COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

INQUIRY BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES ON ITS OWN MOTION INTO THE DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF TIME-VARYING RATES	:	D.P.U. 26-62

RETAIL ENERGY SUPPLY ASSOCIATION'S SUPPLEMENTAL COMMENTS

The Retail Energy Supply Association ("RESA")[1] hereby files comments in response to the Hearing Officer's October 6, 2026 Memorandum[2] in the above-captioned proceeding.

BACKGROUND

On April 2, 2026, the Department of Energy Resources ("DOER") filed a petition recommending that the Department of Public Utilities ("Department") open an investigation regarding the implementation, design, customer experience, and integration of time-varying rates ("TVRs").[3] On June 30, 2026, the Department opened this proceeding to investigate TVR rate design, customer protections, and the electric distribution companies' ("EDCs") TVR implementation and marketing, education, and outreach plans.[4]

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[1] The comments expressed in this filing represent the position of the Retail Energy Supply Association (RESA) as an organization but may not represent the views of any particular member of the Association. Founded in 1990, RESA is a broad and diverse group of retail energy suppliers dedicated to promoting efficient, sustainable and customer-oriented competitive retail energy markets. RESA members operate throughout the United States delivering value-added electricity and natural gas service at retail to residential, commercial and industrial energy customers. More information on RESA can be found at www.resausa.org.

[2] Memorandum re October Technical Conference Agenda (Oct. 6, 2026) ("Memorandum").

[3] Vote and Order Opening Inquiry (Jun. 30, 2026) ("Vote & Order"), at 2.

[4] *Id.* at 1-2.

To facilitate those efforts, the Department offered an opportunity for interested stakeholders to submit comments.[5] On August 31, 2026, RESA submitted comments in response to the Notice.[6] Subsequently, the Hearing Officer issued the Memorandum outlining the agenda for the October 21 and 22, 2026 technical conference, requiring the DOER and EDCs to give presentations regarding various topics, and offering an opportunity for stakeholders to submit comments regarding matters within the scope of the agenda.[7] RESA hereby submits comments in response to the Memorandum.

COMMENTS

When it passed the Electric Restructuring Act, the Massachusetts legislature found, among other things, that "the introduction of competition in the electric generation market will encourage innovation, efficiency, and improved service . . . ."[8] The General Court also declared that competitive electric markets "should open markets for new and improved technologies" and "provide electricity buyers and sellers with appropriate price signals."[9] Appropriately designed and implemented TVRs can help customers manage their electricity costs by responding to price signals and receiving appropriate credit for actions taken to reduce or avoid consumption in response to those signals.[10] Moreover,

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[5] Vote & Order, at 13-14; *see also* Notice of Inquiry and Request for Comments (Jul. 21, 2026) ("Notice"), at 1-2 (inviting comments on topics identified in Vote & Order).

[6] Retail Energy Supply Association's Comments (Aug. 31, 2026).

[7] Memorandum, § IV.

[8] Acts of 1997 Chapter 164, § 1(f).

[9] *Id.* at § 1(g).

[10] *Accord* Vote & Order, at 3-4 (determining that "implementing TVR is critical to achieving the grid modernization objectives, noting TVR's potential to: (1) allow customers, assisted by new technologies (e.g., advanced meters, in-home displays, programmable thermostats, load control devices), to respond to the varying costs of electricity; (2) enable individual customers to save money by changing when they use electricity, based on price signals that reflect costs; (3) benefit all customers by reducing peak energy and capacity market costs; (4) increase system efficiencies and support the distribution system by reducing peak demand; and (5) provide appropriate incentives for consumers to install distributed resources such as solar photovoltaic generation, electricity storage, electric vehicles, and targeted energy efficiency and demand response") (citation omitted).

TVRs will provide substantial benefits not only to the customers adopting those solutions, but to all customers and to the transmission and distribution systems by reducing costs and increasing reliability.[11] Thus, RESA urges the Department to implement TVRs as expeditiously as possible so that customers can benefit from the innovative product offerings envisioned by the Restructuring Act and realize the full value of the "significant investments" made by ratepayers that have laid "the foundation for implementing TVR."[12] In particular, customers who choose TVR products from the competitive supply market should have access to EDC consolidated billing for those products at the same time that Basic Service TVRs are implemented without having to give up the convenience of a single bill.

During the technical conference presentations, the DOER and Fitchburg Gas and Electric Light Company d/b/a Unitil ("Unitil") suggested that the Department implement TVR in phases.[13] Both also indicated that, under a phased approach, the capability of competitive suppliers to bill TVR products using EDC consolidated billing would be implemented last.[14] Yet, as DOER itself recognized, most Massachusetts customers are currently receiving supply from the competitive market.[15]

Indeed, as of June 30, 2026, more than 75% of residential customers and 80% of small commercial and industrial customers received generation supply from the

[11] Vote & Order, at 3-4.

[12] *Cf. id.* at 4 ("Subsequently, the EDCs, with the Department's oversight and direction—and thanks to significant investments from ratepayers— have made substantial progress to lay the foundation for implementing TVR.").

[13] DOER Time-of-Use Rate Proposal Presentation (Oct. 21, 2026) ("DOER Presentation"), at 28; Unitil Presentation on Implementation Timelines (Oct. 22, 2026) ("Unitil Presentation"), at 4.

[14] *See, e.g.*, Unitil Presentation, at 3.

[15] DOER Presentation, at 37 ("Majority of MA customers receive supply from competitive suppliers or municipal aggregators . . . .").

competitive market.[16] Moreover, because only 10-15% of EDC load remains on Basic Service, implementing TVRs for Basic Service customers alone would have a limited impact on wholesale energy markets.[17] Consequently, delaying consolidated-billing capability for competitive TVRs would exclude most customers from meaningful access to TVRs at launch and materially limit the customer and system benefits the Department seeks to achieve. The Department therefore should require EDC consolidated billing for competitive suppliers' TVR products to be available at the same time that Basic Service TVRs are implemented to ensure that ratepayers' "significant investments" in grid modernization[18] are more fully realized.

Currently, when customers are billed by an EDC, they are provided one piece of information about the product in which they are enrolled – the price per kilowatt-hour.[19] A single unit price does not adequately explain how shifting consumption among differently priced periods affects a customer's supply charges. Customers receiving supply from either the competitive market or Basic Service need billing information that makes those effects understandable. EDC billing enhancements are therefore essential not only to implementing TVRs,[20] but also to helping customers recognize and respond to the value of changing when they use electricity.

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[16] *See* DOER Electric Customer Choice Data, 2020 - Q2 2026, https://www.mass.gov/doc/electric-customer-choice-data-2020-q2-2026/download (last visited Nov. 4, 2026).

[17] *Accord* Exhibit ES-1 (noting "that only 10-15% of electric distribution company load remains on Basic Service, so TVR for Basic Service supply customers alone will have a limited impact on wholesale energy markets").

[18] *Cf.* Vote & Order, at 4 ("Subsequently, the EDCs, with the Department's oversight and direction—and thanks to significant investments from ratepayers— have made substantial progress to lay the foundation for implementing TVR.").

[19] *See, e.g.*, Eversource Sample Electric Bill, https://www.eversource.com/business/account-billing/manage-bill/about-your-bill/understanding-your-bill/sample-electric-bill/wma (last visited Nov. 5, 2026).

[20] *Accord* NSTAR Electric Company d/b/a Eversource Energy AMI Program Implementation Plan Presentation (Oct. 22, 2026) ("Eversource Presentation"), at 2, 4-5.

As of today, the EDCs only offer rate-ready billing to suppliers. "Rate-ready billing of TVR entails that suppliers provide to an EDC a set of TVR periods and prices that correspond to the agreed-upon ***standard*** parameters that allow an EDC to calculate a bill for a customer enrolled in that TVR rate."[21] These limitations do not support the billing of more complex pricing options (e.g., critical peak pricing, peak-time rebates),[22] limiting the choices available to customers who want to receive a single bill.

Although the dual billing option does not suffer from these same limitations, residential and many smaller commercial customers strongly prefer to receive one bill for their electric service. Moreover, customers being served through municipal aggregations receive a single bill from the EDCs.[23] As a consequence, the ability of customers to access TVR products through EDC consolidated billing is an important means of allowing the vast majority of residential and small commercial customers[24] to access innovative TVR offerings while retaining the convenience of a single bill.

Bill-ready billing would allow customers who prefer a single bill to choose from a broader range of pricing and product offerings, rather than limiting their choices to

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[21] Dockets 21-80/81/82, AMI Stakeholder Group Final Report (Aug. 1, 2024) ("AMI Final Report"), at 10 n.6 (internal quotations omitted) (emphasis added); *see also* Eversource Presentation, at 4-5; NSTAR Electric Company d/b/a Eversource Energy Exhibit ES-1 (Aug. 31, 2026) ("Exhibit ES-1"), at 12 ("The Company plans to accommodate rate-ready billing for supplier TVR variations that conform to a standard set of parameters.").

[22] *Accord* Exhibit ES-1 ("Supplier TVR designs that are complex and/or non-standard will be accommodated with bill-ready billing . . . ."); Eversource Presentation, at 7-9 (summarizing enhancements necessary for critical peak pricing).

[23] DOER Municipal Aggregation Manual & Best Practices Guide (Aug. 30, 2024), at 35 ("The EDC will continue to provide a single monthly bill to all participating aggregation customers.").

[24] *See* DOER Electric Customer Choice Data, 2020 - Q2 2026, https://www.mass.gov/doc/electric-customer-choice-data-2020-q2-2026/download (last visited Nov. 4, 2026) (reflecting that, as of June 30, 2026, more than 75% of residential customers and 80% of small commercial and industrial customers received generation supply from the competitive market).

products that fit standard rate-ready parameters.[25] "[B]ill-ready billing entails the sending of customer interval usage data to the supplier, which would compute the bill line items and send them back to the EDC for inclusion on the customer bill."[26] By allowing the supplier to calculate charges for its product offerings rather than requiring the EDC to calculate those charges within standard rate-ready parameters, bill-ready billing can make a wider array of pricing and product offerings available to customers through EDC consolidated billing.[27]

Customers who choose more complex pricing and product offerings should be able to receive those offerings through a single bill and understand how their electricity use affects their charges. The EDCs have indicated a willingness to make the necessary system enhancements to accommodate bill-ready billing.[28] To make those benefits available promptly, RESA urges the Department to require the EDCs to make bill-ready functionality available at the same time that Basic Service TVRs are implemented. If bill-ready functionality cannot be available at Basic Service TVR launch, the Department should require rate-ready consolidated billing for competitive-supply TVRs at launch and establish a date certain for implementation of bill-ready functionality. This minimum requirement should not substitute for, or justify delaying, the development of bill-ready

[25] *See* Eversource Presentation, at 4-5; Exhibit ES-1, at 12 ("The Company plans to accommodate rate-ready billing for supplier TVR variations that conform to a standard set of parameters. Supplier TVR designs that are complex and/or non-standard will be accommodated with bill-ready billing . . . .").

[26] AMI Final Report, at 10 n.6 (internal quotations omitted); *see also* Eversource Presentation, at 4-5; Exhibit ES-1, at 12 ("Supplier TVR designs that are complex and/or non-standard will be accommodated with bill-ready billing, meaning that the Company will provide interval usage to those suppliers so that they can calculate bill determinants and send those back to the Company for billing.").

[27] *Accord* Eversource Presentation, at 4-5; Exhibit ES-1, at 12.

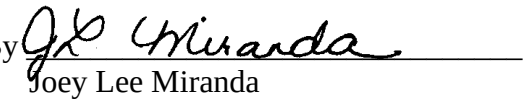
[28] *See, e.g.*, Exhibit ES-1, at 12 ("Supplier TVR designs that are complex and/or non-standard will be accommodated with bill-ready billing . . . .").

billing needed to give customers served by the competitive supply market access to more complex or non-standard offerings through a single bill.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, RESA urges the Department to require EDC bill-ready capability for competitive suppliers' TVR products to be available at the same time that Basic Service TVRs are implemented. If bill-ready functionality cannot be available at Basic Service TVR launch, the Department should require rate-ready consolidated billing at launch and establish a date certain and implementation schedule for bill-ready functionality. These requirements would ensure that EDC billing limitations do not force customers to choose between retaining their competitive supplier and accessing TVRs, accepting dual billing, or foregoing innovative products available through the competitive market. They also would help ensure that the Commonwealth realizes the customer and system benefits of its ratepayer-funded grid-modernization investments.

Respectfully submitted,
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Certificate of Service

I certify that I have this day served the foregoing document in the above-captioned proceeding in accordance with the requirements of 220 C.M.R. § 1.05.

Joey Lee Miranda

Dated: November 5, 2026