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### **PEOPLE'S COUNSEL ANNOUNCES HER RETIREMENT**

Paula Carmody has announced her intention to retire from her position as People's Counsel for the State of Maryland, effective January 1, 2021. Ms. Carmody was appointed to the position in January 2007 by former Attorney General Douglas Gansler, and has continued to represent the interests of residential utility customers under Attorney General Brian Frosh. Ms. Carmody issued the following statement:

*"It has been both an honor and a pleasure to serve Maryland households these past fourteen years as People's Counsel. The Office of People's Counsel (OPC) is a small but mighty independent State agency tasked with the responsibility of representing the interests of Maryland households who rely on essential utility services to light, heat and cool their homes, and provide power for their home appliances and telephone service. We also have worked together with our sister agencies in other states to advocate for consumer-friendly telecommunications policies.*

*These services always are important to Marylanders but are ever more critical during the current State of Emergency and the COVID-19 pandemic. At the end of the day, customers want and need energy, water and telecommunications services that are reliable, safe and (relatively) affordable. Many Marylanders have a strong interest in policies promoting renewable energy and the availability of distributed energy resources while achieving those core goals. While I have been People's Counsel, our agency has been a strong advocate – at the Public Service Commission, the legislature, and federal agencies – for policies and decisions that protect residential consumers, deliver safe and reliable services, and enable consumers to access and use other technologies and services that can benefit them.*

*With a small staff, OPC has been recognized for its vigorous representation of residential consumer interests in many types of cases: rate increase requests, complex utility mergers, transmission line construction, reliability of gas and electric distribution systems, and retail supplier activities. Our presentation of issues in the first ever smart meter litigation in the country has served as a national model for assessing the costs and benefits of smart meter installation. The agency has been a critical stakeholder in the development and implementation of energy efficiency programs (EmPOWER), community solar and other pilot programs established by law. OPC also is a well-recognized consumer advocate in federal matters involving wholesale energy markets and interstate transmission and distribution issues. In fact, to enhance consumer voices at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and PJM, OPC was a co-founder and now an integral part of Consumer Advocates of PJM States, Inc. (CAPS), a non-profit organization funded through PJM tariffs.*

*I am particularly proud of the actions we have taken to assist and protect seniors and vulnerable and limited income customers, including co-founding a voluntary partnership called the Critical Medical Needs Program, which now is a legislative program within the state's Office of Home Energy Programs. During 2020, in response to the pandemic, OPC has been a leader in providing utility information and resources to customers and our agency network and advocating for policies to protect distressed households from service terminations.*

*I am grateful to my excellent team of attorneys and support staff, past and present, for all of the collaborative work we have done over the past fourteen years. Without a doubt, they are the reason OPC has been able to accomplish so much on behalf of the residential customers whom we have the privilege to serve.”*

David Springe, Executive Director of NASUCA, made the following statement:

*“We want to offer our sincerest congratulations to Paula on her retirement. Maryland's utility consumers are fortunate to have benefitted from Paula's leadership and advocacy. And what many in Maryland may not realize is that Paula is a nationally recognized expert on utility advocacy and a sought after voice for utility consumers, having service in leadership and as President of the National Association of State Consumer Advocates (NASUCA). She has had a remarkable career and we wish her only the best in her future.”*

Ms. Carmody has been the People's Counsel since January 2007. She also was an Assistant People's Counsel and an Assistant Attorney General in the Consumer Protection Division of the Office of Attorney General prior to her appointment. She began her public service career as an attorney with Maryland Legal Aid and the managing attorney for the UAW-GM Legal Services Plan. Ms. Carmody served on the Executive Committee for the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates (NASUCA) for several years, with a 2-year stint as President. She also had the honor of appointment by former Secretary Moniz to the U.S. Department of Energy's Electricity Advisory Committee, under the Obama Administration. She has been recognized

nationally as a consumer advocate, and a speaker on energy and regulatory issues affecting consumers. Ms. Carmody graduated with a Juris Doctorate degree from Antioch School of Law, Washington, D.C. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

*The Maryland Office of the People's Counsel is an independent state agency which represents residential consumers of regulated utility services including electric, gas, telecommunications, and water services, before the Maryland Public Service Commission, other state and federal agencies and the Courts.*

xxxx End of OPC Press Release xxxx