

SENATE BILL 66

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EMERGENCY BILL

71r0906

CF 71r0907

By: **Senators Middleton, Dyson, and Miller**

Introduced and read first time: January 19, 2007

Assigned to: Finance

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Electric Cooperatives – Standard Offer Service Supply Contracts**

3 FOR the purpose of authorizing certain electric cooperatives to supply their standard
4 offer service load through a portfolio of blended wholesale supply contracts of
5 short, medium, and long terms under certain circumstances; making this Act an
6 emergency measure; and generally relating to wholesale supply contracts and
7 electric cooperatives.

8 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
9 Article – Public Utility Companies
10 Section 7–510(c)
11 Annotated Code of Maryland
12 (1998 Volume and 2006 Supplement)

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

15 **Article – Public Utility Companies**

16 7–510.

17 (c) (1) Beginning on the initial implementation date, an electric
18 company's obligation to provide electricity supply and electricity supply service is
19 stated by this subsection.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (2) Electricity supply purchased from a customer's electric company is
2 known as standard offer service. A customer is considered to have chosen the standard
3 offer service if the customer:

4 (i) is not allowed to choose an electricity supplier under the
5 phase in of customer choice in subsection (a) of this section;

6 (ii) contracts for electricity with an electricity supplier and it is
7 not delivered;

8 (iii) cannot arrange for electricity from an electricity supplier;

9 (iv) does not choose an electricity supplier;

10 (v) chooses the standard offer service; or

11 (vi) has been denied service or referred to the standard offer
12 service by an electricity supplier in accordance with § 7-507(e)(6) of this subtitle.

13 (3) (i) Except as provided under subparagraph (ii) of this
14 paragraph, any obligation of an electric company to provide standard offer service
15 shall cease on July 1, 2003.

16 (ii) 1. Electric cooperatives and municipal electric utilities
17 may choose to continue providing standard offer service in their respective distribution
18 territories and may cease offering that service after notifying the Commission at least
19 12 months in advance.

20 2. On and after July 1, 2003, an electric company
21 continues to have the obligation to provide standard offer service to residential and
22 small commercial customers at a market price that permits recovery of the verifiable,
23 prudently incurred costs to procure or produce the electricity plus a reasonable return.

24 (iii) 1. On or before December 31, 2008, and every 5 years
25 thereafter, the Commission shall report to the Governor and, in accordance with §
26 2-1246 of the State Government Article, to the General Assembly on the status of the
27 standard offer service, the development of competition, and the transition of standard
28 offer service to a default service.

29 2. The Commission shall establish, by order or
30 regulation, the definition of "default service".

1 (4) (i) On or before July 1, 2001, the Commission shall adopt
2 regulations or issue orders to establish procedures for the competitive selection of
3 wholesale electricity suppliers, including an affiliate of an electric company, to provide
4 electricity for standard offer service to customers of electric companies under
5 paragraph (2) of this subsection, except for customers of electric cooperatives and
6 municipal electric utilities. Unless delayed by the Commission, the competitive
7 selection shall take effect no later than July 1, 2003.

8 (ii) 1. Under an extension of the obligation to provide
9 standard offer service in accordance with paragraph (3)(ii) of this subsection, the
10 Commission, by regulation or order, and in a manner that is designed to obtain the
11 best price for residential and small commercial customers in light of market conditions
12 at the time of procurement and the need to protect these customers from excessive
13 price increases:

14 A. shall require each investor-owned electric company to
15 obtain its electricity supply for residential and small commercial customers
16 participating in standard offer service through a competitive process in accordance
17 with this paragraph; and

18 B. may require or allow an investor-owned electric
19 company to procure electricity for these customers directly from an electricity supplier
20 through one or more bilateral contracts outside the competitive process.

21 2. A. As the Commission directs, the competitive
22 process shall include a series of competitive wholesale bids in which the
23 investor-owned electric company solicits bids to supply anticipated standard offer
24 service load for residential and small commercial customers as part of a portfolio of
25 blended wholesale supply contracts of short, medium, or long terms, and other
26 appropriate electricity products and strategies, as needed to meet demand in a
27 cost-effective manner.

28 B. The competitive process may include different bidding
29 structures and mechanisms for base load, peak load, and very short-term
30 procurement.

31 C. By regulation or order, as a part of the competitive
32 process, the Commission shall require or allow the procurement of cost-effective
33 energy efficiency and conservation measures and services with projected and verifiable
34 energy savings to offset anticipated demand to be served by standard offer service, and
35 the imposition of other cost-effective demand-side management programs.

1 3. A. In order to prevent an excessive amount of load
2 being exposed to upward price risks and volatility, the Commission may stagger the
3 dates for the competitive wholesale auctions.

4 B. By regulation or order, the Commission may allow a
5 date on which a competitive wholesale auction takes place to be altered based on
6 current market conditions.

7 4. By regulation or order, the Commission may allow an
8 investor-owned electric company to refuse to accept some or all of the bids made in a
9 competitive wholesale auction in accordance with standards adopted by the
10 Commission.

11 5. The investor-owned electric company shall publicly
12 disclose the names of all bidders and the names and load allocation of all successful
13 bidders 90 days after all contracts for supply are executed.

14 (5) An electric company may procure the electricity needed to meet its
15 standard offer service electricity supply obligation from any electricity supplier,
16 including an affiliate of the electric company.

17 (6) In order to meet long-term, anticipated demand in the State for
18 standard offer service and other electricity supply, the Commission may require or
19 allow an investor-owned electric company to construct, acquire, or lease, and operate,
20 its own generating facilities, and transmission facilities necessary to interconnect the
21 generating facilities with the electric grid, subject to appropriate cost recovery.

22 (7) (i) To determine whether an appropriate phased
23 implementation of electricity rates that is necessary to protect residential customers
24 from the impact of sudden and significant increases in electricity rates, the
25 Commission in the case of an increase of 20% or more over the previous year's total
26 electricity rates, shall conduct evidentiary proceedings, including public hearings.

27 (ii) 1. A deferral of costs as part of a phased implementation
28 of electricity rates by an investor-owned electric company shall be treated as a
29 regulatory asset to be recovered in accordance with a rate stabilization plan under
30 Part III of this subtitle or any other plan for phased implementation approved by the
31 Commission.

32 2. A deferral of costs under this paragraph must be just,
33 reasonable, and in the public interest.

1 (iii) The Commission shall approve the recovery of deferred costs
2 under subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph as:

3 1. long-term recovery in accordance with a rate
4 stabilization plan under Part III of this subtitle; or

5 2. short-term recovery through a rate proceeding
6 mechanism approved by the Commission.

7 (iv) The Commission may approve a phasing in of increased
8 costs by:

9 1. placing a cap on rates and allowing recovery over
10 time; or

11 2. allowing rates to increase and providing for a rebate
12 to customers of any excess costs paid.

13 **(8) AN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE THAT AS OF JULY 1, 2006,**
14 **SUPPLIED ITS STANDARD OFFER SERVICE LOAD THROUGH A PORTFOLIO OF**
15 **BLENDED WHOLESALE SUPPLY CONTRACTS OF SHORT, MEDIUM, AND LONG**
16 **TERMS, AND OTHER APPROPRIATE ELECTRICITY PRODUCTS AND STRATEGIES,**
17 **AS NEEDED TO MEET DEMAND IN A COST-EFFECTIVE MANNER, MAY CHOOSE TO**
18 **CONTINUE TO USE A BLENDED PORTFOLIO:**

19 **(I) WITHOUT APPROVAL OF THE COMMISSION;**

20 **(II) AS APPROVED AND MODIFIED BY THE ELECTRIC**
21 **COOPERATIVE'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS; AND**

22 **(III) WITH APPROPRIATE COST RECOVERY AS DETERMINED**
23 **BY THE COMMISSION.**

24 **[(8)] (9)** (i) The Commission, on request by an electric cooperative
25 or on its own initiative, shall initiate a proceeding to investigate options for a rate
26 stabilization plan to assist residential electric customers to gradually adjust to market
27 rates over an extended period of time.

28 (ii) If an electric cooperative determines that total electric rates
29 for residential customers are anticipated to increase by more than 20% in a 12-month
30 period resulting from an increase in the cost of generation, the electric cooperative

1 shall survey its membership to determine whether to make a request to the
2 Commission to initiate a proceeding under subsection (a) of this section.

3 (iii) Notwithstanding subparagraphs (i) and (ii) of this
4 paragraph, as approved by the Commission, an electric cooperative may receive a
5 modification in distribution and transmission rates.

6 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act is an emergency
7 measure, is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public health or safety,
8 has been passed by a yea and nay vote supported by three-fifths of all the members
9 elected to each of the two Houses of the General Assembly, and shall take effect from
10 the date it is enacted.