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For Immediate Release

Maryland PSC Launches New Electric Choice Shopping Website

(BALTIMORE, MD-March 9, 2020) – In an effort to help residential consumers make more informed choices when shopping for an electricity supplier, the Maryland Public Service Commission has unveiled a new website with enhanced functionality and features. MDElectricChoice.com is the PSC's stand-alone site where consumers can shop for and sort offers to supply their home energy needs – whether they are seeking renewable energy products, lowest price per kilowatt-hour, no monthly or early termination fees, etc.

“The new site features an attractive, user-friendly design and layout making it easy for energy shoppers to navigate and find products that are most beneficial to them,” said Jason M. Stanek, Commission Chairman. “In addition to the shop-and-compare features, the website also contains a great deal of educational information to help answer questions consumers may have.”

Maryland utility customers have the option of buying their energy commodity from companies other than their local utility (e.g., BGE, Pepco, Delmarva, 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.

After clicking the 'Shop Now' button, a customer looking for an energy supplier will first select their electric utility (BGE, Choptank, Delmarva, Pepco, Potomac Edison or SMECO), then enter their monthly electricity usage, which can be found on their utility bill. If usage is unknown, the system will default to an estimate of 700 kWh per month and display a list of offers starting with the lowest price per kWh. The customer will also see an estimate of their monthly costs for the energy supply (this would include any monthly fees charged by the supplier).

Results can also be filtered to include only renewable energy products, those with no monthly or cancellation fees, or in alphabetical order by supplier name. Energy suppliers will include a link to their own websites in the offer, provide information on any incentives or promotions (such as gift cards, airlines miles, bill credits, etc.) and may also provide a link directly to the offer so customers can easily sign up or seek more information.

The new website also provides information on customers' rights, details on understanding utility bills, frequently asked questions, a list of all licensed suppliers including their PSC-issued license numbers, contact information for suppliers and utilities, links to the PSC's online complaint portal, a link to share the site with family and friends, and more. A companion site for natural gas shoppers will be launched in the next few months.

The new website is one of several recent initiatives the Commission has taken to strengthen protections for energy consumers, including:

- Establishing a Compliance and Enforcement Unit within its Consumer Affairs Division (CAD), to provide more proactive oversight of utilities and third-party energy suppliers to ensure compliance with the Commission's regulations;
- Posting complaint statistics involving retail energy suppliers online, and,
- 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.

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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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