SENATE DOCKET, NO. 359 FILED ON: 1/19/2011

SENATE . . . . . No. 1646

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Stephen M. Brewer

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act promoting transparency in electric bills.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
Stephen M. Brewer	*Worcester, Hampden, Hampshire, Franklin*
Gailanne M. Cariddi	*1st Berkshire*

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SENATE . . . . . No. 1646

By Mr. Brewer, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 1646) of Stephen M. Brewer and Gailanne M. Cariddi for legislation to promote transparency in electric bills. Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Eleven

An Act promoting transparency in electric bills.

Whereas, The deferred operation of this act would tend to defeat its purpose, which is to establish a framework for consumer electricity rate savings and to make certain other changes in law, necessary or appropriate to effectuate important public purposes, therefore, it is hereby declared to be an emergency law, necessary for the immediate preservation of the public convenience.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. This Act shall be entitled the "The Ratepayer Protection Act", and shall be construed in a manner to achieve its public purpose, which is to ensure that affordable electric service be available to all consumers on reasonable terms and conditions.

SECTION 2. Notwithstanding any general or special law, rule, or regulation to the contrary, each calender year, the department of public utilities shall conduct a public hearing to evaluate the economic consequences to the consumers of the costs assessed on residential and commercial ratepayers to meet the renewable portfolio standards of the Commonwealth, including the Commonwealth's expenditures for administration and enforcement of all renewable energy programs, incentives, and funding available in the Commonwealth. The

department of public utilities shall develop and issue, by Marsh first of each year, a report which shall detail the amount in the previous calendar year of wholesale and retail pricing, that is directly attributable to the Commonwealth's renewable portfolio standard requirements. The department may include in such report recommendations to address any identified pricing mechanism flaws that, if corrected, could result in lower energy cost to ratepayers. The department is hereby authorized and directed to promulgate rules and regulations necessary to carry out the provisions of this section.

SECTION 3. Notwithstanding any general or special law, rule or regulation to the contrary, beginning January 1, 2012, all electric bills sent to retail and commercial customers by an electric or distribution company or competitive supplier shall include a separate line-item to reflect the rate charged for renewable energy generation, transmission, and distribution services contained in the total retail price. The department is hereby authorized and directed to determine whether any additional information shall be required to be disclosed on the bills and to promulgate rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this subsection. Rules and regulations relative to the appeals process for billing disputes or damage claims made by customers shall be published and distributed to customers as part of an education and outreach program.