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For Immediate Release

PSC Convenes Annual Supplier Diversity Hearing

Nearly \$700 million Spent with Diverse Suppliers

(BALTIMORE, MD-June 13, 2017) – The Maryland Public Service Commission today held its annual hearing for utility companies to report on their contracts with diverse suppliers. The proceeding reviewed the 2016 diverse supplier procurements—close to \$700 million--of participating companies, which include electricity and gas, transportation and telecommunications. The utility companies reported spending \$3.22 billion on all goods and services in 2016. The 22% total diverse spend ratio—a key metric of the program--represented a more than 25% increase over the previous year, and was the highest recorded diverse spend since 2009.

The proceeding was an opportunity for **Chairman Kevin Hughes, Commissioner Anthony O'Donnell, Commissioner Michael Richard**, utilities and advocates to pay tribute to **Commissioner Harold Williams**, in recognition of his long-standing leadership and advocacy of diverse participation in utility contracting. Commissioner Williams, who has served on the Commission since 2002, reaches the end of his current term on June 30 of this year. **Special Secretary Jimmy Rhee**, of the Governor's Office of Minority Affairs, joined **Baltimore City Mayor Catherine Pugh** in presenting special citations to Commissioner Williams as a trailblazer in this arena. Commissioner Williams commended the utilities for their progress in reaching or striving for diverse spend goals but noted that "there is still a lot to do and I hope you will continue to work towards this effort and not sit on your laurels."

The Commission's Public Conference 16 on Supplier Diversity (PC 16) is aimed at providing women-, minority- and service-disabled veteran-owned businesses, as well as nonprofit organizations, greater opportunities to participate in and compete for contracts and subcontracts with public utilities. Nineteen companies signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Commission (one company has since withdrawn from the program), committing to a goal of awarding 25 percent of their total spend to diverse suppliers.

Of the 15 companies which filed reports, four of them met or exceeded that goal in 2016:

- Washington Gas Light (29.13% -- \$156.7 million total diverse spend)
- Association of Maryland Pilots (26.5% -- \$286,000 total diverse spend)
- Baltimore Gas & Electric Company (26.29% -- \$235.2 million total diverse spend)

- Potomac Edison (26.06% -- \$12.5 million total diverse spend)

Signatories of the Supplier Diversity MOU include:

1. Association of Maryland Pilots
2. AT&T Corporation
3. Baltimore Gas and Electric Company
4. CenturyLink
5. Chesapeake Utilities Corporation – Maryland Division
6. Choptank Electric Cooperative, Inc.
7. Columbia Gas of Maryland
8. Comcast Phone of Northern Maryland, Inc. and Comcast Business Communications, LLC
9. Delmarva Power and Light Company
10. Easton Utilities
11. Pivotal Utility Holdings, Inc. d/b/a Elkton Gas
12. First Transit BWI Airport
13. Potomac Edison Company
14. Potomac Electric Power Company
15. Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative, Inc.
16. Veolia
17. Verizon Maryland, Inc.
18. Washington Gas Light Company
19. XO Communications (has now withdrawn from the program)

The Commission's Technical Staff noted that in Order No. 88192 on May 11, 2017, the Commission approved the offshore wind energy project applications of U.S. Wind, Inc. and Skipjack Offshore Energy, LLC. Conditions to the approvals require the applicants to develop, in consultation with the Governor's Office of Minority Affairs and the Office of the Attorney General, a plan for setting reasonable and appropriate goals for MBE participation in each phase of the project with reports to be filed with the Commission.

More information on PC 16 and supplier diversity is available on the Commission's website, www.psc.state.md.us, under the [Supplier Diversity link](#) on the homepage.

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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, Cumberland and Hagerstown) and bay pilot rates.

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Photos courtesy Maryland Public Service Commission



L-R: Chairman Kevin Hughes, Commissioner Harold Williams, Commission Michael Richard



L-R: Commissioner Anthony O'Donnell, Secretary Jimmy Rhee (GOMA), Chairman Kevin Hughes, Mayor Catherine Pugh, Commissioner Harold Williams, Commissioner Michael Richard



Utilities and advocates attend the 2017 Maryland Public Service Commission Supplier Diversity Hearing.

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