



COMPETE

Electricity Competition **IS** the Public Interest

1317 F Street NW
Suite 600
Washington, DC 20004
Phone: 202-745-6331
Fax: 202-783-0329
www.competecoalition.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 19, 2009

CONTACT: Ben Becker
(202) 292-6974
bbecker@ggdc.com

MARYLAND BUSINESSES URGE GOVERNOR O'MALLEY TO REJECT ELECTRICITY RE-REGULATION PROPOSALS

*State business leaders credit competitive markets with major savings in energy costs;
urge O'Malley to maintain a competitive structure.*

WASHINGTON – The COMPETE Coalition today applauded a group of Maryland employers for urging Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley and Maryland legislators to reject efforts to re-regulate the state's electricity market. Instead, the Governor should foster the continued evolution of the current market, which "sustains the most competitive prices and innovative products for consumers and ensures reliability." The businesses, with 2,036 Maryland facilities, provide 494,128 Maryland jobs and spend more than \$114 million annually on electricity in the state. They outlined their position in a letter warning that re-regulation will have far-reaching, negative impacts on Marylanders.

"One way we have controlled the cost of electricity is to participate in the competitive market, and our continued economic viability depends in part on our ability to obtain electric service from competitive suppliers," the letter states. "These savings help us continue to offer affordable, high quality products and services to our customers as well as fund other important corporate initiatives and social responsibility efforts. The competitive model overwhelmingly yields more benefits to customers over the long term."

Signatories to the letter included: 7-Eleven, Inc.; Best Buy Co., Inc.; Big Lots Stores, Inc.; Giant Food LLC; International Paper; Leggett & Platt, Inc.; Macy's Inc.; Maryland Chamber of Commerce; Maryland Retailers Association; PetSmart, Inc.; Safeway Inc.; Staples; and Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.

"Re-regulation aimed at eliminating 'customer choice' for all Maryland customers, as well as requiring ratepayers to bear the risk of any new generation built or contracted for by the utilities, will negatively impact customers," the letter continues. "Indiscriminately eliminating customer choice will have far reaching negative impacts on all Marylanders including businesses and educational institutions operating in the State. Eliminating reliance on the use of competitive markets will also discourage investment in renewable energy resources and new and innovative technologies."

COMPETE, a coalition of more than 300 electricity stakeholders, commended the businesses for providing a consumer perspective in support of competitive electricity markets as Maryland engages in an important debate with long-term import for the state's economy.

“These businesses are part of the 71 percent of commercial and industrial customers who have successfully participated in the competitive electricity market,” said Joel Malina, executive director of COMPETE. “The reality is that these markets are allowing customers to implement energy strategies allowing them to manage risk and cost. These strategies are critical in producing energy savings, allowing businesses to concentrate on economic growth and providing jobs for Marylanders.”

“It’s easy to forget what the world was like before competitive forces took hold,” the letter concludes. “A return to a regulated market structure will reward utilities for being inefficient and wasteful, will lead to a reduction in a desire to meet customer needs, and will discourage investment in renewable energy.”

A copy of the letter to Gov. O’Malley is available at:

<http://www.competecoalition.com/newsroom/governor-o%E2%80%99malley-letter-re-competitive-electricity-markets>

ABOUT COMPETE:

The **COMPETE** coalition represents more than 300 electricity stakeholders, employing over 7 million American workers, including customers, suppliers, generators, transmission owners, trade associations, and economic development corporations – all of whom support well-structured competitive electricity markets for the benefit of consumers. For more information, please visit www.competecoalition.com

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