

TO: Hearing Officer Gregg Wade

FROM: Competitive Supplier Working Group

RE: D.P.U. 19-07 Investigation into Initiatives to Promote and Protect Consumer Interests in the Retail Electric Competitive Supply Market MA Supplier Working Group Assignments – Language/format of the automatic renewal notifications

DATE: July 26, 2019

INTRODUCTION

Our working group was tasked with developing a proposal from a competitive supplier standpoint for “a. Language/format of the automatic renewal notifications.” See Department of Public Utilities (“Department”) July 2, 2019 Hearing Officer Memorandum at p. 2; see also June 24, 2019 Hearing Officer Memorandum outlining goals for June 26, 2019 Department Working Group meeting.

As discussed in more detail below, the Competitive Supplier Working Group’s (“Working Group”) proposal is that certain minimum information should be provided to customers during a standardized timeframe and in a format which provides customers with clear and plain language information regarding their contract renewal options.

RENEWAL NOTICE RECOMMENDATION

A. Introduction and General Observations.

1. The Working Group recognizes that customers need, and are entitled to, information regarding their competitive supply options, particularly when a term contract is ending and approaching an automatic renewal. The Working Group is proposing a solution that will advance customer education and provide greater protections for consumers, while at the same time allowing the Competitive Supplier to use branding, language and style that reflects their corporate voice.

B. Automatic Renewal Notices

1. The Working Group proposes that any competitive supplier seeking to automatically renew or convert a residential customer from a fixed price to a different price or pricing structure provide the customer with notice of the expiration which includes the enumerated items listed in Section B.2. Such notification shall be provided to the customer no earlier than 60 days and no later than 30 days prior to the initial contract’s expiration date. Suppliers may send such notice by US mail or electronically, if the customer has agreed to receive electronic communications.

2. The Working Group proposes that each competitive supplier must include the following items within its renewal notice:
 - i. Header or subject line in **bold font**: “Important information regarding your electricity supply price”
 - ii. Supplier name, logo, mailing address, DPU license number, and contact information
 - iii. The date that the current price for electricity supply service is expiring
 - iv. Information regarding the price and duration of the contract as renewed that will apply if the customer takes no action
 - v. Optional information regarding other supply offers that may be available from the current supplier
 - vi. Statement that additional information about Competitive Supply, published by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, is available at www.energyswitchma.gov