STATE OF MARYLAND

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## PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

IN	THE	MATTER	OF	THE	ADV	ISABILITY	OF
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BEFORE THE
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF MARYLAND

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PC 47

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**Issue Date: January 6, 2017** 

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC CONFERENCE AND OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT

## **To:** All Interested Persons

The Public Service Commission of Maryland ("Commission") hereby initiates Public Conference 47 ("PC 47") to complete its study of the advisability of establishing an opt-in electric affordability program for residential and small business customers. The purpose of convening PC 47 is to receive comments on the report of its consultant, Gabel Associates, Inc. ("Gabel"), as well as make the comments publicly available in the same location as Gabel's report and the Commission's final report, which is due on January 31, 2017.

During the 2016 Session of the Maryland General Assembly, House Bill 927 and Senate Bill 1075 were introduced as identical, cross-filed measures. The bill would have required the Commission to study and make recommendations about the advisability of establishing an opt-in electric affordability program among retail electric companies for residential and small business customers in the service territories of Potomac Electric Power Company, Allegheny Power

(Potomac Edison), Baltimore Gas and Electric Company, or Delmarva Power & Light Company

that would be based on (1) the offer of multiple-year contracts for electricity at a fixed price per

kilowatt-hour; (2) value-added products and services to help customers manage overall energy

costs; and (3) other potential customer benefits. The Commission would have also been required

to study and make recommendations on the advisability of allowing electric cooperatives to

participate in the program, as well as on the manner in which the program, if advisable, should

be conducted. Specifically, the Commission was to consider provisions relating to low-income

customers to be assisted by such a program; the duration of customer contracts under the

program; procedures governing wholesale electricity procurement for the program; the minimum

qualifications of licensed electricity suppliers and associated providers of value-added products

and services that would be eligible to participate in the program; and procedures and principles

of cost recovery for the implementation of the program.

Although the HB 927/SB 1075 were not enacted, in a letter dated May 4, 2016, the

Chairman of the House Economic Matters Committee asked the Commission to conduct the

study, and report back to the relevant subject matter committees, House Economic Matters and

Senate Finance. The Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee later also conveyed support for

conducting the study.

The Commission agreed to provide findings and recommendations pertaining to the

matters requested in a Report to be filed by January 31, 2017. To assist with this endeavor, the

Commission engaged independent consultant Gabel to conduct a study regarding these matters

on behalf of the Commission. Gabel submitted a Report of its evaluation on January 5, 2017 that

is available electronically in the PC 47 docket on the Commission's web site. The Commission

invites all interested parties to file written comments regarding the Gabel Report on or before

January 20, 2017.

An original and seventeen (17) copies, and an electronic copy, of all filings, identified as

PC 47, shall be filed with the Commission no later than January 20, 2017 and addressed to David

J. Collins, Executive Secretary, Maryland Public Service Commission, William Donald Schaefer

Tower, 6 St. Paul Street, 16th Floor, Baltimore, Maryland 21202. Five of the copies shall be

three-hole punched. The interested parties are encouraged to use the Commission's "e-file"

system that is available on the Commission's website, www.psc.state.md.us.

By Direction of the Commission,

/s/ David J. Collins

David J. Collins

**Executive Secretary**