

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2006 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

Senate Bill 561

(Senator Klausmeier)

Finance

Economic Matters

**Electricity Suppliers - Customers - Contact Information and Electricity Usage
Data**

This bill requires an electric company to provide, upon written request by an electricity supplier, contact information and electricity usage data of the residential and small commercial customers located in the company's service territory after specified notice requirements are met. Prior to providing customer contact information and usage data, the electric company must provide customers clear written notice in billing statements or other communications of the customer's right to object to having their information provided to electricity suppliers. The notice must include instructions for reporting objections. If a customer objects, the electric company may not provide the information to an electric supplier unless the customer affirmatively indicates that it may be provided.

The Public Service Commission must issue regulations or an order that specifies customer notice requirements and the format that an electric company must use to provide information to electricity suppliers.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill's requirements could be handled with existing budgeted resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: The Electric Customer Choice and Competition Act of 1999 (Chapter 4) restructured the electric industry, allowing for consumer choice of electricity suppliers. As a result, Maryland's electric industry was opened to competition in 2000. However, questions abound about whether competition has increased in Maryland to a point that true competition exists in the market. A relatively small segment of the State's electric customers have changed electric suppliers, particularly in the residential market.

Background: There are 75 residential electricity suppliers and 189 commercial electric suppliers that have met Public Service Commission and utility requirements to provide service in the State. Electric utilities are required to share information with electricity suppliers in certain situations. If an electric utility provides customer information to an affiliate, it must also make that information available to other competitors and cannot charge those competitors any more than the electric utility charges its own affiliate.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Public Service Commission, Office of People's Counsel, Department of Legislative Services

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