

~~accruing to the Fund from July 1, 1978 through June 30, 1983 shall be used to supplement funds necessary to carry out the duties of the People's Counsel of the Public Service Commission. The People's Counsel shall submit an annual budget of necessary supplemental funds to the Department to be incorporated in the Department's budget. For the purposes of this subtitle, the Secretary, in consultation with the Director of the Maryland Energy Administration, may execute appropriate contracts with any State or federal agency, research organization, industry, or academic institution to conduct the necessary research, construct or acquire, or both, real property including physical predictive models, laboratories, buildings, land, and appurtenances, or support the technological development of extraordinary systems related to power plants designed to minimize environmental impact. [He] THE SECRETARY may utilize available expertise in any other State unit in the development, execution, and management of contracts and agreements on projects relating to their areas of prime responsibility.~~

~~(d) (1) The Maryland Energy Administration shall receive administrative and fiscal support from the Fund for studies relating to the conservation or production of electric energy.~~

~~(2) Fiscal support to the Maryland Energy Administration from the Fund may not exceed \$250,000 in any fiscal year.~~

~~(e) The Legislative Auditor shall conduct post audits of a fiscal and compliance nature of the Fund and of the appropriations and expenditures made for the purposes of this subtitle. The cost of the fiscal portion of the post audit examinations shall be an operating cost of the Fund.~~

~~SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That Section 3 of this Act shall take effect July 1, 2000, provided that, if the Public Service Commission delays implementation of customer choice in accordance with the provisions of § 7-510(b) of the Public Utility Companies Article, the surcharge funding the Environmental Trust Fund pursuant to § 7-203 of the Public Utility Companies Article shall continue to be collected as a per kilowatt hour surcharge on electricity generated within the State until customer choice is implemented.~~

~~SECTION 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Governor is authorized to submit a budget amendment for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2000, transferring \$6,000,000 from the Revenue Stabilization Fund to be used for the purpose of educating consumers on electric utility industry restructuring. In accordance with § 7-505(b) of the Public Utility Companies Article, the Public Service Commission shall use the allocated funds during the fiscal year ending June 30, 2000, to implement a consumer education program informing customers of changes in the electric industry. On or before September 1, 1999, the Public Service Commission shall report to the Governor and, subject to § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, to the General Assembly on: (1) the recommended funding level, between \$3,000,000 and \$6,000,000, for the consumer education program for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2001; (2) the recommended method of funding for the program; and (3) if applicable, the impact that the funding method will have on customers' costs for electricity. On or before September 1, 2000, the Public Service Commission shall report to the Governor and, subject to § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, to~~