



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

TO: Service Lists in Investigation by the Department of Public Utilities on its own Motion into Initiatives to Promote and Protect Consumer Interests in the Retail Electric Competitive Supply Market, D.P.U. 19-07 and 2019 Arrearage Management Plans, 19-AMP (Via Electronic Mail)

FROM: Katie Zilgme, Hearing Officer

RE: Request for Comments on Attorney General's Notice of Intent to Retain Experts and Consultants

DATE: October 16, 2020

I. INTRODUCTION

On January 18, 2019, the Department of Public Utilities ("Department") opened a proceeding to (1) increase customer awareness of the electric competitive supply market and the value these markets can provide, thus allowing customers to make well-informed decisions; (2) facilitate the Department's adoption of a more pro-active approach toward our oversight of competitive supplier performance rather than reacting to third-party complaints or reports about alleged violations of statute/regulation; and (3) improve the operational efficiency of the competitive market to optimize the value that the market can provide to customers. Investigation by the Department of Public Utilities into Initiatives to Promote and Protect Consumer Interests in the Retail Electric Competitive Supply Market, D.P.U. 19-07, at 4-5, 10. On June 10, 2020, in response to requests made by the Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General ("Attorney General"), the Department expanded the scope of the inquiry in D.P.U. 19-07 to explore the extent of the impact of the electric and gas competitive supply markets on the success rates of Arrearage Management Programs ("AMP"), low-income customers as a whole, and the general subsidy costs for the low-income assistance programs paid for by all ratepayers. The Department has docketed this matter as D.P.U. 19-07/19-AMP.

On August 10, 2020, the Attorney General of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts ("Attorney General"), pursuant to G.L. c. 12, § 11E(b), filed a Notice of Retention of Experts and Consultants in order to assist in its evaluation of the effect of the gas and electric

competitive supply markets on low-income ratepayer assistance programs. The Attorney General requests Department approval to spend up to \$150,000 in this regard. Pursuant to G.L. c. 12, § 11E(b), the costs incurred by the Attorney General relative to her retention of experts and consultants may be recovered in the Company's rates. The Attorney General served a copy of the Notice of Retention of Experts and Consultants on the service lists in Investigation by the Department of Public Utilities on its own Motion into Initiatives to Promote and Protect Consumer Interests in the Retail Electric Competitive Supply Market, D.P.U. 19-07 and 2019 Arrearage Management Plans, D.P.U. 19-AMP. For your convenience, attached is a copy of the Notice of Retention of Experts and Consultants.

II. REQUEST FOR COMMENTS

Consistent with G.L. c. 12, § 11E, the Department provides this service list the opportunity to provide written comments on the Attorney General's Notice of Retention of Experts and Consultants. Any person who seeks to comment on the Attorney General's Notice of Retention of Experts and Consultants must file the comments no later than the **close of business (5:00 p.m.) on Friday, October 23, 2020**.

Written comments on the Attorney General's Notice of Retention of Experts and Consultants should be addressed to Mark D. Marini, Secretary, Department of Public Utilities, One South Station, Boston, MA, 02110. At this time, all filings will be submitted only in electronic format in recognition of the difficulty that parties and the Department may have filing and receiving original copies. On March 10, 2020, Governor Baker issued a state of emergency related to COVID-19 for the entire Commonwealth. Ordinarily, all parties would follow Sections B.1 and B.4 of the Department's Standard Ground Rules (D.P.U. 15-184-A, App. 1 (March 4, 2020)); however, until further notice, parties must retain the original paper version and the Department will later determine when the paper version must be filed with the Department Secretary. Importantly, all large files submitted must be broken down into electronic files that do not exceed 20 MB.

All documents must be submitted to the Department in **pdf format** by e-mail attachment to peter.ray@mass.gov and katie.zilgme@mass.gov. The text of the e-mail must specify: (1) the docket number of the proceeding (D.P.U. 19-07/19-AMP); (2) the name of the person or company submitting the filing; and (3) a brief descriptive title of the document. All documents submitted in electronic format will be posted on the Department's website as soon as practicable at <http://www.mass.gov/dpu>. To the extent a person or entity wishes to submit comments in accordance with this memorandum, electronic submission, as detailed above, is sufficient. To request materials in accessible formats (Braille, large print, electronic files, audio format) for people with disabilities contact Department's ADA coordinator at DPUADACoordinator@state.ma.us.

Any person desiring further information regarding the Attorney General's Notice of Retention of Experts and Consultants should contact Shannon S. Beale, Assistant Attorney General, at (617) 727-2200.