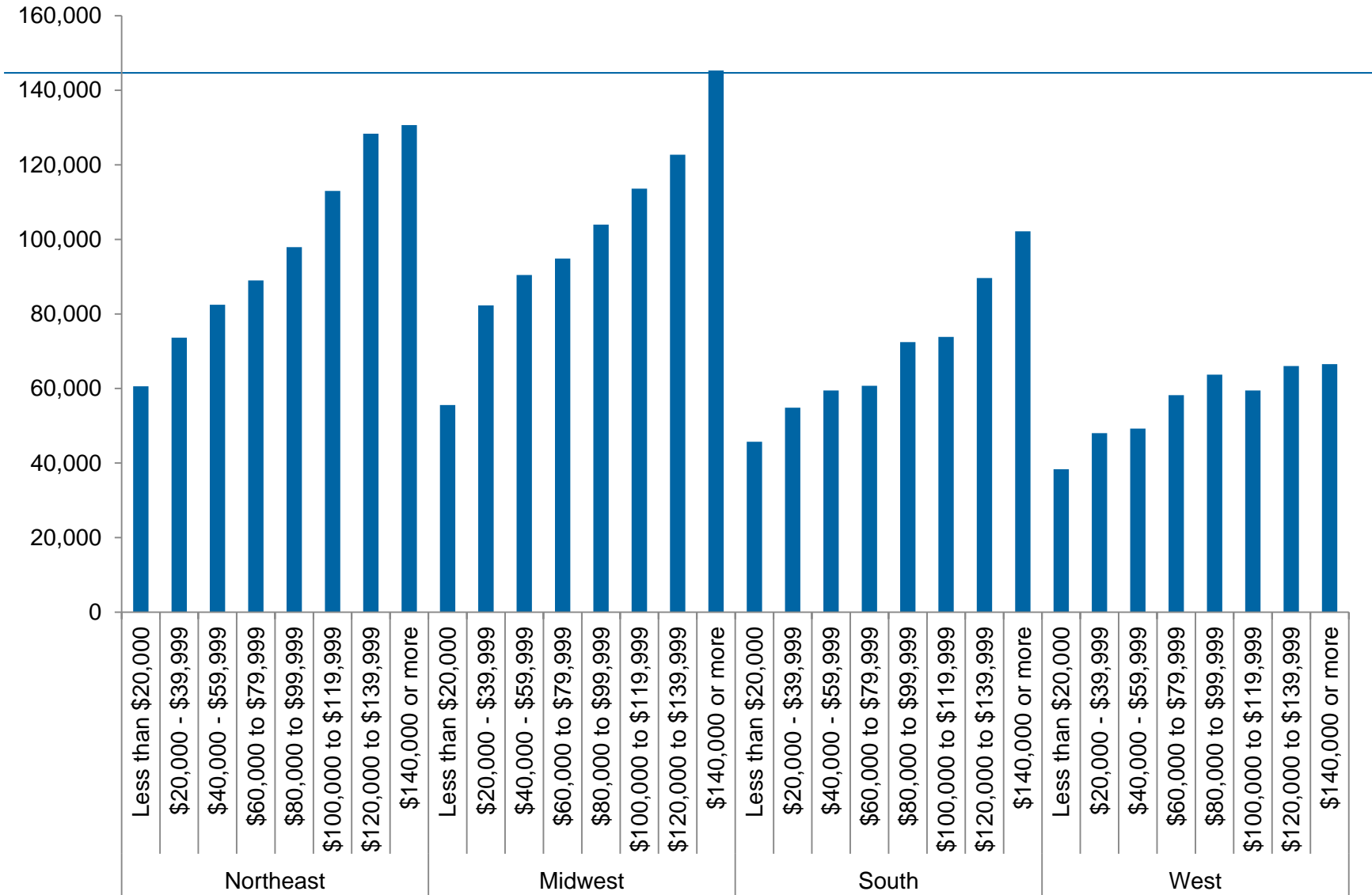


Utility Disconnections and Delinquencies: Tracking the Need

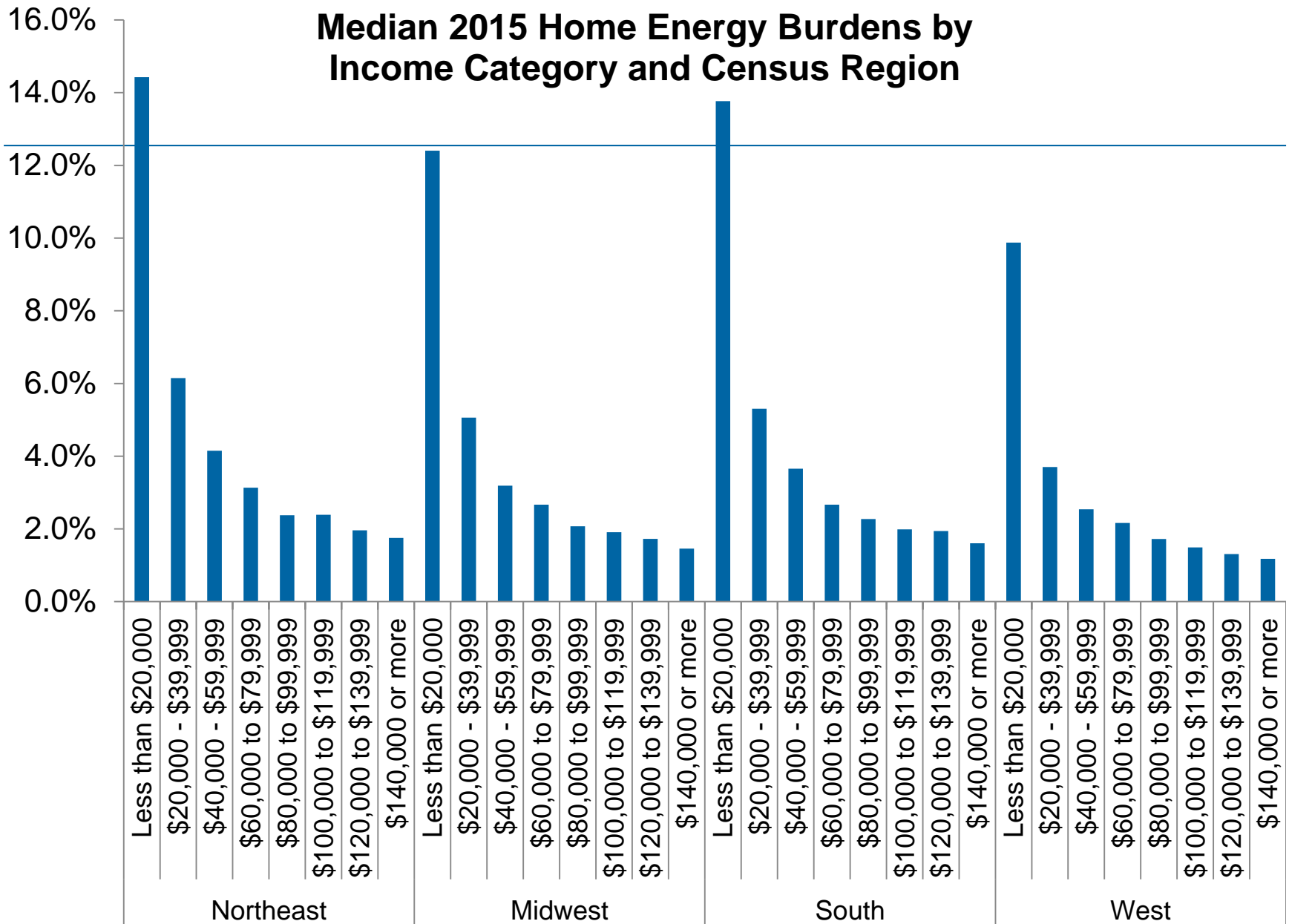
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John Howat – National Consumer Law Center
NASUCA/NARUC/NRRI
June 2019

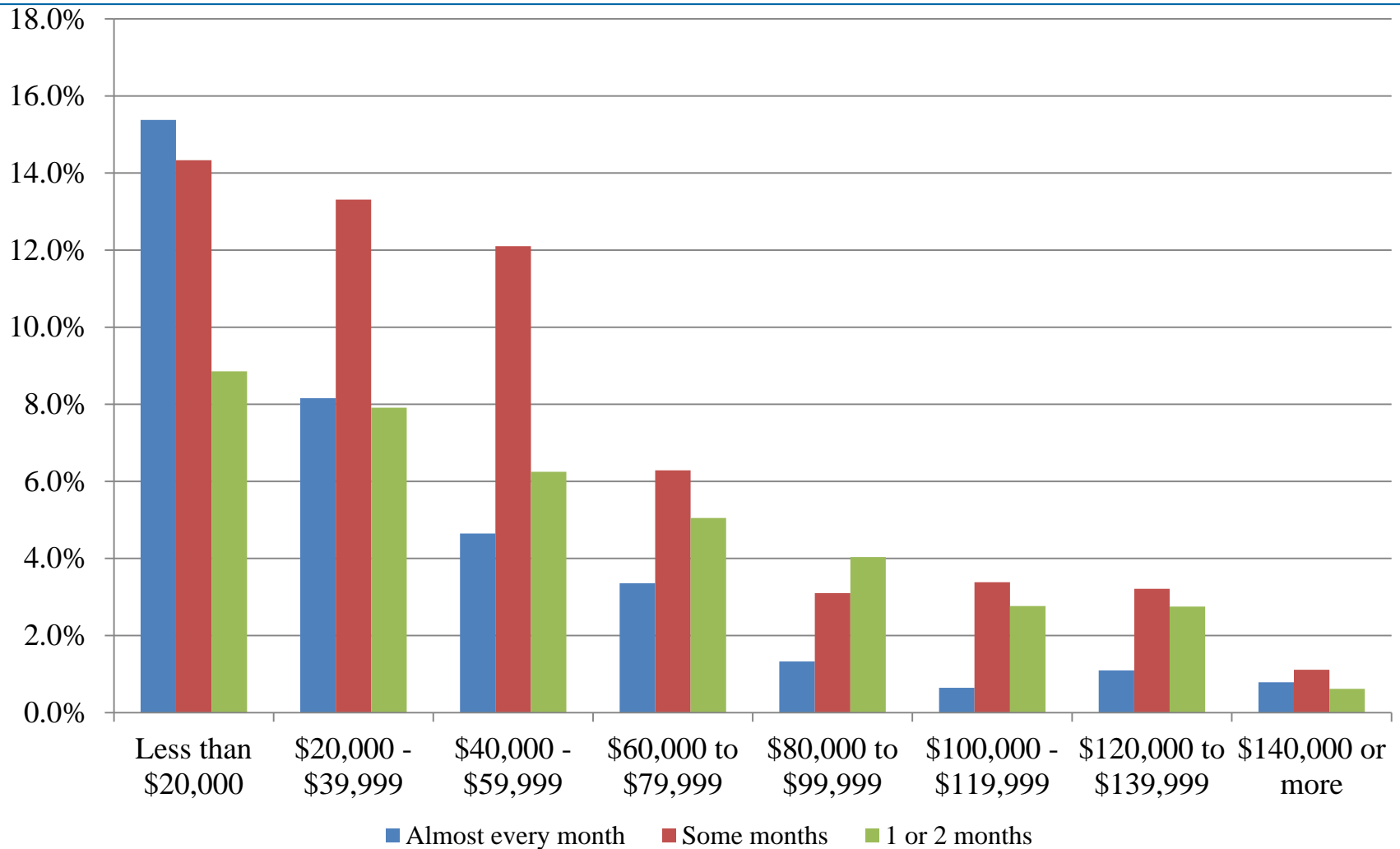
Median 2015 Household Energy Usage (thousand Btu) by Household Income Category and Census Region



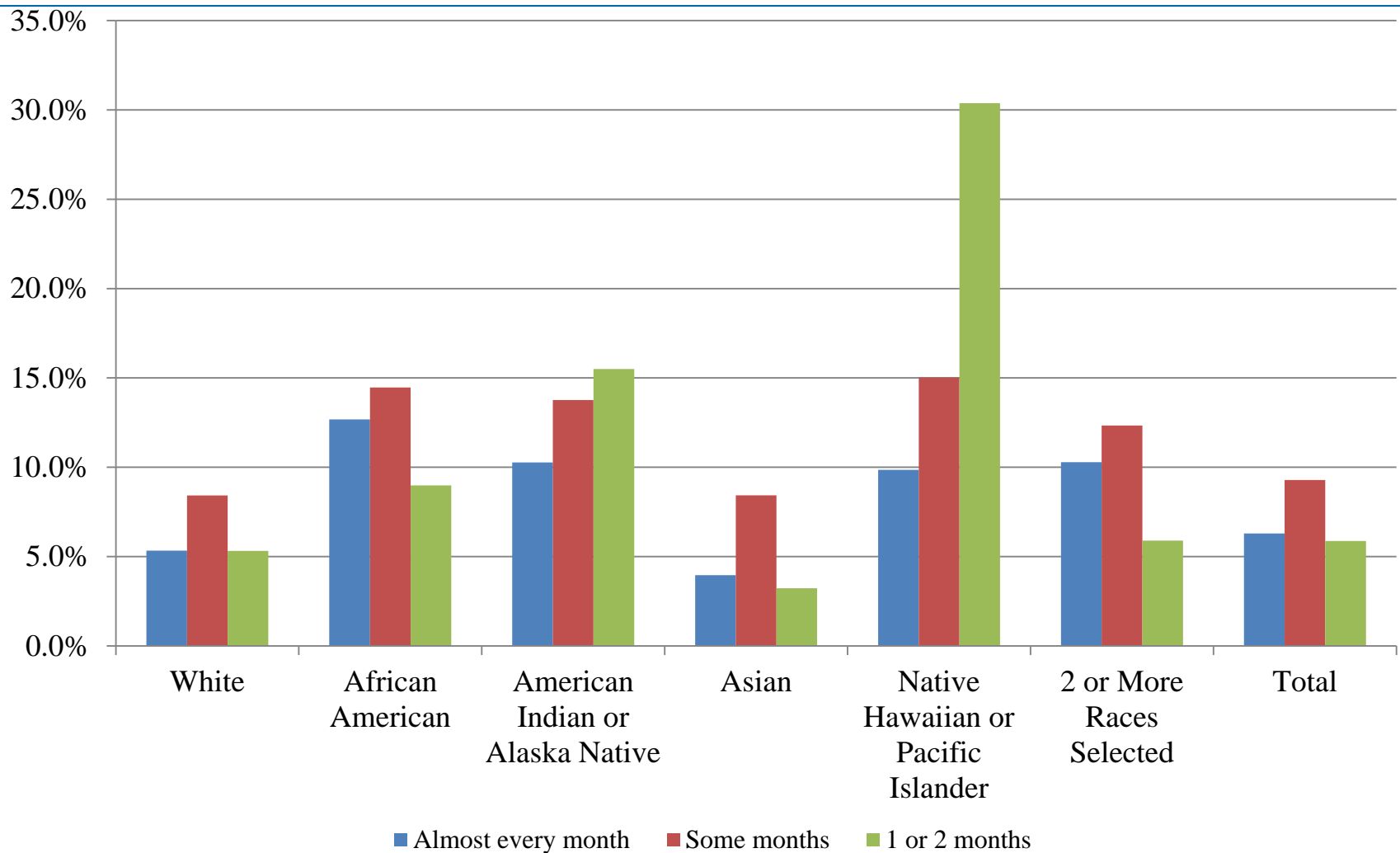
Median 2015 Home Energy Burdens by Income Category and Census Region



Frequency of Reducing or Forgoing Basic Necessities Due to Home Energy Bill by Household Income Category - U.S.



Frequency of Reducing or Forgoing Basic Necessities Due to Home Energy Bill by Race - U.S.



Objectives of Collecting and Reporting Comprehensive, Time-series Credit and Collections Data

- ▶ Opening assumption: home energy/utility service essential – necessity of life
 - ▶ Ramifications of loss of service
 - ▶ Equity concerns – home energy costs and benefits regressively distributed
- ▶ Track the home energy security of general residential customers, low-income customers, and others particularly susceptible to harm from loss of service
- ▶ Gauge the effectiveness of programs and policies intended to enhance affordability and ensure high levels of home energy security
- ▶ Gauge the effectiveness of credit and collection policies and protocols
- ▶ Informed, effective public policy and regulatory decision-making is dependent on reliable, comprehensive time-series data

Credit and Collection Data Points – *Both* General Residential and Identified Low-Income

- ▶ Number of residential accounts
- ▶ Total billed and receipts amounts
- ▶ Total number of “protected” accounts (e.g., for serious illness, elderly, disability)
- ▶ Number and dollar value of unpaid accounts 30-60 days after issuance of a bill
- ▶ Number and dollar value of unpaid accounts 60-90 days after issuance of a bill
- ▶ Number and dollar value of unpaid accounts 90+ days after issuance of a bill
- ▶ Number of accounts referred to collection agencies
- ▶ Number of new payment agreements
- ▶ Number of accounts sent notice of disconnection for non-payment, and number of service
- ▶ disconnections for non-payment
- ▶ Number of service restorations after disconnection for non-payment
- ▶ Number of customers completing an extended payment plan
- ▶ Average duration of service disconnection for restored accounts
- ▶ Number and dollar value of accounts written off as uncollectible

Problems with some existing state data collection/reporting protocols

- ▶ Incomplete set of data points
- ▶ Combined electric and gas utility reporting
- ▶ Lack of public access
- ▶ Frequency of reporting fails to capture seasonal variations
- ▶ No disaggregation of low-income
- ▶ No reporting of total accounts

Tracking the Home Energy Needs of Low-Income Households Through Trend Data on Arrearages and Disconnections

May 2004

http://neada.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Tracking_the_Need.pdf

