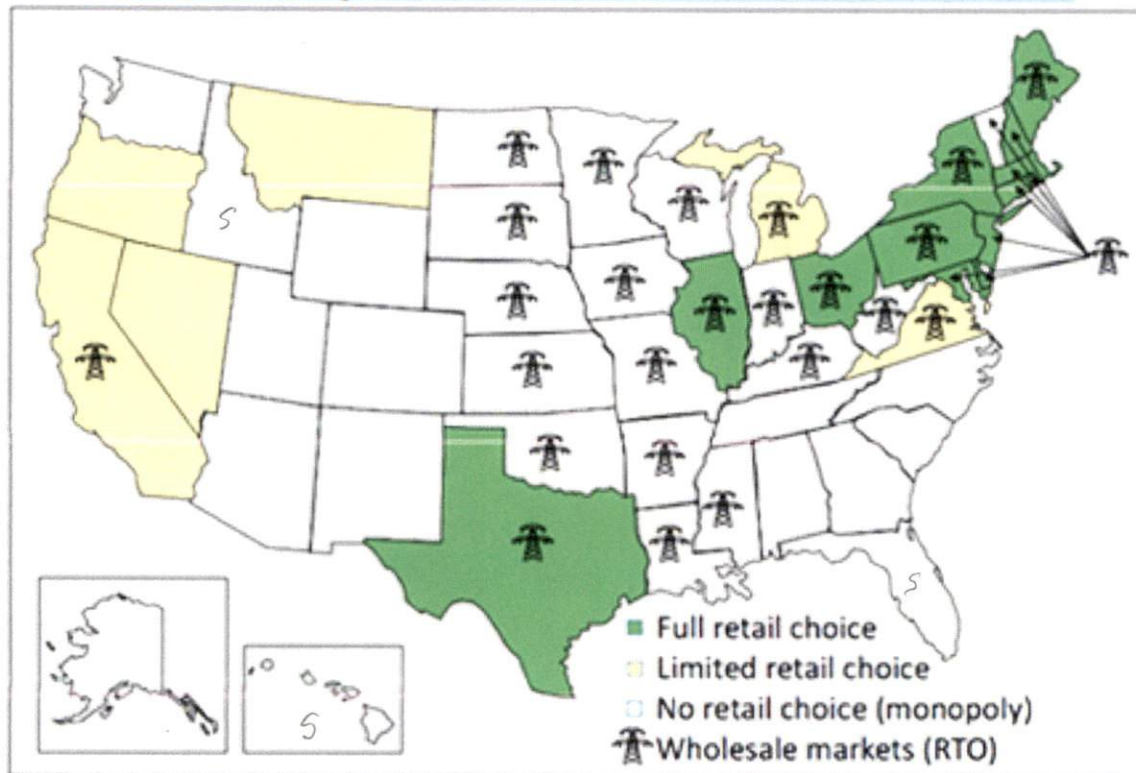


Retail Electricity Choice and Wholesale Markets in the U.S.



Green states – Fully **“restructured”** (competitive) retail electricity markets, where individuals and businesses can choose their electricity supplier and rate plan from among many competing suppliers.

Yellow states – Limited retail consumer choice of one type or another.

White states – No retail consumer choice (monopoly states like Colorado).

The “flavor” of restructuring differs between states. California has minimal individual retail choice, but it allows communities as a whole to select an alternative electricity supplier rather than their local monopoly utility, known as **“Community Choice Aggregation”** (CCA). **Illinois** lets individuals/businesses, as well as communities, choose between competing electricity suppliers, while **Texas** allows individual choice but not community choice.

The transmission tower symbols show which states (or parts of states) belong to a **“Regional Transmission Organization”** (see [RTO map](#)). An RTO operates the high-voltage transmission network on a regional basis (state-size or larger), rather than each utility controlling the transmission system within its own smaller territory, as in Colorado. RTOs also operate wholesale electricity markets, where a competitive bidding process determines which power plants are the most cost-effective and get to dispatch (sell) their power. Utilities in monopoly states control their own power dispatch, so there are no market forces to sort out which power plants are the least-cost power providers.

For more about RTOs, see our [overview of the U.S. electricity system](#) and our [wholesale markets in Colorado](#) webpage. For unfamiliar terms, see our [terms and definitions](#) webpage.