

STATE SENATOR • JOHN J. GLEASON • 27<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT

# Gleason Press Release

P.O. Box 30036 • Lansing • Michigan • 48909-7536 • 517-373-0142 • Fax: 517-373-3938  
E-mail: SenJGleason@senate.michigan.gov • www.senate.mi.gov/gleason



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Oct 8, 2009

Contact: Sen John J Gleason  
Phone: (517) 373-0142

## **Gleason Bill to Protect Senior Citizens from Utility Shutoffs Passes Senate**

*Bill package addresses need to protect vulnerable citizens from losing heat, electricity*

LANSING— The State Senate voted today to pass legislation introduced by Senator John J. Gleason (D-Flushing) that would protect senior citizens from dangerous utility shutoffs. His bill, SB 533, is part of an extensive bipartisan legislative package to ban winter utility shutoffs and regulate other shutoff practices for all utility companies throughout the state to help citizens keep their power on.

“People should be able to feel safe in their homes regardless of their financial situation, and utility companies should not be putting lives at risk in order to collect payments,” said Sen. Gleason. “Michigan winters are some of the harshest in the nation, and there’s no reason people should be without heat. I am pleased that we can come together on both sides of the aisle to protect our residents who are most at risk.”

The five bills that passed today will allow the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) to regulate municipal utilities to prevent utility shutoffs and help citizens keep their power on. This brings these utilities in line with what is already current law for other regulated utilities to ensure all consumers have the same protection against shutoffs.

This legislative package was introduced to prevent tragedies like the death of Marvin Schur, a 93-year-old World War II veteran in Bay City. He was found frozen to death in his home last winter after Bay City Electric Light and Power, a municipal utility not subject to MPSC rules, placed an electric limiter on his home.

###