

National Report Shows Pennsylvanians Benefit from Electric Choice

A national report on competitive electricity markets issued Monday (12/6) shows that customer choice is thriving in several states, including Pennsylvania, and that choice benefits both residential and business customers with new options and innovations not available in traditionally regulated markets.

"The report confirms that well-structured and properly regulated electricity markets provide benefits for customers in terms of options, prices and variety of services," said Gene Alessandrini, senior vice president-Marketing for [PPL EnergyPlus](#), the energy marketing affiliate of PPL Corporation. PPL EnergyPlus is a member of ABACCUS and a sponsor of the report.

The Annual Baseline Assessment of Choice in Canada and the United States (ABACCUS) was produced by the Distributed Energy Financial Group of Houston. It's a report card on the progress of customer choice and a ranking of competitive electricity markets across North America.

Pennsylvania ranks fourth among 24 competitive markets for residential customers and sixth among 23 competitive markets for business customers. The outlook for future development of customer choice among residential and business customers in Pennsylvania is identified as positive in the report.

"While the report shows Pennsylvania has room for improvement, we are making progress, as evidenced by the significant growth in the number of residential and business customers who are choosing their electricity supplier," he said.

Nowhere has that growth been as strong as in the 29-county area served by PPL Electric Utilities, another PPL affiliate, where 496,000 customers have shopped for their electricity supply as of Dec. 1.

"Because wholesale electricity prices are as low as they have been in several years, it's a good time for customers to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the competitive market," Alessandrini said.

He expects electric choice to expand considerably in 2011 when rate caps for the remaining electric distribution companies in Pennsylvania expire.

Texas and New York are ranked first and second for both residential and business markets in the ABACCUS Report, which is based on an assessment of more than two dozen attributes of electric service.

The report finds that competitive electricity markets provide product and service options not available to customers in traditionally regulated markets. The options include hourly pricing, multiyear supply contracts, backup power services, bundling of energy and building maintenance services, and opportunities to participate in bulk power markets.

In response to the report, Pennsylvania Public Utility Commissioner Robert Powelson said, "Customer choice has benefitted Pennsylvanians in a variety of ways. A well-structured competitive electric market not only results in reasonable rates, but also creates clean energy jobs, promotes technological innovation and infrastructure improvements, and encourages energy efficiency measures."

A full copy of the report is available on the PPL EnergyPlus website, www.pplenergyplus.com, or at www.defgllc.com.

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