

# REACHING THE PUBLIC – CONSUMER EDUCATION, THE MEDIA AND POLITICS

David Bonar, Government Services Administrator  
Delaware Public Service Commission  
March 1, 2004

# Message to the Public

- Utility regulation is necessary, even with competition
  - Makes for clearer goals and objectives
  - Substitutes for the lack of competition
  - Gives proper guidance
  - Provides protections to the consumer
- Competition has changed the role of Utility Commissions

# Public Participation

- Formally intervene or be participant in cases
- Speak at public comment sessions
- Submit written comments
- May attend any PSC hearing
- May initiate formal proceedings (complaint)

# Consumer Outreach

- Public notices
- Press releases
- Consumer education working group for electric competition
- Speaking engagements
- Workshops
- Resolve customer complaints and answer inquiries

# Media Relations

- Carefully select media contacts and maintain list of relevant media outlets
- Selective press releases
- Prepare for media inquiries
  - Answer questions only when information is available and correct
- Accessibility is very important
- Arrange meetings with press when appropriate

# Utilizing the Political Process

- Answer inquiries from legislators promptly
- Designate specific personnel to work with legislators
- Meet to discuss key and timely issues – proactive, not reactive
- Educate legislators on issues, presenting a balanced view
- Credibility is critical