

Customer Choice Hits Airwaves Second Time

The sparks continue to fly over the so-called energy package ([HB 5524](#), [HB 5525](#), [HB 5548](#) and [HB 5549](#)). Today, the Customer Choice Coalition (CCC) announced a second radio ad campaign it hopes would inform voters that "the bills would lead to huge electric rate hikes and job losses."

"The Customer Choice Coalition has taken the lead in providing factual information to lawmakers and citizens about this massive and unnecessary electric rate hike bill," said Barry [CARGILL](#). "We are proud to be running this week on statewide radio another spot that lets Michigan know the House is ready to impose a \$2 billion tax increase on Michigan by remonopolizing the state's electric system and taking away their right to choose."

Proponents of the House energy package, which is expected to come up shortly in the House Energy and Technology Committee, contend that doing nothing will actually cost the state more than taking the steps outlined in the House package.

In an interview last month, former Senate Majority Leader Ken **SIKKEMA** told *MIRS* that the state has limited options in how it can receive its future electricity. Sikkema argued that the House plan is essentially a good plan, and that doing nothing is the most expensive option facing the state because it means we buy future power on the open market (See "[House Makes Late Electric Pitch](#)," 03/17/08).

The CCC ad is expected to run statewide through this week. The coalition contends that the latest version of [HB 5524](#) was made available today and it's expected to be voted on Thursday.

"There is no time for lawmakers to review this complex legislation, fully consider its implications, meet with their constituents, and ask if, in an election year, they really want to raise their electric rates by \$2 billion annually — more than the tax hike that was passed in 2007," reads the Customer Choice Coalition press release.

The text of the group's radio ad is as follows:

Did you know Michigan's electric rates could soon be increasing by \$2 billion each year? First the Legislature raised your taxes, now the House of Representatives is considering taking away your right to choose an electric supplier. That would give Detroit Edison and Consumers Energy a monopoly.

[HB 5524](#) means when utilities raise rates, you will have no choice but to pay more. The bill also means you will pay for huge cost overruns when the utilities build a new plant. Higher electric rates kill jobs, especially manufacturing jobs. Michigan businesses and residents can't afford higher electric rates.

Tell the Michigan Legislature to save jobs and vote no on higher electric rates. Go to [www.stopthemonopoly.com](#). That's [stopthemonopoly.com](#), to tell your lawmakers to vote NO on House Bill 5524. You can't afford to pay more for electricity. Michigan can't afford to lose more jobs. That's [stopthemonopoly.com](#).

Paid for by the Customer Choice Coalition.