



# CITY OF MELROSE

## OFFICE OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

DENISE M. GAFFEY  
*Director & City Planner*

City Hall, 562 Main Street  
Melrose, Massachusetts 02176  
Telephone - (781) 979-4190  
Fax - (781) 979-4290

January 11, 2021

Mark D. Marini, Secretary  
Department of Public Utilities  
One South Station – 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02110

**Re: Investigation by the Department of Public Utilities )**  
**On its own Motion into Initiatives to Promote and ) D.P.U. 19-07**  
**Protect Consumer Interests in the Retail Electric )**  
**Competitive Supply Market )**

Dear Secretary Marini,

I am pleased to submit comments on the proposals related to the Department’s retail market investigation as set forth in the Memorandum dated November 19, 2020 in the above-referenced proceeding. My interest in the topic is as a consumer advocate who assists Melrose residents and businesses in navigating the complexities of the retail electric supply market. I’ve also managed our municipal aggregation program, Melrose Community Power, since 2015. As more and more cities and towns have initiated aggregation programs in the last five years, we have become a trusted source of unbiased information and a resource for confused ratepayer residents who don’t understand their utility bills.

Regarding Door-to-Door Marketing and Notification of Municipal Officials, the Department should be thorough and proactive in collecting the contact information for the designated municipal officials who will receive information about which companies are conducting door-to-door sales in their municipality. However, first the Department is obligated to notify municipal officials about this Investigation in general, what the hearings have set out to accomplish, and what has been approved to date. Municipalities can’t assist the Department in protecting consumer interests if they don’t know that rules of engagement for competitive suppliers have changed and how over the last two years of hearings and decisions in 19-07.

Notice of this Investigation should first be sent by the Department via mail and email to mayors, town managers, and city solicitors, as well as all of the municipal contacts the Department has on file for every approved aggregation, informing them that this effort is underway and what it means for their residents and retail suppliers. Once they are fully informed, municipal officials can then decide whether they seek to be notified and who should be notified of door-to-door marketing in their city and town. Only after municipalities are fully informed of the results of this Investigation by the Department does it then make sense to waive the obligation of suppliers to contact municipalities that did not identify a designated official.

In order for the Investigation to succeed in protecting consumers, the Department's goal should be to provide municipalities with the information they need and to require as much transparency as possible in that effort. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Martha S. Grover", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Martha S. Grover  
Sustainability Manager

cc: Peter Ray  
Greggory Wade