

SENATE BILL 538

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By: **Senators Garagiola, Haines, Klausmeier, Peters, and Pugh**

Introduced and read first time: February 4, 2010

Assigned to: Finance

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Residential Multiple Occupancy Buildings and Shopping Centers – Master**
3 **Meters**

4 FOR the purpose of authorizing the Public Service Commission to authorize the use of
5 a certain master meter in certain residential multiple occupancy buildings and
6 shopping centers without requiring individual metering or submetering under
7 certain circumstances; authorizing an electric company or a gas company to
8 inspect and test certain master meters in accordance with a certain provision of
9 law; defining certain terms; and generally relating to metering for electricity
10 and natural gas in residential multiple occupancy buildings and shopping
11 centers.

12 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
13 Article – Public Utility Companies
14 Section 7–301
15 Annotated Code of Maryland
16 (2008 Replacement Volume and 2009 Supplement)

17 BY adding to
18 Article – Public Utility Companies
19 Section 7–304.1
20 Annotated Code of Maryland
21 (2008 Replacement Volume and 2009 Supplement)

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

24 **Article – Public Utility Companies**

25 7–301.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (a) A person may not furnish or put in use for revenue billing purposes a gas
2 meter or electric meter unless the Commission has authorized the meter's use.

3 (b) (1) Each gas company and electric company shall maintain suitable
4 equipment, approved by the Commission, for testing the accuracy of a gas meter or
5 electric meter furnished by the company for use by its customers.

6 (2) The gas company or electric company shall test a customer's meter
7 with the equipment in accordance with § 7-302 of this subtitle.

8 (3) A small rural electric cooperative described in § 7-502(a) of this
9 title may satisfy this section by demonstrating that the electric meters which it
10 furnishes to customers comply with the standards of the utility regulatory body of the
11 state in which the cooperative has its principal place of business.

12 (c) (1) This subsection applies to:

13 (i) a new residential multiple occupancy building;

14 (ii) a new shopping center; or

15 (iii) a new housing unit that is constructed, managed, operated,
16 developed, or subsidized by a local housing authority established under Division II of
17 the Housing and Community Development Article.

18 (2) The service restrictions imposed under this subsection do not apply
19 to central hot water.

20 (3) **[The] EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN § 7-304.1 OF THIS SUBTITLE,**
21 **THE** Commission may not authorize a gas company or electric company to service an
22 occupancy unit or shopping center unit subject to this subsection unless the building
23 or shopping center has individual metered service or submetering as provided under §
24 7-303 or § 7-304 of this subtitle for each individually leased or owned occupancy unit
25 or shopping center unit.

26 (4) In accordance with its regulations, the Commission may authorize
27 a gas company or electric company to provide service for central heating or cooling
28 systems, or a combination of those systems, to an occupancy unit or shopping center
29 unit subject to this subsection if the Commission is satisfied that the service will result
30 in a substantial net saving of energy over the energy saving that would result from
31 individual metering or submetering as provided under § 7-303 or § 7-304 of this
32 subtitle.

33 (d) The owner, operator, or manager of a residential multiple occupancy
34 building or shopping center subject to this section may not impose a utility cost on an
35 occupancy unit or shopping center unit, except for charges that:

1 (1) the Commission authorizes the gas company or electric company to
2 impose; and

3 (2) the gas company or electric company actually imposes on the
4 owner, operator, or manager.

5 **7-304.1.**

6 (A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE
7 MEANINGS INDICATED.

8 (2) "MASTER METER" MEANS A METER USED TO MEASURE, FOR
9 BILLING PURPOSES, THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF ELECTRICITY OR NATURAL GAS
10 USED IN A BUILDING, INCLUDING THE COMBINED USE FROM ALL INDIVIDUALLY
11 LEASED OR OWNED UNITS AND ALL COMMON AREAS.

12 (3) "SHOPPING CENTER" HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 7-303
13 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

14 (B) THE COMMISSION MAY AUTHORIZE THE USE OF A MASTER METER
15 IN A RESIDENTIAL MULTIPLE OCCUPANCY BUILDING OR SHOPPING CENTER
16 WITHOUT REQUIRING INDIVIDUAL METERING OR SUBMETERING AS PROVIDED
17 UNDER § 7-303 OR § 7-304 OF THIS SUBTITLE IF:

18 (1) THE UTILITY BILL FOR EACH INDIVIDUALLY LEASED OR
19 OWNED OCCUPANCY UNIT OR SHOPPING CENTER UNIT IS INCLUDED IN THE
20 RENT FOR THAT UNIT; AND

21 (2) THE COMMISSION IS SATISFIED THAT THE USE OF THE
22 MASTER METER WILL RESULT IN A NET SAVINGS OF ENERGY OVER THE ENERGY
23 SAVINGS THAT WOULD RESULT FROM INDIVIDUAL METERING OR SUBMETERING.

24 (C) IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 7-301 OF THIS SUBTITLE, AN ELECTRIC
25 COMPANY OR A GAS COMPANY MAY INSPECT AND TEST A MASTER METER
26 AUTHORIZED FOR USE BY THE COMMISSION UNDER THIS SECTION.

27 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
28 October 1, 2010.