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BILL NO.: **House Bill 295**
Electricity – Explanation of Bill Charges

COMMITTEE: **Economic Matters**

HEARING DATE: **February 4, 2016**

SPONSORS: **Delegate Krimm**

POSITION: **Informational**

House Bill 295 requires an electric company to include an explanation of each charge that is listed on its customer bill. The explanation must disclose whether the charge is a uniform charge, a charge based on customer class, a charge based on usage, a one-time assessment, or another type of charge, fee, or assessment and include a description of how the charge is calculated, how the charge is authorized, and the purpose of the charge.

While this bill applies only to electric companies, it should be noted that no regulated public service company may charge any new rate or include a charge on a customer's bill unless that rate or charge is approved by the Public Service Commission (PSC). Rates and charges are described in each of the public service company's tariffs. Electric company tariffs are available online through the Public Service Commission website <http://www.psc.state.md.us/electricity/electric-utility-tariffs/> and through the individual companies' websites.

Current regulations govern the specific information that must be included on customer bills and the PSC may by order direct that additional information be included on customer bills as necessary. Space considerations often limit how much detailed information can be provided to customers directly on the bills themselves. However, companies could provide the explanations sought by HB 295 through bill inserts included with paper bills and through a link to the explanation on their websites for customers who have opted out of receiving paper bills.

Potomac Edison (PE) provides an explanation of its bill format and an online tutorial through

https://www.firstenergycorp.com/customer_choice/maryland/understanding_your_bill/potomac_edison_bill_format.html. Baltimore Gas and Electric Company (BGE) provide an explanation

of the various items on its bill at:

<https://www.bge.com/myaccount/billsrates/Pages/Understanding-My-Bill.aspx>. Likewise, both

Delmarva Power (DPL) and the Potomac Electric Power Company (PEPCO) have online

mechanisms to explain bills although theirs do not appear to be as interactive as PE's and BGE's.