

Legislative Analysis



IDENTIFICATION OF OLDER UTILITY CUSTOMERS

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House Bill 4658 (Substitute H-1)
Sponsor: Rep. Andy Neumann

House Bill 4661 (Substitute H-1)
Sponsor: Rep. Andy Coulouris
Committee: Energy and Technology

Complete to 3-31-09

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILLS 4658 & 4661 AS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE 3-26-09

The bills would amend the Public Service Commission Law to require electric and natural gas providers to try to identify their senior citizen customers (customers aged 65 and older) in the ordinary course of business, using one or more of the following methods: (1) customer interviews; (2) information obtained from consumer reporting agencies; (3) personal or automated telephone calls in which direct contact is made with a member of a customer's household or a recorded message is left on an answering machine or voice mail; (4) first class mail; (5) personal visits to a customer; (6) written notices left at or on customers' doors; (7) bill inserts; or (8) any other method approved by the Public Service Commission.

House Bill 4658 would add a new Section 9o to require *municipally-owned electric and natural gas utilities* to comply with this requirement by November 1, 2009 unless the municipal utility's governing body grants an extension of this deadline *for good cause*. (MCL 460.9o)

House Bill 4661 would add a new Section 9l to require *electric utilities, cooperative electric utilities, alternative electric suppliers, and investor-owned natural gas utilities with regulated rates* to comply by November 1, 2009, unless the Public Service Commission grants an extension. (MCL 460.9l.)

[Note: Unlike House Bill 4658 which applies to municipal utilities, House Bill 4661 does not contain a "*good cause*" standard for extensions. Another difference between the two bills is that a provider's efforts under House Bill 4661 have to be "ongoing," but the word "ongoing" is not used in House Bill 4658.]

FISCAL IMPACT:

A fiscal analysis is in process.

POSITIONS:

The Public Service Commission testified in support of the entire shutoff protection package of bills. (3-24-09)

The Attorney General indicated support of the entire package. (3-26-09)

The Department of Human Services indicated support of the entire package. (3-26-09)

ACORN (Michigan) indicated support of the entire package. (3-24-09)

The Center for Civil Justice indicated support of the entire package. (3-24-09)

Clean Water Action testified in support of the entire package, and submitted a letter of support dated 3-24-09, but would also like to see shutoff protections during hot summer weather and ban on foreclosures due to non-payment of utility bills. (3-24-09)

Consumers Energy indicated support of the entire package. (3-24-09)

DTE Energy indicated support of the entire package. (3-26-09)

Elder Law of Michigan indicated support of the entire package. (3-24-09)

Indiana Michigan Power indicated support of the entire package. (3-26-09)

Michigan Advocacy project indicated support of the entire package. (3-24-09)

The Michigan Catholic Conference indicated support of the entire package. (3-24-09)

The Michigan Electric Cooperative Association indicated support of the entire package. (3-24-09)

The Michigan Electric and Gas Association indicated support of the entire package. (3-26-09)

Michigan Citizen Action indicated support of the entire package. (3-24-09)

The Michigan Municipal Electric Association testified in support of the entire package. (3-26-09)

SEMCO Energy indicated support of the entire package. (3-26-09)

The AARP opposes House Bill 4390 and House Bill 4392, but is supportive of the rest of the package, including this bill. (3-24-09)

Legislative Analyst: Shannan Kane
Fiscal Analyst: Mark Wolf

■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.