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**For Immediate Release**

## **Maryland PSC Prohibits SunSea Energy from Enrolling New Customers**

*Company ordered to refund customers enrolled by phone*

(BALTIMORE, MD-October 8, 2020) – The Maryland Public Service Commission has taken action against a retail energy supplier, SunSea Energy, LLC, for enrolling customers without a signed contract and other violations of Maryland law and the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR). In a ruling following an evidentiary hearing yesterday, the Commission prohibited SunSea Energy from marketing and soliciting new customers and also ordered the company to provide refunds to all of its customers who were solicited by telephone.

This matter stemmed from a filing in June 2020 by the Maryland Office of People's Counsel alleging that SunSea Energy engaged in unfair and deceptive marketing practices. SunSea Energy, which has principal offices in New Jersey, has been licensed to supply electricity in Maryland since January of 2019, and licensed to supply natural gas in Maryland since April of 2019. According to the company, it currently has nearly 2,300 customers in Maryland.

The Commission found that SunSea Energy violated specific provisions of Maryland law and COMAR by enrolling nearly 1,000 customers over the phone but did not provide those customers with a written contract or have the customers sign a contract prior to enrollment, failed to provide an accurate contract summary to those customers, and engaged in deceptive solicitations. At the Commission's October 7, 2020 evidentiary hearing, SunSea Energy admitted to committing many of these alleged violations of Maryland law (including the Maryland Telephone Solicitations Act) and Commission regulations.

In addition to the moratorium, the Commission also directed that all of SunSea Energy's existing customers who were solicited by telephone must be returned to default service with their respective electric or gas utility within 10 days of the ruling, and be notified in writing of the Commission's findings, including the customer's right to a refund of the difference between SunSea Energy's supply charge and the utility's default supply price. The Commission will give consideration to any potential civil monetary penalty after the refund process has begun.

SunSea Energy operates in four other jurisdictions, including New York, New Jersey, Washington, D.C. and Ohio.

Maryland utility customers have the option of buying their energy commodity from companies other than their local utility (e.g., BGE, Pepco, Washington Gas, etc.). While the Commission does not regulate the prices competitive suppliers charge, it does license them and oversees their behavior in the energy marketplace to ensure compliance with the Commission's regulations and consumer protections.

The Commission this year launched two shopping websites for customers seeking energy suppliers. Both sites allow customers to review offers and important educational information, including customer rights and protections at: [www.MdElectricChoice.com](http://www.MdElectricChoice.com) or [www.MDGasChoice.com](http://www.MDGasChoice.com).

Customers with complaints about retail energy suppliers are encouraged to contact the Commission's Consumer Affairs Division at (410) 767-8028. Complaints can also be filed on the Commission's web site, <https://www.psc.state.md.us/online-complaints/> The Commission also posts on its website those suppliers with 3 or more complaints in a month -- that information is available at: <https://www.psc.state.md.us/retail-energy-supplier-complaint-reports/>

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**About the Public Service Commission:**

*The Maryland Public Service Commission regulates electric and gas utilities and suppliers, 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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