

My name is Cheryl Ebinger . My company, Tweakt LLC is located at 4000 Crooks Rd. in Royal Oak. I reside at [REDACTED] in Royal Oak and I am here today not as an utilities expert but as a Michigan citizen who makes a living working primarily with Michigan businesses doing telecom and utilities .

Simply put, my electric choice customers are **panicking** about the serious financial consequences of being placed back into a monopoly environment with forced price increases.

“Devastating” was a word used by my client, Howard Behr, the Business Manager for St. Frances Cabrini Parish and school, when I told him about the Nesbitt Bill and its consequences. “If our electric program is taken away, we will be forced to eliminate positions.”

My other choice electric customers are gravely concerned about cuts they will be forced to make and how many employees will have reduced hours or be terminated.

The companies I enrolled in the queue years ago keep asking “When are we going to start saving money on our electricity? ”

The 11,000 businesses in the queue want and deserve the opportunity to be able to freely shop their electricity. They’re capitalists and they KNOW about the success of electric choice in other states.

I come from a telecom background where in the early days of telecom deregulation I worked for a “new” carrier. Because of scare tactics, businesses had concerns about moving from the one big phone carrier they’d always used.

But the gloom and doom portended by the telecom giant simply **did not happen**. Telecom deregulation allowed my clients, who previously paid high monopoly-dictated rates, to immediately start saving thousands, fueling opportunities for them to hire employees and otherwise grow . Through deregulated gas and electricity, I help provide my clients **additional** control over their expenses and their futures.

Let’s look at Illinois, who estimates 37 billion dollars in savings because of electric choice. 37 billion fixes a lot of roads and hires a lot of workers. Illinois went from having the highest electric rates in the Midwest to having the lowest. Now MICHIGAN has the distinction of the highest electric rates in the Midwest. Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas and all of New England except Vermont, have successful electric choice programs. And if Chicago who is also a MISO member and on the same grid, was experiencing electric problems, don’t you think we’d hear about it?

Governor Snyder, DTE, and Consumers' concerns about having enough capacity are unfounded and I have emailed everyone on the Energy Committee factual information that addresses these concerns, which are based simply on a lack of accurate information.

Here's a quick pop quiz-

True or false: DTE currently purchases wholesale electricity from other generators?
(YES-TRUE)

True or false: DTE's retail electric subsidiary currently sells electricity to other states at a cost LOWER than the generation component of DTE's retail rates in Michigan?
(YES-TRUE)

True or false: MISO (Midcontinent Independent System Operator) is spending more in Michigan than any other state, to increase transmission infrastructure to increase import capacity?
(YES-TRUE)

Yes or No: If a DTE or Consumers customer switches to a retail supplier, would the total MISO demand for electricity change?
(NO)

Yes or No: If a Consumers or DTE customer switches to a retail supplier, would MISO see any change in its overall reserve requirement?
(NO)

Recent campaign finance records reflect that 124 of Michigan's current 148 state legislators, (that's 83 percent) have taken contributions from a PAC or employee tied to DTE or Consumers since early 2014. I can't write checks like that. I can only encourage you to do the right thing. Ask questions. Look at Michigan's skyrocketing electric prices versus **other** states with successful choice markets. Help Michigan's economy bounce back from some tough years. Help businesses get back in the game. As elected officials, people trust and are counting on you.

Many of you are recently sworn-in as well as new to this committee.

I understand that for many of you utilities may be unfamiliar territory. In addition to being new, you're exposed to plenty of marketing, TV ads and seasoned lobbyists emphasizing the dangers and evils of a free-enterprise electric market. I urge you to look at more than just traditional political media and read concrete, fact-based information about this mission-critical issue before making any decisions, so that when you do, it will be an educated one. Don't let yourselves be railroaded or rushed.

If you don't K-N-O-W , you need to vote N-O on Nesbitt's House Bill 4298 because one thing we DO know is that **capitalism works**.

Don't underestimate the positive impact you, YOU, can have on millions of Michigan citizens' lives, and livelihoods, by saying "no thanks" to the Nesbitt Bill and opening up Michigan's electric market.

Michigan's businesses and Michigan's people are counting on you.

You have the power.

Feel free to contact me with any questions regarding the sources of the information contained in this testimony at cheryl@kennon.com or my office phone 248-538-5250.

