

# Critics blame higher power bills on Michigan law

Associated Press

October 27, 2009

LANSING, Mich. — Residential customers are paying higher electric bills than they were a year ago, and critics say it's because of a Michigan law that limited competition in the power market.

Opponents of the law say Detroit Edison households are paying about \$11 more a month than last October, a 20 percent hike. Consumers Energy households are paying about \$5, or 9 percent more. The Customer Choice Coalition held a Capitol press conference Tuesday to urge eliminating or changing the law's 10 percent cap on competition.

Utility officials have said the law is working as intended. Regulated utilities pushed the law so they could have a guaranteed customer base before building more power plants. But demand for electricity is falling, not rising.

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