

Electricity market reform advances; ASEP promises stronger consumer rights

When	No date given
Where	Panama
Source	gn_tigo
Outlet	DPL News
Published	2026-10-09 11:34-05:00
Discovered	2026-10-10 02:00-05:00
Link	https://dplnews.com/panama-asep-reforma-responde-a-la-demanda-de-los-usuarios-por-un-servicio-de-calidad/

Summary

DPL News reports that a government bill reforming Panama's 1997 electricity law passed first debate in the National Assembly, giving ASEP more oversight powers, faster complaint handling and bill credits when service quality fails.

Details (summary of the article)

The National Assembly's commerce and economic affairs committee has approved in first debate a government bill to overhaul Law 6 of 1997, which governs Panama's electricity market, according to DPL News. ASEP's administrator general, Zelmar Rodríguez Crespo, says the changes answer users' demand for reliable service and fair handling of complaints. For customers of distributors such as Naturgy/EDECHI, the practical points are shorter deadlines for resolving claims, automatic credits on the bill when quality standards are not met, and stronger compensation mechanisms, for example when appliances are ruined by voltage fluctuations. The bill also aims at more competition and transparency, with a new scheme for buying capacity and energy through regulated tenders, updated rules for the regulated return on transmission and distribution, and limits on concentration in generation. ASEP argues this will not directly set tariffs but should modernise how the sector works. The bill must still go to second debate before becoming law.

Original (es)

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