

5639

Sponsor(s): Senators Finkbeiner, Strannigan, Rossi and Hochstatter

Brief Title: Enacting the electric customer choice act.

SB 5639 - DIGEST

Declares an intent to: (1) Allow all retail electric customers to select their electricity supplier of choice no later than July 1, 1999;

(2) permit new entities, including power marketers and others, to sell electricity directly to retail electric customers;

(3) impose on electric utilities an obligation, similar to a common carrier, to provide nondiscriminatory and nonpreferential service in operating electric distribution facilities;

(4) preserve the obligations of electric utilities to operate safe and reliable distribution facilities;

(5) retain local control over publicly owned utilities and cooperatives that distribute electricity to retail customers;

(6) establish procedures and deadlines for utilities;

(7) ensure that the benefits of a competitive market are enjoyed by all customer classes;

(8) provide electric utilities with a reasonable opportunity to recover a portion of their uneconomic utility investments during a five-year period;

(9) deregulate the pricing of electric generation for electrical companies after July 1, 1999, to allow sellers and buyers to negotiate market-based transactions;

(10) maintain regulation of rates for local distribution facilities and ancillary services, and prohibit a utility from shifting unrelated costs onto the rates of its distribution facilities and ancillary services;

(11) permit customers to aggregate or pool their purchases;

(12) adopt consumer information provisions to ensure that all customers receive itemized bills with unbundled rates; and

(13) provide retail electric customers with sufficient information to enable them to compare and select among products and services in the electricity market.