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## **Your electric bill could go higher**

LANSING -- Michigan's two largest electric utilities would regain virtual monopoly status and gradually shift \$365 million in energy costs from businesses to residential customers, under legislation passed by the state House on Thursday.

The average DTE Energy residential customer would pay less than \$100 over five years to cover the shift in costs, according to DTE.

The bill passed on a bipartisan 78-30 vote and now goes to the Senate, where it faces scrutiny and likely changes.

Competitors to the state's utility giants -- DTE and Consumers Energy -- could generate no more than 10% of all power statewide. Limiting competition would allow the companies to more easily finance new, multibillion-dollar power plants, they said. The proposal also would allow utilities to raise rates faster but would require state approval before the companies build new power plants.

Critics said the bill would kill competition and result in higher rates than the utilities claim.