

Municipalities take electric aggregation measures to the ballot box as competitive rates emerge

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Since S.B. 3 went into effect in January 2001, more than 274 local municipalities now participate in electric aggregation, while several others are taking the issue to the ballot box this November. Among other things, the 1999 law aimed to unbundle the multiple services that constitute energy rates to allow residential and small business customers to collectively buy either natural gas or electricity as a group in a single buying block, thereby possibly achieving a lower rate. A fully competitive market did not develop as quickly as lawmakers intended after S.B. 3, but competitive rates from different electric generating companies have emerged in recent years.

Athens City Council and Athens County Commissioners are among the several municipalities that are putting electric aggregation initiatives on the November ballot. Dayton residents and small businesses could save between \$100 and \$200 per year if a ballot measure to allow the city's customers to be grouped into a single buying block is approved. A ballot measure in the Village and Township of Granville could save customers as much as 10 percent off their bills if they join. Baltimore is voting on a program this November.

There are two forms of aggregation under Ohio law: "Opt-in," which does not require voter approval - however, each consumer must consent before being included in the group - and "Opt-out," which requires voter approval, and automatically includes consumers who must then actively indicate to the local government if they do not want to participate.

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For more, read this recent [Bricker & Eckler publication](#), and access this [Public Utilities Commission of Ohio \(PUCO\) presentation](#).

If you have questions regarding Ohio's electricity aggregation laws, contact [Maria Armstrong](#) at (614) 227-8821 or marmstrong@bricker.com, [Thomas J. O'Brien](#) at (614) 227-2335 or tobrien@bricker.com or [Dylan Borchers](#) at (614) 227-4914 or dborchers@bricker.com.