Emergency Regulation Basis:

Emergency promulgation is consistent with the standard established in G.L. Ch. 30A Sec. 2. An emergency regulation is necessary for the preservation of the welfare of the public to immediately lower ratepayer costs and alleviate the expected increase in home heating costs for the 2026/2027 winter. In addition, the delays inherent to the non-emergency promulgation pathway are contrary to the public interest. As indicated in Executive Order 659, issued October 5, 2026, high home heating oil prices for the 2026/2027 winter could jeopardize Massachusetts residents access to heat this winter, to the detriment of the public health and wellbeing of the people of Massachusetts, and the overall energy system. The changes to Compliance Year 2027, including a reduction in the compliance obligation, which DOER estimates will save ratepayers between $22,000,000 and $67,000,000 beginning next January, must be implemented as soon as possible to maximize ratepayer savings on their electric bills, which will help offset the expected rise in home heating oil prices and are necessary for the preservation of the general welfare. Competitive suppliers are currently negotiating or entering into contracts for 2027 at the current, higher obligation. The longer the higher obligation remains in effect, the value of savings to ratepayers will be diminished as contracts may have to be renegotiated or updated to reflect the lower compliance obligation.