



Statement by Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Hayashi Full Liberalization of Entry into the Electricity Retail Market

April 1, 2016

1. Today, entry into the electricity retail market was fully liberalized as a result of the first revision in approximately 60 years to the policy which maintained electric power company regional monopolies. This measure, which is critical to reforming the “bedrock regulation” as stipulated under the Abenomics policy, makes it possible for ordinary households to choose their preferred electric power company and electricity pricing plan.
2. More than 250 companies have already moved into the market as new entrants, and competition between existing electric power companies is intensifying. Various changes including suppressed electricity price rise and new services are visible in the electricity market. In April 2017, the gas market will also be liberalized, creating an integrated energy market that penetrates the electricity, gas and heat supply sectors.
3. I believe that such changes in the electricity market will be further promoted by choices made by consumers. It is important that people understand the basic, reassuring facts as follows in choosing a new power supplier that better suits their particular needs: electricity supply will not be suspended even in the event that suppliers with which they have concluded contracts fail; and electricity quality will not suffer even if they sign contracts with small electricity suppliers. For its part, the Government will make every possible effort to protect consumers.
4. I strongly believe that in the new energy market, new innovations and resourceful ideas created by electricity suppliers will not only strengthen the competitiveness of the energy industry but also invigorate Japanese industry as a whole, acting as the driving force in achieving the Growth Strategy.

Division in Charge

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