 Highway 516
Suite 101
Old Bridge, New Jersey 08857

RE: Senate Bill 3467

I am writing this letter in **opposition to Senate Bill 3467**, The Utility Workers Union of America Local 601 and New Jersey State Council of Utility Workers Union of America and its 3500 members in customer service for Public Service Electric and Gas, Bus claims department for New Jersey Transit, Atlantic City Contact Center located in the old Claridge Casino, New Jersey America Water, United Water, Elizabeth Town Gas Company, Bergen County Sewerage Authority, Safford Township Water Authority, Berkeley Township Water Authority, Keily Construction and JD Covely Contstruction **Vehemently Oppose Senate Bill 3467.**

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November 27, 2017

Honorable Richard J. Cody
66 W. Mount Pleasant Avenue
Livingston, New Jersey, 07039

RE: Senate Bill 3467

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November 27, 2017

Honorable Bob Smith
216 Stelton Road
Suite E-5
Piscataway, New Jersey 08854

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November 27, 2017

Honorable Christopher "Kip" Bateman
36 East Main St.
Somerville, New Jersey 08875

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