

utility for which it has ratemaking authority) or a nonregulated electric utility from fixing, approving, or allowing to go into effect a rate for essential needs (as defined by the State regulatory authority or by the nonregulated electric utility, as the case may be) of residential electric consumers which is lower than a rate under the standard referred to in section 2621(d)(1) of this title.

(b) Determination

If any State regulated electric utility or nonregulated electric utility does not have a lower rate as described in subsection (a) in effect two years after November 9, 1978, the State regulatory authority having ratemaking authority with respect to such State regulated electric utility or the nonregulated electric utility, as the case may be, shall determine, after an evidentiary hearing, whether such a rate should be implemented by such utility.

(c) Prior proceedings

Section 2634 of this title shall not apply to the requirements of this section.

(Pub. L. 95-617, title I, § 114, Nov. 9, 1978, 92 Stat. 3124.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This chapter, referred to in subsec. (a), was in the original "this title", meaning title I (§101 et seq.) of Pub. L. 95-617, Nov. 9, 1978, 92 Stat. 3120, which enacted subchapters I to IV of this chapter and section 6808 of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare, and amended sections 6802 to 6807 of Title 42. For complete classification of title I to the Code, see Tables.

§ 2625. Special rules for standards

(a) Cost of service

In undertaking the consideration and making the determination under section 2621 of this title with respect to the standard concerning cost of service established by section 2621(d)(1) of this title, the costs of providing electric service to each class of electric consumers shall, to the maximum extent practicable, be determined on the basis of methods prescribed by the State regulatory authority (in the case of a State regulated electric utility) or by the electric utility (in the case of a nonregulated electric utility). Such methods shall to the maximum extent practicable—

(1) permit identification of differences in cost-incurrence, for each such class of electric consumers, attributable to daily and seasonal time of use of service and

(2) permit identification of differences in cost-incurrence attributable to differences in customer demand, and energy components of cost. In prescribing such methods, such State regulatory authority or nonregulated electric utility shall take into account the extent to which total costs to an electric utility are likely to change if—

(A) additional capacity is added to meet peak demand relative to base demand; and

(B) additional kilowatt-hours of electric energy are delivered to electric consumers.

(b) Time-of-day rates

In undertaking the consideration and making the determination required under section 2621 of

this title with respect to the standard for time-of-day rates established by section 2621(d)(3) of this title and the standard for time-based metering and communications established by section 2621(d)(14) of this title, a time-of-day rate charged by an electric utility for providing electric service to each class of electric consumers shall be determined to be cost-effective with respect to each such class if the long-run benefits of such rate to the electric utility and its electric consumers in the class concerned are likely to exceed the metering and communications costs and other costs associated with the use of such rates.

(c) Load management techniques

In undertaking the consideration and making the determination required under section 2621 of this title with respect to the standard for load management techniques established by section 2621(d)(6) of this title, a load management technique shall be determined, by the State regulatory authority or nonregulated electric utility, to be cost-effective if—

(1) such technique is likely to reduce maximum kilowatt demand on the electric utility, and

(2) the long-run cost-savings to the utility of such reduction are likely to exceed the long-run costs to the utility associated with implementation of such technique.

(d) Master metering

Separate metering shall be determined appropriate for any new building for purposes of section 2623(b)(1) of this title if—

(1) there is more than one unit in such building,

(2) the occupant of each such unit has control over a portion of the electric energy used in such unit, and

(3) with respect to such portion of electric energy used in such unit, the long-run benefits to the electric consumers in such building exceed the costs of purchasing and installing separate meters in such building.

(e) Automatic adjustment clauses

(1) An automatic adjustment clause of an electric utility meets the requirements of this subsection if—

(A) such clause is determined, not less often than every four years, by the State regulatory authority (with respect to an electric utility for which it has ratemaking authority) or by the electric utility (in the case of a nonregulated electric utility), after an evidentiary hearing, to provide incentives for efficient use of resources (including incentives for economical purchase and use of fuel and electric energy) by such electric utility, and

(B) such clause is reviewed not less often than every two years, in the manner described in paragraph (2), by the State regulatory authority having ratemaking authority with respect to such utility (or by the electric utility in the case of a nonregulated electric utility), to insure the maximum economies in those operations and purchases which affect the rates to which such clause applies.

(2) In making a review under subparagraph (B) of paragraph (1) with respect to an electric util-

ity, the reviewing authority shall examine and, if appropriate, cause to be audited the practices of such electric utility relating to costs subject to an automatic adjustment clause, and shall require such reports as may be necessary to carry out such review (including a disclosure of any ownership or corporate relationship between such electric utility and the seller to such utility of fuel, electric energy, or other items).

(3) As used in this subsection and section 2623(b) of this title, the term “automatic adjustment clause” means a provision of a rate schedule which provides for increases or decreases (or both), without prior hearing, in rates reflecting increases or decreases (or both) in costs incurred by an electric utility. Such term does not include an interim rate which takes effect subject to a later determination of the appropriate amount of the rate.

(f) Information to consumers

(1) For purposes of the standard for information to consumers established by section 2623(b)(3) of this title, each electric utility shall transmit to each of its electric consumers a clear and concise explanation of the existing rate schedule and any rate schedule applied for (or proposed by a nonregulated electric utility) applicable to such consumer. Such statement shall be transmitted to each such consumer—

(A) not later than sixty days after the date of commencement of service to such consumer or ninety days after the standard established by section 2623(b)(3) of this title is adopted with respect to such electric utility, whichever last occurs, and

(B) not later than thirty days (sixty days in the case of an electric utility which uses a bi-monthly billing system) after such utility’s application for any change in a rate schedule applicable to such consumer (or proposal of such a change in the case of a nonregulated utility).

(2) For purposes of the standard for information to consumers established by section 2623(b)(3) of this title, each electric utility shall transmit to each of its electric consumers not less frequently than once each year—

(A) a clear and concise summary of the existing rate schedules applicable to each of the major classes of its electric consumers for which there is a separate rate, and

(B) an identification of any classes whose rates are not summarized.

Such summary may be transmitted together with such consumer’s billing or in such other manner as the State regulatory authority or nonregulated electric utility deems appropriate.

(3) For purposes of the standard for information to consumers established by section 2623(b)(3) of this title, each electric utility, on request of an electric consumer of such utility, shall transmit to such consumer a clear and concise statement of the actual consumption (or degree-day adjusted consumption) of electric energy by such consumer for each billing period during the prior year (unless such consumption data is not reasonably ascertainable by the utility).

(g) Procedures for termination of electric service

The procedures for termination of service referred to in section 2623(b)(4) of this title are procedures prescribed by the State regulatory authority (with respect to electric utilities for which it has ratemaking authority) or by the nonregulated electric utility which provide that—

(1) no electric service to an electric consumer may be terminated unless reasonable prior notice (including notice of rights and remedies) is given to such consumer and such consumer has a reasonable opportunity to dispute the reasons for such termination, and

(2) during any period when termination of service to an electric consumer would be especially dangerous to health, as determined by the State regulatory authority (with respect to an electric utility for which it has ratemaking authority) or nonregulated electric utility, and such consumer establishes that—

(A) he is unable to pay for such service in accordance with the requirements of the utility’s billing, or

(B) he is able to pay for such service but only in installments,

such service may not be terminated.

Such procedures shall take into account the need to include reasonable provisions for elderly and handicapped consumers.

(h) Advertising

(1) For purposes of this section and section 2623(b)(5) of this title—

(A) The term “advertising” means the commercial use, by an electric utility, of any media, including newspaper, printed matter, radio, and television, in order to transmit a message to a substantial number of members of the public or to such utility’s electric consumers.

(B) The term “political advertising” means any advertising for the purpose of influencing public opinion with respect to legislative, administrative, or electoral matters, or with respect to any controversial issue of public importance.

(C) The term “promotional advertising” means any advertising for the purpose of encouraging any person to select or use the service or additional service of an electric utility or the selection or installation of any appliance or equipment designed to use such utility’s service.

(2) For purposes of this subsection and section 2623(b)(5) of this title, the terms “political advertising” and “promotional advertising” do not include—

(A) advertising which informs electric consumers how they can conserve energy or can reduce peak demand for electric energy,

(B) advertising required by law or regulation, including advertising required under part 1 of title II of the National Energy Conservation Policy Act [42 U.S.C. 8211 et seq.],

(C) advertising regarding service interruptions, safety measures, or emergency conditions,

(D) advertising concerning employment opportunities with such utility,

(E) advertising which promotes the use of energy efficient appliances, equipment or services, or

(F) any explanation or justification of existing or proposed rate schedules, or notifications of hearings thereon.

(i) Time-based metering and communications

In making a determination with respect to the standard established by section 2621(d)(14) of this title, the investigation requirement of section 2621(d)(14)(F) of this title shall be as follows: Each State regulatory authority shall conduct an investigation and issue a decision whether or not it is appropriate for electric utilities to provide and install time-based meters and communications devices for each of their customers which enable such customers to participate in time-based pricing rate schedules and other demand response programs.

(Pub. L. 95-617, title I, § 115, Nov. 9, 1978, 92 Stat. 3125; Pub. L. 109-58, title XII, § 1252(b), Aug. 8, 2005, 119 Stat. 965.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The National Energy Conservation Policy Act, referred to in subsec. (h)(2)(B), is Pub. L. 95-619, Nov. 9, 1978, 92 Stat. 3206, as amended. Part 1 of title II of the National Energy Conservation Policy Act was classified generally to part A (§8211 et seq.) of subchapter II of chapter 91 of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare, and was omitted from the Code pursuant to section 8229 of Title 42 which terminated authority under that part June 30, 1989. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 8201 of Title 42 and Tables.

AMENDMENTS

2005—Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 109-58, § 1252(b)(1), (2), inserted “and the standard for time-based metering and communications established by section 2621(d)(14) of this title” after “section 2621(d)(3) of this title” and substituted “metering and communications costs” for “metering costs”.

Subsec. (i). Pub. L. 109-58, § 1252(b)(3), added subsec. (i).

§ 2626. Reports respecting standards

(a) State authorities and nonregulated utilities

Not later than one year after November 9, 1978, and annually thereafter for ten years, each State regulatory authority (with respect to each State regulated electric utility for which it has ratemaking authority), and each nonregulated electric utility, shall report to the Secretary, in such manner as the Secretary shall prescribe, respecting its consideration of the standards established by sections 2621(d) and 2623(b) of this title. Such report shall include a summary of the determinations made and actions taken with respect to each such standard on a utility-by-utility basis.

(b) Secretary

Not later than eighteen months after November 9, 1978, and annually thereafter for ten years, the Secretary shall submit a report to the President and the Congress containing—

- (1) a summary of the reports submitted under subsection (a),
- (2) his analysis of such reports, and
- (3) his actions under this chapter, and his recommendations for such further Federal ac-

tions, including any legislation, regarding retail electric utility rates (and other practices) as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this chapter.

(Pub. L. 95-617, title I, § 116, Nov. 9, 1978, 92 Stat. 3128.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This chapter, referred to in subsec. (b)(3), was in the original “this title”, meaning title I (§101 et seq.) of Pub. L. 95-617, Nov. 9, 1978, 92 Stat. 3120, which enacted subchapters I to IV of this chapter and section 6808 of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare, and amended sections 6802 to 6807 of Title 42. For complete classification of title I to the Code, see Tables.

§ 2627. Relationship to State law

(a) Revenue and rate of return

Nothing in this chapter shall authorize or require the recovery by an electric utility of revenues, or of a rate of return, in excess of, or less than, the amount of revenues or the rate of return determined to be lawful under any other provision of law.

(b) State authority

Nothing in this chapter prohibits any State regulatory authority or nonregulated electric utility from adopting, pursuant to State law, any standard or rule affecting electric utilities which is different from any standard established by this subchapter.

(c) Federal agencies

With respect to any electric utility which is a Federal agency, and with respect to the Tennessee Valley Authority when it is treated as a State regulatory authority as provided in section 2602(17) of this title, any reference in section 2621 or 2623 of this title to State law shall be treated as a reference to Federal law.

(Pub. L. 95-617, title I, § 117, Nov. 9, 1978, 92 Stat. 3128.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This chapter, referred to in subsections. (a) and (b), was in the original “this title”, meaning title I (§101 et seq.) of Pub. L. 95-617, Nov. 9, 1978, 92 Stat. 3120, which enacted subchapters I to IV of this chapter and section 6808 of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare, and amended sections 6802 to 6807 of Title 42. For complete classification of title I to the Code, see Tables.

SUBCHAPTER III—INTERVENTION AND JUDICIAL REVIEW

§ 2631. Intervention in proceedings

(a) Authority to intervene and participate

In order to initiate and participate in the consideration of one or more of the standards established by subchapter II or other concepts which contribute to the achievement of the purposes of this chapter, the Secretary, any affected electric utility, or any electric consumer of an affected electric utility may intervene and participate as a matter of right in any ratemaking proceeding or other appropriate regulatory proceeding relating to rates or rate design which is conducted by a State regulatory authority (with respect to an electric utility for which it has ratemaking authority) or by a nonregulated electric utility.