

ORDER NO. 88342

IN THE MATTER OF THE ELECTRIC
UNIVERSAL SERVICE PROGRAM.

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BEFORE THE
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF MARYLAND

CASE NO. 8903

Issued: August 15, 2017

To: All Parties of Record and Interested Persons

On June 9, 2017, the Maryland Department of Human Resources Family Investment Administration Office of Home Energy Programs (“OHEP”) submitted to the Public Service Commission of Maryland (“Commission”) OHEP’s Proposed Operations Plan for Fiscal Year (“FY”) 2018 (“Proposed Plan”) for the Electric Universal Service Program (“EUSP”). Written comments were filed by the Commission’s Technical Staff (“Staff”), the Maryland Office of People’s Counsel (“OPC”), the Potomac Electric Power Company and Delmarva Power & Light Company (PHI Companies), the Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative, Inc. (SMECO), and the Baltimore Gas and Electric Company (“BGE”). On August 10, 2017, after the submission of written comments, a public hearing was held on this matter (“Hearing”).

OHEP’s Proposed Plan describes the available funds for support of EUSP. The aggregate total of funding for EUSP in FY 2018, according to OHEP, is the amount of \$74,000,000: \$37,000,000 from EUSP Ratepayer Funds (“Ratepayer Fund”) and \$37,000,000 from the Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund (“MSEIF”). It

appears from the Proposed Plan that OHEP proposes to allocate the Ratepayer Fund as follows: the amount of \$4,440,000 to administration; \$200,000 to outreach; \$1,440,063 for OHEP's EUSP Data System; and the remaining amount to bill payment assistance.

The Commission's statutory oversight and authority extends to the approval of the proposed allocation of the bill assistance and arrearage components of the EUSP. See § 7-512.1 of the Public Utilities Article, *Annotated Code of Maryland*. Accordingly, the Commission takes action only on the allocation of the Ratepayer Fund.

After hearing from OHEP, OPC, BGE, PHI Companies, and Staff of the Commission, the Commission approved the allocation for the Ratepayer Fund for FY 2018 as follows:

- \$4,440,000 to Administration
- \$200,000 to Outreach
- \$1,440,063 to EUSP Data System
- \$30,919,937 to Bill Payment Assistance (OHEP is directed to use all monies allocated for bill payment assistance consistent with past Commission Orders).
- \$0.00 to Arrearage Retirement

In addition, the Commission encourages OHEP to investigate with stakeholders whether budget billing is an effective requirement that should be continued for EUSP recipients. The Commission requests OHEP to report back to the Commission on its findings and any recommendation in its 2017 annual report filed with the Commission.

IT IS, THEREFORE, this 15th day of August, in the year Two Thousand and Seventeen, by the Public Service Commission of Maryland,

ORDERED: (1) That OHEP's Proposed Operations Plan for FY 2018 is accepted and the allocations for the Ratepayer Fund, as identified by the Commission in this Order, are hereby approved.

By Direction of the Commission,

/s/ David J. Collins

David J. Collins
Executive Secretary