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BILL NO.: Senate Bill 595
Residential Electricity and Gas Supply Billing
Information – Reports

COMMITTEE: Finance

HEARING DATE: February 23, 2021

SPONSOR: Senator Washington

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Office of People’s Counsel (OPC) supports Senate Bill 595. The bill requires gas and electric utilities and suppliers to report data and the Public Service Commission (PSC) to publish reports on the relative costs of electricity supply options. This information will be beneficial to customers considering their supply options.

Senate Bill 595 requires electric and gas utilities, as well as energy suppliers that bill residential customers, to submit monthly reports to the PSC using information in their billing systems. The initial report must contain information for the previous 12 months. The reported information is only required for residential customer data and will include aggregated information regarding customers receiving energy assistance. The reports must be made available to OPC and the Office of Home Energy (OHEP) programs. OHEP must use the reports to analyze information related to low-income customers receiving OHEP energy assistance.

The reports required under SB 595 will benefit consumers and promote the PSC’s oversight of the retail electricity market. The bill includes an annual reporting requirement for the PSC to report to the General Assembly and a requirement for the PSC to publish on its website the information on supply options that is reported to the PSC under the bill. These annual reports will provide information for consumers on their supply options.

OPC understands that amendments from the bill sponsor will require the PSC's report to compare products that are similar or identify material differences between products. These amendments will enhance the value of the information that the bill makes available to customers; the amendment benefits both customers and retail suppliers that want to compete on the merits of their offerings.

Recommendation: The Office of People's Counsel respectfully requests a FAVORABLE REPORT on Senate Bill 595.