

**Ohio Retail Electric Service Market  
Case No. 12-3151-EL-COI  
July 9, 2013 Workshop Summary**

**How Do We Create Consistency in Operation Support Across the State?**

**Prepared Discussion Remarks:**

Stephen Bennett, PPL Energy Plus and Retail Energy Supply Association (RESA)

Matthew White, Interstate Gas Supply Energy

**Open Discussion:**

Mr. Bennett and Mr. White started the discussion with their prepared remarks; from there the discussion was an open forum for all in attendance to contribute. The following topics were discussed throughout the workshop.

- **Customer Identification for Switching**

Suppliers would like the ability for customers to switch providers without having to know their Utility ID number to create a more dynamic and active market and increase the ways to solicit customers. Some concerns about consumer protection were raised.

- **Bill Formatting and Inserts**

Some parties would like ability to have dual branding on the bills and marketing bill inserts from competition. Another suggestion was the potential to create usage data and price comparisons directly on the bills. Standardization and simplification of the utility bills were discussed to reduce customer confusion.

The main concerns were focused on cost recovery and who pays for these potential changes and the specifics needed to implement them. Concern was voiced as to whether the cost benefit justified the suggested changes or if the market is already fluid without these additions.

- **Electronic Data Interchange**

Uniform data availability across the state would be preferred by parties to be able to streamline their process and reduce costs for suppliers. Issues expressed were with the specific changes, customer data protection and potential cost to existing systems and how those would be paid.

- **Purchase of Receivables**

Some parties would prefer a consistent purchase of receivables program across the state. They feel this would open up the market to more vendors and encourage competition. Concerns addressed had to do with lack of uncollectible expense riders from some parties and that the market is already highly saturated and competitive without a purchase of receivables program in many parts of the state.

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**Making the PUCO Comparison Tool – Apples to Apples – More Useful**

Holly Karg, Director of the Office of Public Affairs presented a list of questions to the attendees for discussion on improving the PUCO's Apples to Apples website. Below are the main discussion points from this topic.

- **Apples to Apples Website**

**Sorting** - Suppliers suggested allowing the ability for customers to sort the supplier list by multiple options, including but not limited to, price, contract length, fixed/variable contract, monthly fees, termination fees and supplier ranking. There were different opinions on whether the initial sort should be alphabetical or random.

**Complaint Tracker** – Interest in including a complaint tracker to allow customers to query complaints.

**Rating System** – Interest in having a rating or star system that would help customers choose their suppliers.

**Illinois Website** - The Illinois website was brought up often as a potential reference for best practices to date. <http://www.pluginillinois.org/>

**Suppliers Direct Access** - Suppliers want the ability to have direct access to the website and to be able to adjust their prices and for those prices to appear virtually immediately. Feel this provides a more accurate and fluid market for customers.

**Small Business Sizes** - Small business rates are negotiated based on usage and time of day, they are not standard like residential. This causes issues for listed prices on the website. Suppliers prefer links over set prices. Hard to set specific size, large homes can also be considered in the small business markets depending on their usage.

**Customer Protection & Education**- Customer groups would like to see historical trends/graphs of prices offered by suppliers and EDUs. Provide more interactive data for customers to educate themselves with, ensure secure links to sites and customers have protections in place.

**Customer Surveys / Focus Groups**- Was suggested that customer surveys and/or focus groups be used in developing and implementing the website.

**Phasing In** – Was suggested a phased delivery of the website to allow for further enhancements on a going-forward basis.