

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2021 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 949
Finance

(Senator Hershey)

Public Utilities – Bills for Electricity Service – Meter Reading

This bill requires the Public Service Commission (PSC), by regulation or order, to require that a customer's bill for electricity service include the customer's exact meter readings for the close of the last billing cycle and the close of the current billing cycle. This generally codifies existing practice under PSC regulations for most electric companies.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: PSC can handle the bill's requirements with existing budgeted resources. The bill does not otherwise materially affect State finances or operations.

Local Effect: The bill does not materially affect local government finances or operations.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: PSC must, by regulation or order, require that customers' bills for electricity service indicate charges for (1) distribution and transmission; (2) transition charge or credit; (3) universal service program charges; (4) customer charges; (5) taxes; and (6) other charges identified by PSC. PSC [regulations](#) require various specified information to be included on customer bill forms, including:

- the readings of all meters used for billing purposes at the end of the period for which the bill is rendered;
- the meter reading date;

- the number and kind of units metered;
- the total due, including any prior unpaid amount but excluding the current late payment charge;
- information concerning the customer's electricity usage during the same billing period in the prior year; and
- any conversions from meter reading units to billing units, or any calculations to determine billing units from recording or other devices, and any other factors used in determining the bill.

PSC may, for good cause, grant a waiver or exemption from bill requirements specified in regulation. An electric company must file an application with PSC which sets forth the facts and reasons for the waiver or exemption.

State Fiscal Effect: PSC advises that, in practice, most Maryland electric companies provide both the beginning and ending meter reading on customer bills. However, Potomac Electric Power Company ("Pepco") and Delmarva Power and Light Company received bill requirement waivers from PSC in 2013, which can no longer apply to specific meter reading information under the bill. Still, since PSC is already administering and enforcing customer billing regulations more generally, PSC can handle the bill's requirements with existing budgeted resources.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Designated Cross File: None.

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

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