

3260

2009-2010 Regular Sessions

I N S E N A T E

March 13, 2009

Introduced by Sen. GRIFFO -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Energy and Telecommunications

AN ACT to amend the public service law, in relation to the establishment of investigation, hearing and determination procedures with respect to the creation of new area codes

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

1 Section 1. Legislative findings and intent. Telephone numbering
2 resources are limited and at times it may be necessary, as more numbers
3 and local exchange codes are utilized, to create new area codes. Area
4 code changes are a major burden because new area codes cause confusion
5 to callers and potential safety issues when hospitals, ambulances, and
6 public health and safety institutions are required to change their tele-
7 phone numbers; the records for E911, which include telephone numbers,
8 need to be changed when area codes change; errors in record changes can
9 result in serious health, safety, and welfare concerns; and the accuracy
10 of telephone numbers is a security issue if contacts are not reachable
11 because of outdated area codes on old contact lists.

12 The legislature finds that businesses suffer economic harm when their
13 area codes are changed if they are required to advertise the new
14 numbers, contact existing customers, and revise all stationery showing
15 their new telephone number, and they face the possibility of losing
16 business during area code transition periods when customers use an old
17 number.

18 The legislature further finds that greater regulatory vigilance is
19 needed to ensure that numbers or exchange codes do not become unneces-
20 sarily stranded due to inadvertent oversupply of numbering resources
21 where they are not really needed.

22 S 2. The public service law is amended by adding a new section 96-a to
23 read as follows:

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

LBD03879-01-9

1 S 96-A. INVESTIGATION, HEARING, AND DETERMINATIONS REGARDING NUMBER
2 CONSERVATION, NUMBER RESOURCE RECLAMATION, AND CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNA-
3 TIVES PRIOR TO IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW AREA CODES. 1. IT IS HEREBY
4 DECLARED TO BE THE POLICY OF THE STATE, AND IN THE PUBLIC HEALTH,
5 WELFARE, AND PUBLIC INTEREST, TO AVOID UNNECESSARY TELEPHONE AREA CODE
6 CHANGES THROUGH CONSERVATION OF NUMBERING RESOURCES AND RECLAMATION OF
7 UNDERUTILIZED NUMBERING RESOURCES.

8 2. THE COMMISSION SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS FOR CONSERVATION OF NUMBER-
9 ING RESOURCES AND FOR RECLAMATION OF UNDERUTILIZED NUMBERING RESOURCES.

10 3. PRIOR TO IMPLEMENTING ANY NEW AREA CODE, THE COMMISSION SHALL:

11 A. CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION TO DETERMINE WHETHER NUMBER CONSERVATION
12 POLICIES AND RULES HAVE BEEN FOLLOWED, WHETHER FOR ANY REASON NUMBERING
13 RESOURCES ARE OVERSUPPLIED IN ANY AREAS WHERE THEY ARE NOT REQUIRED TO
14 MEET LOCAL NEEDS, AND IDENTIFY ALTERNATIVES, INCLUDING WHETHER REALLO-
15 CATION AND RECLAMATION OF NUMBERING RESOURCES, INCLUDING EXCHANGE CODES,
16 COULD MEET NEEDS WITH LESS COST AND INCONVENIENCE THAN CREATION OF A NEW
17 AREA CODE.

18 B. APPOINT AN ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE TO HOLD PUBLIC EVIDENTIARY
19 HEARINGS, HEAR EVIDENCE REGARDING THE NEED FOR A NEW AREA CODE, ANY
20 OVERSUPPLY OF NUMBERING RESOURCES, AND EVIDENCE REGARDING ALTERNATIVES
21 SUCH AS REALLOCATION OF EXISTING RESOURCES, AND ISSUE A RECOMMENDED
22 DECISION WHICH ADDRESSES THE NEED FOR A NEW AREA CODE AND CONSIDERS THE
23 COMPARATIVE COSTS AND BENEFITS OF RECLAIMING UNDERUTILIZED EXCHANGE
24 CODES WITH THE COST AND BENEFITS OF IMPLEMENTING A NEW AREA CODE.

25 S 3. This act shall take effect immediately and shall apply to any
26 pending commission proceedings regarding creation of new area codes.