

House Bill 775 - Public Safety - Emergency Management - Consumer Protections Against Price Gouging

Baltimore Gas and Electric Company (BGE) offers the following thoughts on House *Bill 775 – Public Safety - Emergency Management - Consumer Protections Against Price Gouging*. House Bill 775 prohibits during a state of emergency a seller of goods or services, including fuel and energy sources, from increasing the price of the good or service by more than 10%.

House Bill 775 seeks to protect Maryland price gauging during a state of emergency or times of uncertainty and great economic vulnerability. BGE understands the concerns regarding price gauging; but the legislation needs clarification regarding whether “fuel” and “energy sources,” includes electric and natural gas supplied and a utility regulated by the Maryland Public Service Commission. Most importantly, both the electric and gas commodity rates are governed by statutes, regulations and Commission orders dictating the process through which they are changed resulting in stringent oversight from the Commission. BGE, therefore, respectfully requests that the language of the legislation is amended to exempt regulated electric and gas utility rates from the legislation.

If necessary, BGE respectfully requests adoption of the following amendment. On page 2, line 2, insert:

14–1301.

(B) UNLESS OTHERWISE PROVIDED BY THE GOVERNOR IN A DECLARATION OF STATE OF EMERGENCY OR BY EXECUTIVE ORDER, “ESSENTIAL GOODS AND SERVICES” INCLUDES:

- (1) FOOD;
- (2) FUEL **EXCEPT WHERE THE FUEL RATES CHARGED ARE REGULATED BY PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**;
- (3) WATER AND ICE;
- (4) MEDICINE;
- (5) MEDICAL SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT;
- (6) CLEANING PRODUCTS;
- (7) BUILDING SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT;
- (8) ENERGY SOURCES **EXCEPT ENERGY SOURCES WHERE THE RATES CHARGED ARE REGULATED BY PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**;

BGE, headquartered in Baltimore, is Maryland’s largest gas and electric utility, delivering power to more than 1.2 million electric customers and more than 655,000 natural gas customers in central Maryland. The company’s approximately 3,400 employees are committed to the safe and reliable delivery of gas and electricity, as well as enhanced energy management, conservation, environmental stewardship and community assistance. BGE is a subsidiary of Exelon Corporation (NYSE: EXC), the nation’s leading competitive energy provider.