

STATE OF NEW YORK

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Cal. No. 922

IN SENATE

March 7, 2022

Introduced by Sens. PARKER, GAUGHRAN -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Energy and Telecommunications -- reported favorably from said committee, ordered to first and second report, ordered to a third reading, amended and ordered reprinted, retaining its place in the order of third reading -- again amended and ordered reprinted, retaining its place in the order of third reading

AN ACT to amend the public service law, in relation to establishing discount programs for veterans

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. The public service law is amended by adding a new section
2 66-t to read as follows:

3 § 66-t. Utility discount program. 1. (a) Notwithstanding any other
4 provision of law, the commission is authorized and directed to require a
5 gas corporation, electric corporation or municipality to establish a
6 discount program for veterans no later than ninety days after the effec-
7 tive date of this section. Such program shall offer a yearly benefit to
8 veterans in the form of a ten percent discount on utility bills. The
9 fiscal impact of such program shall not be borne by customers and shall
10 not be added to bills rendered by a gas corporation, electric corpo-
11 ration or municipality to customers.

12 (b) A gas corporation, electric corporation or municipality which
13 offers such discount program shall conspicuously advertise the avail-
14 ability and amount of such discount on the website of such gas corpo-
15 ration, electric corporation or municipality. The availability and
16 amount of such discount shall also be conspicuously advertised on the
17 accessibility page of the website of such gas corporation, electric
18 corporation or municipality.

19 2. For the purposes of this section, "veteran" shall mean a resident
20 of the state who (a) is the primary named utility service accountholder;
21 (b) has had a total household income of less than fifty thousand dollars
22 for the most recent two consecutive income tax years beginning in two
23 thousand nineteen, as verified by the department of taxation and

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 finance; and (c) served in and who received any honorable or general
2 discharge from the United States army, navy, air force, marine corps,
3 coast guard and/or the reserves thereof, and/or the army national guard,
4 air national guard, New York guard or New York naval militia.

5 § 2. The public service law is amended by adding a new section 89-q to
6 read as follows:

7 § 89-q. Water discount program. 1. (a) Notwithstanding any other
8 provision of law, the commission is authorized and directed to require
9 waterworks corporations and municipal water systems to establish a
10 discount program for veterans no later than ninety days after the effec-
11 tive date of this section. Such program shall offer a yearly benefit to
12 veterans in the form of a ten percent discount on water utility bills.
13 The fiscal impact of such program shall not be borne by customers and
14 shall not be added to bills rendered by a waterworks corporation or
15 municipal water system to customers.

16 (b) A waterworks corporation or municipal water system which offers
17 such discount program shall conspicuously advertise the availability and
18 amount of such discount on the website of such waterworks corporation or
19 municipal water system. The availability and amount of such discount
20 shall also be conspicuously advertised on the accessibility page of the
21 website of such waterworks corporation or municipal water system.

22 2. For the purposes of this section, "veteran" shall mean a resident
23 of the state who (a) is the primary named waterworks or municipal water
24 system service accountholder; (b) has had a total household income of
25 less than fifty thousand dollars for the most recent two consecutive
26 income tax years beginning in two thousand nineteen, as verified by the
27 department of taxation and finance; and (c) served in and who received
28 any honorable or general discharge from the United States army, navy,
29 air force, marine corps, coast guard and/or the reserves thereof, and/or
30 the army national guard, air national guard, New York guard or New York
31 naval militia.

32 § 3. The public service law is amended by adding a new section 91-b to
33 read as follows:

34 § 91-b. Telephone discount program. 1. (a) Notwithstanding any other
35 provision of law, the commission is authorized and directed to require a
36 telephone corporation to establish a discount program for veterans no
37 later than ninety days after the effective date of this section. Such
38 program shall offer a yearly benefit to veterans in the form of a ten
39 percent discount on telephone bills. The fiscal impact of such program
40 shall not be borne by customers and shall not be added to bills rendered
41 by a telephone corporation to customers.

42 (b) A telephone corporation which offers such discount program shall
43 conspicuously advertise the availability and amount of such discount on
44 the website of such telephone corporation. The availability and amount
45 of such discount shall also be conspicuously advertised on the accessi-
46 bility page of the website of such telephone corporation.

47 (c) Participation in the federal government's Lifeline or Affordable
48 Connectivity program, or any successor program the commission shall deem
49 sufficient, shall satisfy the telephone corporation's or cable tele-
50 vision company's obligation to establish a discount program under para-
51 graph (a) of this subdivision, provided that the commission deems it
52 sufficient to satisfy such requirements.

53 (d) Before applying a discount under paragraph (a) of this subdivi-
54 sion, a telephone corporation may require proof of eligibility from the
55 primary named telephone service accountholder for the calendar year in
56 which the discount is sought.

2. (a) For the purposes of this section, "veteran" shall mean a resident of the state who (i) is the primary named telephone service accountholder; (ii) has had a total household income of less than fifty thousand dollars for the most recent two consecutive income tax years beginning in two thousand nineteen, as verified by the department of taxation and finance; and (iii) served in and who received any honorable or general discharge from the United States army, navy, air force, marine corps, coast guard and/or the reserves thereof, and/or the army national guard, air national guard, New York guard or New York naval militia.

(b) A primary named telephone service accountholder shall provide the telephone corporation an authenticated copy of his or her discharge papers to be eligible for such discount.

§ 4. The public service law is amended by adding a new section 224-d to read as follows:

§ 224-d. Cable discount program. 1. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the commission is authorized and directed to require a telephone corporation, as defined in subdivision seventeen of section two of this chapter, and a cable television company, as defined in section two hundred twelve of this article, that provides cable service to customers in New York, to establish a discount program for veterans no later than ninety days after the effective date of this section. Such program shall offer a yearly benefit to veterans in the form of a ten percent discount on cable bills. The fiscal impact of such program shall not be borne by customers and shall not be added to bills rendered by a telephone corporation or cable television company to customers.

(b) A telephone corporation or cable television company which offers such discount program shall conspicuously advertise the availability and amount of such discount on the website of such telephone corporation or cable television company. The availability and amount of such discount shall also be conspicuously advertised on the accessibility page of the website of such telephone corporation or cable television company.

(c) Participation in the federal government's Lifeline or Affordable Connectivity program, or any successor program the commission shall deem sufficient, shall satisfy the telephone corporation's or cable television company's obligation to establish a discount program under paragraph (a) of this subdivision, provided that the commission deems it sufficient to satisfy such requirements.

(d) Before applying a discount under paragraph (a) of this subdivision, a telephone corporation or cable television company may require proof of eligibility from the primary named cable service accountholder for the calendar year in which the discount is sought.

2. (a) For the purposes of this section, "veteran" shall mean a resident of the state who (i) is the primary named cable service accountholder; (ii) has had a total household income of less than fifty thousand dollars for the most recent two consecutive income tax years beginning in two thousand nineteen, as verified by the department of taxation and finance; and (iii) received any honorable or general discharge from the United States army, navy, air force, marine corps, coast guard and/or the reserves thereof, and/or the army national guard, air national guard, New York guard or New York naval militia.

(b) A primary named cable service accountholder shall provide the telephone corporation or the cable television company an authenticated copy of his or her discharge papers to be eligible for such discount.

§ 5. This act shall take effect immediately.