

STATE SENATOR • JIM BARCIA • 31ST DISTRICT

# Barcia Press Release

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## **Mayes, Barcia Demand Answers About Death of Bay City Resident**

*93-year-old World War II veteran froze to death inside his home*

LANSING – State Representative Jeff Mayes (D-Bay City) and State Senator Jim Barcia (D-Bay City) today called for a review of the tragic death of Marvin E. Schur, a 93-year-old World War II veteran, who froze to death in his Bay City home after Bay City Electric Light & Power placed a device on his home to limit his electric use.

"I am shocked and saddened by this tragedy," said Mayes, Chair of the House Energy and Technology Committee. "Though we're still getting more information, what's clear is that this man's death was entirely preventable. Until we understand this unfortunate situation, we need a moratorium on all electric shut-offs as well as the use of these limiting devices, in order to ensure that this does not happen again."

Schur, who owed more than \$1,000 to Bay City Electric Light and Power, had a limiter device placed on his home on January 13 to restrict the amount of electricity that the home can use. If the homeowner uses too much electricity, the device shuts off all power to the home, and needs to be reset. City officials believe that nobody explained the device's operation to Schur, who tripped the device and did not reset it. Schur's body was found January 17.

"Under no circumstances should a person suffer what Marvin Schur did," Barcia said. "We need to know what happened and what we can do to prevent this from happening anywhere in our state, ever again. In the meantime, Bay City Electric Light & Power should suspend all shut-offs and use of regulators for the remainder of this winter season."

Mayes and Barcia have called for a review by the Michigan Public Service Commission to review city shut-off policies and offer recommendations to Bay City in order to prevent similar occurrences in the future. Additionally, Mayes is calling for a subcommittee in the House of Representatives to review policies and make additional recommendations. Mayes and Barcia are also drafting legislation to protect vulnerable citizens like seniors and the people with disabilities during the winter months. Both are working on efforts in the House and Senate that not only would restrict power shutoffs between November and April, but also would ban the use of limiter devices until strict criteria are met that would protect the safety of homeowners.

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