



**Retail Energy Supply Association**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Green Groups, Power Providers Call for Greater Competition in NH**  
*Polling Data, Growing Retail Choice Support Freeing Consumers from PSNH Plants*

CONCORD, NH – Citing new polling data demonstrating strong customer support for retail electricity competition in New Hampshire, leading New England environmental advocacy groups and competitive electricity providers are joining with the [Retail Energy Supply Association](#) (RESA) in calling for state policy makers to take action to fully integrate the Granite State into New England’s competitive electricity markets.

A RESA-sponsored survey found 55 percent of those polled would consider switching from their utility to a competitive supplier, and that more than 14 percent of those surveyed had already switched to a competitive provider. The [Conservation Law Foundation](#), [The COMPETE Coalition](#), [ENH Power](#), the [New England Power Generators Association](#) and [Toxics Action Center](#) are joining with RESA in citing the survey results as supporting action by New Hampshire lawmakers to protect customers’ right to choose and repeal laws forcing ratepayers to cover the costs for power plants in the state.

The survey results reinforce the most recent [data from the New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission](#) showing that 47,191 customers of Public Service New Hampshire, including 30,055 residential customers, have exercised their right to purchase their electricity from a competitive supplier. This represents 9.44 percent of all PSNH delivery customers and 43.79 percent of all electricity delivered by the utility. But so many consumers are embracing competitive alternatives, that data is already obsolete.

“Competition in New Hampshire’s electricity market is growing by leaps and bounds every day. Not only are increasing numbers of consumers receptive to competition, there are already [13 licensed retail electricity suppliers and 79 registered aggregators in the state](#), and those numbers are growing in response to demand,” observed RESA President Melissa Lauderdale.

“Power customers are voting with their checkbooks, sending a clear message that families and the state’s economy benefit when they can buy electricity from lower cost suppliers. PSNH’s power plants should participate in the competitive market without guaranteed rates paid by consumers, as do the vast majority of power plants in New England,” said Jonathan Peress, Vice President and Director, Clean Energy and Climate Change, for the Conservation Law Foundation.

The Public Utility Commission has already taken an important step with its recent order directing a staff investigation into the rate impacts of maintaining utility power plant ownership in the face of increasing customer migration to competitive suppliers. That order quoted the motivation behind the 1996 law restructuring New Hampshire's electricity market to foster competition:

*The most compelling reason to restructure the New Hampshire electric utility industry is to reduce costs for all consumers of electricity by harnessing the power of competitive markets. The overall public policy goal of restructuring is to develop a more efficient industry structure and regulatory framework that results in a more productive economy by reducing costs to consumers while maintaining safe and reliable electric service with minimum adverse impacts on the environment. Increased customer choice and the development of competitive markets for wholesale and retail electricity services are key elements in a restructured industry that will require unbundling of prices and services and at least functional separation of centralized generation services from transmission and distribution services.*

“Unfortunately, the law as amended in 2003 stops short of promoting a fully competitive electricity market in New Hampshire by allowing PSNH to maintain ownership of its generating plants and to pass the costs of those power plants on to its retail customers,” Lauderdale said.

“That construct has become completely unsustainable when prevailing wholesale power prices in New England are below the cost of PSNH's self-produced power, and increasing retail competition in New Hampshire is leaving fewer and fewer customers responsible for the increasing costs PSNH encounters in maintaining its generation assets,” Lauderdale added.

“Only by freeing New Hampshire consumers to competitively shop with suppliers other than PSNH will New Hampshire's consumers and its economy fully realize the benefits of competition in electricity,” said Joel Malina, executive director of the COMPETE Coalition, whose more than 700 members include a wide range of electricity consumer interests.

“New Hampshire has no time to lose in completing the transition to a fully competitive market. To maintain the status quo puts the state's consumers and its economy at risk,” said Dan Dolan, the New England Power Generators Association's president.

PSNH rates jumped 34 percent in December, resulting in a default service rate of 9.54 cents per kilowatt-hour. This marks a substantial increase from the 2012 default service rate of 7.11 cents, and the previously projected 2013 rate of 8.97 cents. Meanwhile, [ISO-New England announced](#) that its wholesale power rates in 2012 plunged to the lowest levels in 10 years.

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