
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 548 Session of
2021

INTRODUCED BY METZGAR, PICKETT, JAMES, JOZWIAK, SANKEY, STRUZZI,
PYLE, BURNS, ORTITAY, WHEELAND, FLYNN, KAUFFMAN, GLEIM,
METCALFE, DOWLING, MULLINS, BIZZARRO, OBERLANDER, E. NELSON,
TOPPER AND T. DAVIS, FEBRUARY 17, 2021

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FEBRUARY 17, 2021

AN ACT

1 Amending Title 66 (Public Utilities) of the Pennsylvania
2 Consolidated Statutes, in natural gas competition, further
3 providing for duties of natural gas distribution companies
4 and for consumer protections and customer service; and, in
5 restructuring of electric utility industry, further providing
6 for definitions, for standards for restructuring of electric
7 industry and for duties of electric distribution companies.

8 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
9 hereby enacts as follows:

10 Section 1. Sections 2205(c)(1), (2) and (4) and 2206(a) of
11 Title 66 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes are amended
12 to read:

13 § 2205. Duties of natural gas distribution companies.

14 * * *

15 (c) Customer billing.--

16 (1) [Subject to the right of a retail gas customer to
17 choose to receive separate bills from its natural gas
18 supplier for natural gas supply service, the natural gas
19 distribution company shall be responsible for billing each of

1 its retail gas customers for natural gas distribution
2 service, consistent with the orders or regulations of the
3 commission, regardless of the identity of the provider of
4 natural gas supply services.] A retail natural gas customer
5 shall have the right to choose to receive separate bills from
6 its natural gas distribution company for natural gas
7 distribution service and natural gas supplier for natural gas
8 supply service, or a consolidated bill that includes both
9 natural gas distribution charges and natural gas supply
10 charges from either the natural gas distribution company or
11 natural gas supplier. If the natural gas supplier is not
12 willing, able or qualified to provide billing services, the
13 natural gas distribution company shall be responsible for
14 billing retail gas customers for natural gas distribution
15 service and supply. The commission shall adopt regulations to
16 establish the financial and technical requirements for
17 natural gas suppliers to provide consolidated billing
18 services. Any billing service shall be consistent with the
19 orders or regulations of the commission, which shall be
20 issued or promulgated within 180 days of the effective date
21 of this paragraph, and existing applicable regulations,
22 including, but not limited to, the regulations at 52 Pa. Code
23 Ch. 56 (relating to standards and billing practices for
24 residential utility service), regardless of the identity of
25 the provider of natural gas billing services. Suppliers that
26 apply to render consolidated bills to end-use customers shall
27 post a bond in the amount of \$250,000 and shall not have had
28 a natural gas supplier license revoked by any other state in
29 the three years preceding the application. A customer's right
30 to receive a consolidated bill from either the customer's

1 natural gas distribution company or natural gas supplier
2 shall be available within one year of the effective date of
3 the final-form regulations.

4 (2) (i) Bills to retail gas customers shall contain
5 sufficient unbundled charge information to enable the
6 customer to determine the basis for those charges and
7 shall comply with section 1509 (relating to billing
8 procedures). At a minimum, such charges shall include
9 those services which are unbundled as a result of a
10 restructuring filing or rulemaking.

11 (ii) Bills to retail residential customers rendered
12 [by a natural gas distribution company] for natural gas
13 distribution services shall include information required
14 by commission regulations governing standards and billing
15 practices for residential utility service.

16 (iii) Bills rendered [by a natural gas distribution
17 company] on behalf of a natural gas supplier shall
18 include[, in a form and manner determined by the natural
19 gas distribution company in consultation with the natural
20 gas supplier,] the following information with respect to
21 natural gas supplier services: the name of the natural
22 gas supplier; the rates, charges or prices of natural gas
23 supply services billed, including adjustments to prior
24 period billings, if applicable, and taxes, if applicable;
25 and the natural gas supplier's toll-free telephone number
26 and hours of operation for customer inquiries.

27 (iv) Natural gas suppliers providing consolidated
28 billing shall purchase the natural gas distribution
29 company's receivables for regulated charges consistent
30 with the regulations of the commission.

1 * * *

2 (4) If services are provided by an entity other than the
3 natural gas distribution company, the entity that provided
4 those services shall furnish to the natural gas distribution
5 company billing data sufficient to enable the natural gas
6 distribution company to timely bill retail gas customers. If
7 billing services are provided by an entity other than the
8 natural gas distribution company, the natural gas
9 distribution company shall furnish to the entity providing
10 the billing service, billing data sufficient to enable the
11 billing service provider to timely bill retail gas customers.
12 The nonbilling entity shall provide data for billing purposes
13 in a format and in a time frame as required by the [natural
14 gas distribution company] commission. The [natural gas
15 distribution company] billing service provider shall consider
16 the data and information confidential and shall treat it as
17 such.

18 * * *

19 § 2206. Consumer protections and customer service.

20 (a) Quality.--A natural gas distribution company shall [be
21 responsible for] provide customer service functions consistent
22 with the orders and regulations of the commission, including,
23 but not limited to, meter reading, installation, testing and
24 maintenance and emergency response for all customers, and
25 complaint resolution and collections related to the service
26 provided by the natural gas distribution company. Natural gas
27 suppliers providing consolidated billing services shall be
28 responsible for performing complaint resolution and collections
29 functions, which shall include the ability to initiate the
30 termination process for any reason enumerated under Chapter 14

1 (relating to responsible utility customer protection). Customer
2 service and consumer protections and policies for retail gas
3 customers shall, at a minimum, be maintained at the same level
4 of quality under retail competition as in existence on the
5 effective date of this chapter.

6 * * *

7 Section 2. Section 2803 of Title 66 is amended by adding a
8 definition to read:

9 § 2803. Definitions.

10 The following words and phrases when used in this chapter
11 shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
12 context clearly indicates otherwise:

13 * * *

14 "Supplier consolidated billing." The billing of retail
15 customers by an electricity supplier for all electric services,
16 including the charges of the electric distribution company for
17 distribution services and all charges of the electricity
18 supplier.

19 * * *

20 Section 3. Section 2804 of Title 66 is amended by adding a
21 paragraph to read:

22 § 2804. Standards for restructuring of electric industry.

23 The following interdependent standards shall govern the
24 commission's assessment and approval of each public utility's
25 restructuring plan, oversight of the transition process and
26 regulation of the restructured electric utility industry:

27 * * *

28 (17) The commission shall issue regulations that permit
29 electricity suppliers that meet the financial and technical
30 requirements established by the commission to render

1 consolidated bills to end-use customers that contain the
2 charges for distribution services provided by an electric
3 distribution company and the charges of the electricity
4 supplier for commodity services and any other services
5 provided by the electricity supplier. Suppliers that apply to
6 render consolidated bills to end-use customers shall post a
7 bond in the amount of \$250,000 and shall not have had an
8 electric supplier license revoked by any other state in the
9 three years preceding the application. The commission shall
10 adopt temporary regulations establishing financial and
11 technical requirements and the framework for supplier
12 consolidated billing within 90 days of the effective date of
13 this paragraph. The temporary regulations shall not be
14 subject to sections 201, 202, 203, 204 and 205 of the act of
15 July 31, 1968 (P.L.769, No.240), referred to as the
16 Commonwealth Documents Law, sections 204(b) and 301(10) of
17 the act of October 15, 1980 (P.L.950, No.164), known as the
18 Commonwealth Attorneys Act, or the act of June 25, 1982
19 (P.L.633, No.181), known as the Regulatory Review Act. The
20 temporary regulations shall expire upon the promulgation of
21 final-form regulations or two years following the effective
22 date of this section, whichever is later. Supplier
23 consolidated billing shall be available within one year of
24 the effective date of the final-form regulations. The
25 commission shall adopt orders, rules, regulations and
26 policies as shall be necessary and appropriate to implement
27 fully this section within the time frames specified in this
28 chapter.

29 Section 4. Section 2807(c) and (d) introductory paragraph of
30 Title 66 are amended to read:

1 § 2807. Duties of electric distribution companies.

2 * * *

3 (c) Customer billing.--Subject to the right of an end-use
4 customer to choose to receive separate or consolidated bills
5 from its electric generation supplier, the electric distribution
6 company may be responsible for billing customers for all
7 electric services, consistent with the regulations of the
8 commission, regardless of the identity of the provider of those
9 services.

10 (1) Customer bills shall contain unbundled charges
11 sufficient to enable the customer to determine the basis for
12 those charges.

13 (2) If services are provided by an entity other than the
14 electric distribution company, the entity that provides those
15 services shall furnish to the electric distribution company
16 billing data sufficient to enable the electric distribution
17 company to bill customers.

18 (3) The electric distribution company shall not be
19 required to forward payment to entities providing services to
20 customers, and on whose behalf the electric distribution
21 company is billing those customers, before the electric
22 distribution company has received payment for those services
23 from customers.

24 (4) Electric generation suppliers providing consolidated
25 billing shall purchase the electric distribution company's
26 receivables for regulated charges consistent with the
27 regulations of the commission.

28 (d) Consumer protections and customer service.--The electric
29 distribution company shall continue to provide customer service
30 functions consistent with the regulations of the commission,

1 including meter reading, complaint resolution and
2 collections[.], except that electricity suppliers providing
3 consolidated billing services shall be responsible for
4 performing complaint resolution and collections functions, which
5 shall include the ability to initiate the termination process
6 for any reason enumerated under Chapter 14 (relating to
7 responsible utility customer protection). Customer services
8 shall, at a minimum, be maintained at the same level of quality
9 under retail competition.

10 * * *

11 Section 5. This act shall take effect in 60 days.