

Office of the People's Counsel

MISSION

The Office of the People's Counsel (OPC) strives to provide effective and zealous representation for Maryland's residential utility ratepayers. In addition, it is our mission to identify systemic issues that impact ratepayers and pursue solutions that will preserve the safety and reliability of consumer utility service, while advocating for the lowest possible costs to utility consumers. Finally, OPC is committed to educating residential consumers on issues pertinent to their utility service and changes in the energy markets.

VISION

A State in which all residential utility customers have equal access to advocacy, education and resources concerning their utility service, regardless of income.

KEY GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Goal 1 To advocate for safe, reliable and fairly priced utility service for residential consumers of energy, telecommunications and other regulated utility services.

- Obj. 1.1** To advocate yearly through litigation on behalf of residential ratepayers before the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) and Maryland State circuit and appellate courts.
- Obj. 1.2** To advocate yearly for safe, reliable and fairly priced utility service for residential consumers of energy, telecommunications and other regulated utility services in other non-litigated forums.
- Obj. 1.3** Annually increase the number of successful resolutions or referrals.

Performance Measures	2014 Act.	2015 Act.	2016 Act.	2017 Act.	2018 Act.	2019 Est.	2020 Est.
Federal, PSC and Appellate cases in which OPC has participated	170	138	130	131	151	140	140
Favorable Federal, PSC and appellate court decisions	114	91	85	71	79	78	78
Amount saved for customers in major cases (\$ millions)	171	114	209	148	315	224	224
Regulatory matters in which OPC has participated	16	14	22	30	29	27	27
Favorable resolution in regulatory matters	13	7	10	13	15	13	13
Calls meeting OPC intake criteria that were successfully resolved	368	710	557	499	373	476	476

Office of the People's Counsel

C91H00.01 General Administration

Program Description

The Office of the People's Counsel (OPC) is an independent State agency that represents Maryland's residential consumers of electricity, natural gas, telephone and private water services. The OPC litigates on behalf of consumers and their interests in regulatory and court proceedings, helps resolve problems with utility services and locates financial assistance for ratepayers who have difficulty paying their bills. OPC advocates on both State and Federal levels for legislation that provides protection for residential ratepayers. In addition to monitoring the changes in competitive energy markets in the areas of gas, electricity and telephone services, the OPC also serves as a resource to the community by providing education, referrals and training.

Appropriation Statement

		2018 Actual	2019 Appropriation	2020 Allowance
Number of Authorized Positions		19.00	19.00	19.00
01	Salaries, Wages and Fringe Benefits	2,158,416	2,252,804	2,307,488
02	Technical and Special Fees	1,482,423	1,484,910	1,497,323
03	Communications	21,585	28,241	9,801
04	Travel	11,573	14,000	13,000
07	Motor Vehicle Operation and Maintenance	10,920	11,500	11,500
08	Contractual Services	65,574	80,934	106,892
09	Supplies and Materials	59,603	60,000	62,000
13	Fixed Charges	154,309	158,957	164,810
Total Operating Expenses		<u>323,564</u>	<u>353,632</u>	<u>368,003</u>
Total Expenditure		<u>3,964,403</u>	<u>4,091,346</u>	<u>4,172,814</u>
Special Fund Expenditure		<u>3,964,403</u>	<u>4,091,346</u>	<u>4,172,814</u>
Total Expenditure		<u>3,964,403</u>	<u>4,091,346</u>	<u>4,172,814</u>
Special Fund Expenditure				
C91301	Public Utility Regulation Fund	<u>3,964,403</u>	<u>4,091,346</u>	<u>4,172,814</u>
Total		<u>3,964,403</u>	<u>4,091,346</u>	<u>4,172,814</u>

3 Year Position Summary

Classification Title	FY 2018 Positions	FY 2018 Expenditures	FY 2019 Positions	FY 2019 Appropriation	FY 2020 Positions	FY 2020 Allowance
C91 - Office of the People's Counsel						
C91H0001 - General Administration						
Admin Officer III	1.00	65,918	1.00	63,371	1.00	65,880
Admin Prog Mgr I	1.00	83,811	1.00	83,811	1.00	85,488
Administrator II	1.00	66,888	1.00	66,888	1.00	68,226
Asst Peoples Counsel II	1.00	72,000	1.00	72,000	1.00	73,440
Asst Peoples Counsel III	3.00	209,549	3.00	233,090	3.00	254,090
Asst Peoples Counsel IV	4.00	367,172	4.00	417,557	4.00	393,061
Consumer Liaison Peoples Couns	1.00	99,914	1.00	99,914	1.00	101,912
Dep Peoples Counsel	1.00	123,206	1.00	123,206	1.00	125,670
Management Associate	3.00	150,695	3.00	149,941	3.00	154,638
OBS-Admin Spec I	1.00	45,160	1.00	45,160	1.00	46,064
Office Secy I	1.00	38,577	1.00	37,662	1.00	39,232
Peoples Counsel	1.00	115,472	1.00	115,472	1.00	117,781
Total C91H0001	19.00	1,438,362	19.00	1,508,072	19.00	1,525,482