

# SENATE BILL 880

C5

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By: **Senator Hershey**

Introduced and read first time: February 11, 2019

Assigned to: Rules

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Public Service Commission – Customer Choice Shopping Website**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring the Public Service Commission to establish a certain  
4 customer choice website for electric customers; specifying the contents of the website;  
5 requiring the Commission to use certain information to maintain the information on  
6 the website; requiring the Commission to include certain information on a certain  
7 customer education webpage; requiring the Commission to recover certain costs in  
8 accordance with a certain provision of law; making stylistic changes; and generally  
9 relating to the Public Service Commission and electric customer choice.

10 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,  
11 Article – Public Utilities  
12 Section 7–501(a), (e), and (f)  
13 Annotated Code of Maryland  
14 (2010 Replacement Volume and 2018 Supplement)

15 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
16 Article – Public Utilities  
17 Section 7–510.1  
18 Annotated Code of Maryland  
19 (2010 Replacement Volume and 2018 Supplement)

20 BY adding to  
21 Article – Public Utilities  
22 Section 7–510.2  
23 Annotated Code of Maryland  
24 (2010 Replacement Volume and 2018 Supplement)

25 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
26 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 **Article – Public Utilities**

2 7–501.

3 (a) In this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated.

4 (e) “Consumer” and “customer” each means a retail electric customer.

5 (f) “Customer choice” means the right of electricity suppliers and customers to  
6 utilize and interconnect with the electric distribution system on a nondiscriminatory basis  
7 at rates, terms, and conditions of service comparable to the electric company’s own use of  
8 the system to distribute electricity from an electricity supplier to a customer, under which  
9 a customer has the opportunity to purchase electricity from the customer’s choice of  
10 licensed electricity suppliers.

11 7–510.1.

12 (a) The Commission shall educate customers about customer choice in accordance  
13 with this section.

14 (b) (1) The Commission shall:

15 (i) host and regularly update a user–friendly customer choice  
16 education section on its [Web site] WEBSITE that complies with standards issued under §  
17 508 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and

18 (ii) prominently display a link to that section of the Commission’s  
19 [Web site] WEBSITE on the home page of the Commission’s [Web site] WEBSITE.

20 (2) The customer choice education section of the Commission’s [Web site]  
21 WEBSITE shall include:

22 (i) a clear and simple description of:

23 1. customer choice;

24 2. how customers can shop for an electricity supplier;

25 3. what kinds of competitive electricity supply options  
26 customers have, including:

27 A. renewable energy supply;

28 B. fixed and variable pricing; and

29 C. other common contract terms;

1                                   4.     the current price of standard offer service in the service  
2 territory of each electric company; and

3                                   5.     the continuing role of the electric company in delivering  
4 electricity to a customer that chooses an electricity supplier;

5                                   (ii)   fact sheets that:

6                                   1.     answer common questions about customer choice;

7                                   2.     advise customers about the questions customers should  
8 ask when choosing an electricity supplier; and

9                                   3.     list the kinds of disclosures that electricity suppliers must  
10 make to customers;

11                                  (iii)   a list of all electricity suppliers that have open offers to supply  
12 electricity in a customer's service area, searchable by service territory or jurisdiction; [and]

13                                  (iv)   a statement indicating that customers who have entered into a  
14 contract with a competitive electricity supplier for electricity supply should be aware of the  
15 ending date of the contract so that they may determine, before being placed into a renewal  
16 contract with the current electricity supplier, whether they would like to:

17                                  1.     shop for an alternative electricity supplier;

18                                  2.     renew with the current electricity supplier; or

19                                  3.     return to the standard offer service which may be offered  
20 at a price that is less than the renewal price offered by the current electricity supplier; AND

21                                  **(V)   A LINK TO THE CUSTOMER CHOICE SHOPPING WEBSITE**  
22 **ESTABLISHED UNDER § 7-510.2 OF THIS SUBTITLE.**

23                                  (3)   To the extent practicable, the list of electricity suppliers required under  
24 paragraph (2)(iii) of this subsection shall include:

25                                  (i)   the terms of any open offers to supply electricity, including:

26                                  1.     the duration of the contract;

27                                  2.     the cost of electricity per kilowatt-hour; and

28                                  3.     any cancellation fees; and

29                                  (ii)   a link to the [Web site] WEBSITE of each electricity supplier with

1 an open offer to supply electricity.

2 (c) (1) To ensure the currency and accuracy of information required under  
3 subsection (b)(2)(iii) of this section, the Commission shall maintain a secure portal on its  
4 [Web site] WEBSITE to receive information about offers to supply electricity from electricity  
5 suppliers.

6 (2) At least once each month, each electricity supplier with an open offer to  
7 supply electricity shall submit detailed information about the offer to the Commission  
8 through a secure portal maintained by the Commission on the Commission's [Web site]  
9 WEBSITE for this purpose.

10 (d) The Commission shall work with media outlets in the State to develop and air  
11 public service announcements publicizing customer choice and directing customers to the  
12 Commission's [Web site] WEBSITE for additional information.

13 (e) The Commission shall recover the cost of complying with this section in  
14 accordance with § 2–110 of this article.

15 (f) On or before December 31 of each year, the Commission shall report, in  
16 accordance with § 2–1246 of the State Government Article, to the General Assembly on the  
17 status and success of the Commission's efforts to educate customers about customer choice  
18 under this section.

19 **7–510.2.**

20 (A) **THE COMMISSION SHALL ESTABLISH A CUSTOMER CHOICE SHOPPING**  
21 **WEBSITE THAT ALLOWS A CUSTOMER TO:**

22 (1) **SORT ELECTRICITY SUPPLIERS THAT HAVE OPEN OFFERS TO**  
23 **SUPPLY ELECTRICITY IN THE CUSTOMER'S SERVICE AREA; AND**

24 (2) **INITIATE THE TRANSITION FROM ONE ELECTRICITY SUPPLIER TO**  
25 **ANOTHER ELECTRICITY SUPPLIER.**

26 (B) **THE WEBSITE SHALL INCLUDE:**

27 (1) **A LIST OF ALL ELECTRICITY SUPPLIERS THAT HAVE OPEN OFFERS**  
28 **TO SUPPLY ELECTRICITY IN A CUSTOMER'S SERVICE AREA, SORTABLE BY:**

29 (I) **COST OF SERVICE;**

30 (II) **COST OF ELECTRICITY PER KILOWATT-HOUR;**

31 (III) **RATE STRUCTURE;**

1 (IV) DURATION OF THE CONTRACT;

2 (V) CANCELLATION FEE; AND

3 (VI) ANY OTHER ASPECT OF SERVICE THAT THE COMMISSION  
4 CONSIDERS NECESSARY;

5 (2) A WAY TO COMPARE ELECTRICITY SUPPLIERS BASED ON THE  
6 SORTABLE ITEMS SPECIFIED UNDER ITEM (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION;

7 (3) A LINK TO THE WEBSITE OF EACH ELECTRICITY SUPPLIER WITH  
8 AN OPEN OFFER TO SUPPLY ELECTRICITY;

9 (4) A LINK TO THE CUSTOMER EDUCATION WEBPAGE ESTABLISHED  
10 UNDER § 7-510.1 OF THIS SUBTITLE; AND

11 (5) A WAY FOR A CUSTOMER TO INITIATE THE TRANSITION FROM THE  
12 CUSTOMER'S CURRENT ELECTRICITY SUPPLIER TO ANOTHER ELECTRICITY  
13 SUPPLIER.

14 (C) THE COMMISSION SHALL USE THE INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM AN  
15 ELECTRICITY SUPPLIER UNDER § 7-510.1 OF THIS SUBTITLE TO MAINTAIN THE  
16 INFORMATION ON THE WEBSITE.

17 (D) THE COMMISSION SHALL RECOVER THE COST OF COMPLYING WITH  
18 THIS SECTION IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-110 OF THIS ARTICLE.

19 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
20 October 1, 2019.