

HOUSE No. 855

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Demetrius J. Atsalis

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: |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Demetrius J. Atsalis</i> | <i>2nd Barnstable</i> |
| <i>David T. Vieira</i> | <i>3rd Barnstable</i> |
| <i>William Smitty Pignatelli</i> | <i>4th Berkshire</i> |
| <i>Gailanne M. Cariddi</i> | <i>1st Berkshire</i> |
| <i>George N. Peterson, Jr.</i> | <i>9th Worcester</i> |
| <i>Stephen L. DiNatale</i> | <i>3rd Worcester</i> |

HOUSE No. 855

By Mr. Atsalis of Barnstable, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 855) of Demetrius J. Atsalis and others for legislation to establish a framework for consumer electricity rate savings. Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Eleven

An Act promoting transparency in electric bills.

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

1 An Act Promoting Transparency in Electric Bills

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

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

9

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

13 SECTION 2. Notwithstanding any general or special law, rule, or regulation to
14 the contrary, each calender year, the department of public utilities shall conduct a public hearing
15 to evaluate the economic consequences to the consumers of the costs assessed on residential and
16 commercial ratepayers to meet the renewable portfolio standards of the Commonwealth,
17 including the Commonwealth’s expenditures for administration and enforcement of all
18 renewable energy programs, incentives, and funding available in the Commonwealth. The
19 department of public utilities shall develop and issue, by Marsh first of each year, a report which
20 shall detail the amount in the previous calendar year of wholesale and retail pricing, that is
21 directly attributable to the Commonwealth’s renewable portfolio standard requirements. The
22 department may include in such report recommendations to address any identified pricing
23 mechanism flaws that, if corrected, could result in lower energy cost to ratepayers. The
24 department is hereby authorized and directed to promulgate rules and regulations necessary to
25 carry out the provisions of this section.

26 SECTION 4. Notwithstanding any general or special law, rule or regulation to
27 the contrary, beginning January 1, 2012, all electric bills sent to retail and commercial customers
28 by an electric or distribution company or competitive supplier shall include a separate line-item
29 to reflect the rate charged for renewable energy generation, transmission, and distribution
30 services contained in the total retail price. The department is hereby authorized and directed to
31 determine whether any additional information shall be required to be disclosed on the bills and to
32 promulgate rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this subsection. Rules and
33 regulations relative to the appeals process for billing disputes or damage claims made by
34 customers shall be published and distributed to customers as part of an education and outreach
35 program.