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Campaign to Stop Predatory Electric Suppliers Applauds Department of Public Utilities for Holding CleanChoice Energy Accountable

BOSTON — Today, the <u>Campaign to Stop Predatory Electric Suppliers</u>, backed by dozens of advocacy organizations and municipal leaders, issued the following statement in response to the Department of Public Utilities' <u>Notice of Probable Violation</u> to CleanChoice Energy:

"We applaud the Department of Public Utilities for taking action to hold third party suppliers accountable for allegedly taking advantage of consumers by overcharging them for contracts secured through aggressive and unethical marketing practices. We are glad to see proactive steps such as this to protect consumers, but the problems detailed in the case are not confined to one supplier. To protect all consumers from predatory suppliers, we also need legislation.

The DPU's Notice of Probable Violation details dozens of complaints in which CleanChoice appears to have engaged in "egregious misconduct." These include deceptive mail advertising, arbitrary price increases that double or even triple rates, customer service agents who misrepresent the environmental quality of energy plans, and unauthorized enrollment of customers without their consent outside of retail stores.

CleanChoice has previously faced investigations from state attorneys general in Pennsylvania and Illinois for misleading advertising.

The Massachusetts Attorney General's Office's most <u>recent report</u> on third-party suppliers documented more than \$650 million in consumer losses over the last nine years, compared to what customers would have paid for basic service. Most recently, between 2023 and 2024, consumers lost nearly \$75 million. The likely costs to ratepayers are even higher because municipal aggregations are often cheaper than default utility rates.

We continue to believe that the single best way to protect Massachusetts residents from third-party electric suppliers' exorbitant rates and predatory practices over the long term is to pass legislation to ban third-party electric suppliers from the residential electricity market, or at the very least pass substantial reforms like those introduced in Governor Healey's recent energy affordability legislation to provide immediate relief and protections for residential electricity consumers across the Commonwealth."