



MUNICIPAL  
ELECTRIC  
UTILITIES OF  
WISCONSIN

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- Wisconsin Dells
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TO: Members of the Assembly Energy and Utilities Committee

FROM: Zachary Bloom, Executive Director

DATE: October 15, 2013

RE: **MEUW Support** Statement on Assembly Bill 384

Chairman Kuglitsch, thank you for the opportunity to appear before the committee this morning to offer MEUW's support for Assembly Bill 384, relating to exceptions to the prohibition of release of customer information by a municipal utility. My name is Zachary Bloom, and I am the Executive Director for the Municipal Electric Utilities of Wisconsin, the trade association that serves all 82 municipally owned electric utilities in this state. Combined our utilities distribute about 11 percent of Wisconsin's electric load to nearly 280,000 residential, commercial, industrial and farm customers.

Originally, Act 25 addressed several key issues for MEUW member utilities. It clarified the discrepancy between PSC Administrative Code Chapter 113 and Wisconsin Open Records laws. In addition, Act 25 protects the privacy of municipal utility customers; placing MEUW member's customers on par with other regulated utilities in Wisconsin.

As with any new law, Act 25 has not been without growing pains. MEUW offered educational opportunities to its members on Act 25's impacts on their business practices. As a result, our members have adjusted several of their outmoded business practices to protect customer information. The municipal finance issue created by Act 25 relates to our member's ability to release customer information required by Federal securities laws in conjunction with issuance of new long-term debt, a refinancing of existing debt, and annual continuing disclosure requirements.

Additionally, our members have encountered issues when dealing with landlords, title companies, and banks when properties are in foreclosure. MEUW supports the elements of the amendment to the bill that was passed by the Senate because we believe they do not dilute the intent of the law.

MEUW supports Assembly Bill 384 and the amendment to its Senate companion bill SB 315. We ask for the committee's support for the bill as amended. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today and I look forward to working with you and the Committee in the future.