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To: The Honorable Delores G. Kelley
Chair, Finance Committee

From: Karen S. Straughn
Consumer Protection Division

Re: Senate Bill 603 – Public Service Commission – Electricity and Gas Suppliers – Training
and Educational Program (SUPPORT)

The Consumer Protection Division of the Office of the Attorney General submits the following written testimony in support of Senate Bill 603 submitted by Senator Brian J. Feldman. This bill requires the Public Service Commission to develop a training and educational program for third-party suppliers of electricity and gas, which includes sales, consumer protection and other matters that the Commission deems appropriate.

The Consumer Protection Division regularly receives complaints about unscrupulous practices in the sale of third-party gas and electric supply contracts. Although primarily regulated by the Public Service Commission, third-party gas and electricity suppliers are subject to certain consumer protection statutes in addition to the Consumer Protection Act, including the Door-to-Door Sales Act and the Telephone Solicitation Act. Since the majority of sales obtained by a third-party supplier involve the application of one or the other of these statutes, it is critical that third-party suppliers know and understand their requirements. By training and educating third-party suppliers, not only do suppliers have enhanced knowledge which will ensure the accuracy of their sales process, but consumers are better protected as well. This office is willing to work with the Public Service Commission on these programs to ensure that third-party suppliers are provided with the necessary education.

For these reasons, we ask that the Finance Committee return a favorable report on this bill.

cc: The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
Members, Finance Committee

