



725 Lois Drive
Sun Prairie, WI 53590
(608) 837-2263
fax: (608) 837-0206
www.meuw.org

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TO: All Wisconsin Legislators
FROM: Scott J. Meske, Associate Director
DATE: April 13, 2011
RE: Please Do Not Support Senate Bill 58 – related to electric meter back billing and cost recovery

We are aware that Sens. Ellis has introduced SB 58, a bill that would prohibit utilities from recovering the total cost of providing service from customers, even though service was provided, due to a faulty electric meter. MEUW represents 82 Wisconsin communities that own and operate an electric utility, and along with our investor owned utility counterparts, we respectfully urge you not to support this bill.

We are supportive of the current law which allows the electric service provider to recover two years' worth of "back-bills" under the law, should a metering or billing issue be discovered. This is a reasonable compromise, for if the utility had owed the customer a *refund*, it would be required to go back *six* years to correct the mistake - and also pay interest.

According to PSC records, less than 1% of electric meters were inaccurate, stopped or faulty in 2010 and the utilities refunded nearly as much money to customers as they billed. The current law provides a reasonable balance to a difficult issue. Limiting back-bills to two years is a realistic middle ground and ensures that customers are not unfairly billed for inaccurate meters while allowing the provider to recover a reasonable portion of the cost of the service they provided.

It is important to note that it is merely the *measurement* of the electric service already provided to a customer that can be inaccurate; something that can be caused by any number of issues. Thus the current two-year limitation on cost recovery strikes a reasonable balance when weighed against the six-years for which utilities furnish refunds for over-charges.

For these reasons, MEUW respectfully urges you to not support SB 58.