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**For Immediate Release**

## **Maryland PSC Launches Compliance and Enforcement Unit**

(BALTIMORE, MD-February 11, 2020) – In an effort to strengthen protections for energy consumers, the Maryland Public Service Commission has established a Compliance and Enforcement Unit within its Consumer Affairs Division (CAD). The new unit will be dedicated to more proactive oversight of utilities and third-party energy suppliers to ensure compliance with the Commission’s regulations. Among its enforcement responsibilities, the unit will identify and track violation patterns, monitor supplier marketing practices in the field, conduct on-the-spot investigations and compliance audits, and provide retail supplier training. The unit will also work to support customer education regarding utility and energy supplier practices and other issues involving billing, service quality, fees, and contract terms.

Last year CAD investigated nearly 2,700 complaints against electric, gas, telecommunications and water utilities and energy suppliers. Among the goals of the new unit is the faster resolution of complaints filed by utility customers.

“The Commission takes its oversight of utilities and retail suppliers very seriously,” said Commission Chairman Jason M. Stanek. “We have made it a priority to ensure that customer rights are protected and that utility companies and suppliers are in full compliance with the Commission’s regulations and Maryland law.”

In recent months, the Commission has increased its enforcement and oversight of retail energy suppliers, including taking action against a natural gas supplier (SmartOne Energy) for enrolling customers without their consent—a practice known as ‘slamming.’ The Commission revoked SmartOne’s license to do business in Maryland and levied a record \$561,000 civil penalty. Four other complaint proceedings involving energy suppliers are currently in litigation before the Commission’s Public Utility Law Judge Division.

In addition, the Commission has begun posting energy supplier complaint data on its [website](#). During the next few weeks, the Commission also plans to launch a new, improved website for customers to shop for electricity supply that meets their needs.

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**About the Public Service Commission:**

*The Maryland Public Service Commission regulates electric and gas utilities, telephone companies (land lines), certain water and sewer companies, passenger motor vehicle carriers for hire (sedans, limousines, buses, Uber, Lyft), taxicab companies (in Baltimore City and County, Charles County, Cumberland and Hagerstown) and bay pilot rates.*

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