



## **Retail Energy Supply Association**

### **RESA MEMBERS TESTIFY IN SUPPORT OF LEGISLATIVE BILLS THAT FOSTER COMPETITION AND OPPOSE THOSE THAT COULD LIMIT CONSUMER CHOICE**

Annapolis, MD (February 19, 2008) -- The Retail Energy Supply Association (RESA) today submitted letters of support for House Bill 1165 and Senate Bill 329, as RESA believes the utility referral program proposed in these bills will help remove some of the barriers to entry for competitive suppliers to the residential and small commercial customer market and better enable suppliers to offer competitive options to all Maryland customers. RESA also submitted a letter in opposition to Senate Bill 278, as RESA believes this bill flies in the face of all of the energy efficiency and conservation goals of Governor O'Malley and will prohibit competitive market alternatives to utility-built, ratepayer backed generation plants and deny customers the possibility to seek less costly and more efficient sources of electricity.

"One of the most important benefits of competitive markets is that **competitive markets shift risk away from customers** and toward the shareholders of competitive companies," said Leah Gibbons, RESA's Maryland Chair, in their letter of opposition to SB 278. "Over the last thirty years, consumers have paid hundreds of billions of dollars for regulated utility mistakes, and continue to do so. RESA strongly believes that requiring Maryland's utilities to construct any new generation to meet all of Maryland's electricity demand needs as described in Senate Bill 278 is a profound mistake, one that would be exorbitantly costly to Maryland's customers. Returning to utility owned generation will mean higher prices for consumers and the end of competitive choices for all customers. For these reasons, RESA opposes SB 278 and urges the committee to give Senate Bill 278 an unfavorable report."

In support of HB 1165 and SB 329 Gibbons wrote, "Maryland's commercial and industrial customers, including the State of Maryland, several county governments, numerous school districts, and the city of Baltimore are all exercising their right to shop for electricity from competitive retail suppliers. "As is evidenced by the data posted on the Maryland Public Service Commission's website 94% of Maryland's large commercial and industrial customers, 66% of the medium sized commercial and industrial customers, and 31% of the small commercial customers are shopping for electricity and demanding competitive pricing and terms, as well as energy efficiency and demand response products from the competitive market. RESA is confident that the state's smaller customers will also benefit from the power of choice and supports programs that are aimed at bringing the power of choice to Maryland customer."

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#### **About RESA**

RESA is comprised of 12 member companies who are actively involved in supplying competitive electricity and natural gas products to customers across the country, including

residential, commercial and industrial customers in Maryland. RESA member companies include Commerce Energy, Consolidated Edison Solutions, Inc., Direct Energy Services, LLC, GEXA Energy, Hess Corporation, Integrys Energy Services, Inc., Liberty Power, Reliant Energy Retail Services, LLC, Sempra Energy Solutions, Strategic Energy, LLC, SUEZ Energy Resources, N.A., Inc., and U.S. Energy Savings Corporation.