

# News...



*...from the Illinois House of Representatives*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

State Rep. Bob Flider

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[www.housedem.state.il.us/members/fliderb/index.htm](http://www.housedem.state.il.us/members/fliderb/index.htm)

## **Flider's Bill to Protect Against Utility Shut Offs** **During Blistering Summer Heat Passes House**

*Lawmaker Partners with AARP to Pass Legislation Strengthening Consumer Protections*

**SPRINGFIELD** – Legislation sponsored by state Rep. Bob Flider (D-Mount Zion) to increase protections for area consumers passed out of the Illinois House on Thursday. House Bill 5086 prevents utility companies from shutting off electricity if the temperature is forecasted to reach 95 degrees or above.

“As we approach the summer months, it is important that we provide the protection that area consumers need to ensure that their utility services aren’t cut off when they need them the most,” Flider said. “This bill will guarantee that our most vulnerable citizens, especially senior citizens, are protected from having their fans or air conditioning shut off at the worst possible time.”

Currently, state law prevents utility companies from shutting off service during winter months. However, utilities can shut off electric or natural gas service if the outside temperature is predicted to be 32 degrees or above. Currently, there is no protection for customers from having their power shut off during hot summer months.

Flider teamed up with AARP Illinois to pass House Bill 5086, which provides additional protections for consumers who are struggling to make ends meet. The legislation provides cooling disconnection protection to residential customers, for non-payment of bills, if the National Weather Service has forecasted the temperature to reach 95 degrees or above, on any day or for the following 24 hours. The proposal also prevents disconnection on any day preceding a holiday or weekend when the forecast indicates that a temperature of 95 degrees or above will be reached during the holiday or weekend.

“In past summers, we have seen the tragic loss of life that excessive heat can cause,” Flider said. “With the added protection that this bill will provide, consumers won’t have to worry about having their electricity disconnected during the extreme summer heat.”

Flider added that the legislation is not intended to absolve citizens from paying their bills.

HB 5086 now moves to the Senate for further action. For more information, please contact Flider’s constituent service office at (217) 428-2708.

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