



DRA

*Division of Ratepayer Advocates
California Public Utilities Commission*

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JOSEPH P. COMO
Acting Director

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April 25, 2013

Honorable Roderick Wright
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 2032
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 656 (Wright) – Support

Dear Senator Wright,

DRA (Division of Ratepayer Advocates) is the independent consumer advocate within the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). DRA's statutory mandate is to obtain the lowest possible rate for utility service consistent with reliable and safe service levels. DRA also advocates for customer and environmental protections in connection with utility service.

DRA supports your SB 656, which would appropriately update the California Public Utilities Code regarding customers' information access to electric service options, as specified. Public Utilities Code §392.1(c) was created during the restructuring of California's electricity markets. This effort attempted to create a competitive retail market with multiple electric service providers, alternative to investor-owned utility service, and accessible to all customer classes. The Direct Access model was ultimately unsuccessful. In 2001, the Legislature passed legislation to freeze Direct Access enrollment. Public Utilities Code §392.1(c) is no longer relevant because Direct Access companies are no longer competing to sign up residential accounts, and thus there is no longer a need to help customers evaluate competing options.

DRA supports SB 656 because it would remove an unnecessary and antiquated statutory requirement. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this matter further, please call DRA's Deputy Director Matthew Marcus, at (916) 327-3455 or me at (415) 703-2381.

Respectfully,

Joseph P. Como, Acting Director
Division of Ratepayer Advocates

By
Matthew Marcus, Deputy Director
Division of Ratepayer Advocates