S T A T E O F N E W Y O R K

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I N A S S E M B L Y

April 16, 2009

Introduced by M. of A. CAHILL, JOHN, CHRISTENSEN, GLICK, GUNTHER, FIELDS, PHEFFER, JACOBS, BOYLAND, ROSENTHAL, ALESSI -- Multi-Sponsored by -- M. of A. BENJAMIN, BRODSKY, COLTON, DESTITO, DINOWITZ, FARRELL, HEVESI, LIFTON, LUPARDO, MAGEE, MAGNARELLI, McDONOUGH, ORTIZ, TOWNS -- read once and referred to the Committee on Corporations, Authorities and Commissions -- reported from committee, advanced to a third reading, amended and ordered reprinted, retaining its place on the order of third reading -- reported from committee, advanced to a third reading, amended and ordered reprinted, retaining its place on the order of third reading

AN ACT to amend the public service law, in relation to utility service call centers

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Subdivision 11 of section 65 of the public service law, as added by chapter 693 of the laws of 1985, is renumbered subdivision 12 and a new subdivision 13 is added to read as follows:

13. (A) EVERY GAS CORPORATION OR ELECTRIC CORPORATION FURNISHING UTILITY SERVICES SHALL PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING CALL CENTER CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE RECEIVING INQUIRIES ON: CUSTOMER FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY; RECEIVING REQUESTS TO INITIATE OR TERMINATE SERVICE; RECEIVING REQUESTS FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES; DETERMINING DEPOSIT REQUIRED OR BILLING RATE; RECEIVING METER AND SERVICE ORDERS AND ACCESS TO METER REQUESTS; EXPLAINING COMPANY RATES, REGULATIONS, POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND COMMON PRACTICES; INITIATING TROUBLE ORDER FORMS AND HIGH BILL INVESTIGATIONS; HANDLING PAYMENT AND OTHER CREDIT ARRANGEMENTS SUCH AS OBTAINING DEPOSITS, FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND PAYMENT PLANS; AND REFERRING CUSTOMERS TO SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES AND OTHER ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.

(B) NO GAS OR ELECTRIC CORPORATION SHALL CLOSE A CALL CENTER OR OTHER FACILITY PROVIDING THE CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE SET FORTH IN PARAGRAPH (A) OF THIS SUBDIVISION OR RELOCATE SUCH CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE TO ANOTHER AREA OF

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

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NEW YORK STATE OR OUTSIDE OF NEW YORK STATE WITHOUT NOTICE AND HEARING BEFORE THE COMMISSION.

(C) THIS SUBDIVISION SHALL NOT APPLY TO THE COLLECTION OF DEBT WHERE BY UTILITY COMPANY POLICY SUCH DEBT IS DIRECTED TO A COLLECTION AGENCY OR SIMILAR SERVICE COMPANIES.

S 2. This act shall take effect on the sixtieth day after it shall have become a law. The public service commission is immediately authorized and directed to take any and all actions, including but not limited to the promulgation of any rules or regulations necessary to implement the provisions of this act on such effective date.