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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

The Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA) invites all New Hampshire residential utility customers to voice their opinions about important and current public utility issues. Please visit [www.oca.nh.gov](http://www.oca.nh.gov) for the May Survey. This is your opportunity to impact the work of the OCA and, possibly, the qualities and rates of your utility services. The May survey will only be up until May 31<sup>st</sup>, so please take the survey now.

This month's survey question concerns telephone communication choices. The regulated telephone companies within the state have been insistent that they are facing competitive pressures from communications providers entering the market. The statement has been made that they are losing lines to competitors that are providing services via cable television networks, wireless cellular networks and Voice over Internet Protocol (VOIP). Currently regulated telephone service providers are seeking to have their businesses deregulated; which if allowed without appropriate consumer protections could result in increased rates and diminished service quality. The OCA would like to test the validity of the level of competition within New Hampshire when it comes to the offering of basic telephone service. The OCA will post the results of the survey in June; the results will be used to help formulate policy development and positions to be taken by the OCA in future cases before the NH Public Utilities Commission (PUC). It is vitally important that you participate in the survey and share your thoughts with us. Also, if you have an idea or suggestion for an upcoming survey, please do not hesitate to contact us at [oca@puc.nh.gov](mailto:oca@puc.nh.gov) or 603-271-1172.

In addition to the consumer survey, you may always view present and past New Hampshire Ratewatcher newsletters, follow the Residential Ratepayers' Advisory Board actions, learn about the telecommunications, electric, gas and water industries, and obtain other interesting and helpful consumer information from the OCA's website. The OCA invites you to tour the website and share your comments and suggestions for improvement.

**The OCA is an independent state agency representing the interests of New Hampshire's residential utility ratepayers.**

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