

3938

2009-2010 Regular Sessions

I N   S E N A T E

April 7, 2009

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Introduced by Sen. OPPENHEIMER -- read twice and ordered printed, and  
when printed to be committed to the Committee on Energy and Telecommu-  
nications

AN ACT to amend the public service law, in relation to mandating direc-  
tory information or assistance for certain eligible persons at no cost  
to such persons

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

1     Section 1. The public service law is amended by adding a new section  
2     92-g to read as follows:  
3     S 92-G. DIRECTORY ASSISTANCE FOR ELIGIBLE PERSONS. 1. THE COMMISSION  
4     SHALL REQUIRE ALL TELEPHONE CORPORATIONS TO PROVIDE DIRECTORY INFORMA-  
5     TION OR ASSISTANCE TO ELIGIBLE PERSONS, AS PROVIDED IN SUBDIVISION TWO  
6     OF THIS SECTION, AT NO COST TO SUCH PERSONS. THE COMMISSION SHALL  
7     ESTABLISH PROCEDURES BY WHICH FREE ACCESS TO SUCH INFORMATION OR ASSIST-  
8     ANCE FOR SUCH PERSONS IS AUTOMATICALLY REGISTERED AS EXEMPT FROM ALL  
9     CHARGES.  
10    2. THE FOLLOWING PERSONS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICE PURSUANT TO THIS  
11    SECTION:  
12    (A) BLIND PERSONS WHOSE VISUAL ACUITY, AS DETERMINED BY COMPETENT  
13    AUTHORITY, IS 20/200 OR LESS IN THE BETTER EYE WITH CORRECTING LENSES,  
14    OR WHOSE WIDEST DIAMETER OF VISUAL FIELD SUBTENDS ANGULAR DISTANCE NO  
15    GREATER THAN TWENTY DEGREES.  
16    (B) OTHER PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED PERSONS ARE ELIGIBLE AS FOLLOWS:  
17    (I) PERSONS WHOSE VISUAL DISABILITY, WITH CORRECTION AND REGARDLESS OF  
18    OPTICAL MEASUREMENT, IS CERTIFIED BY COMPETENT AUTHORITY AS PREVENTING  
19    THE READING OF STANDARD PRINTED MATERIAL.  
20    (II) PERSONS CERTIFIED BY COMPETENT AUTHORITY AS UNABLE TO READ OR  
21    UNABLE TO USE STANDARD PRINTED MATERIAL AS A RESULT OF PHYSICAL LIMITA-  
22    TIONS.

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

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1 (III) PERSONS CERTIFIED BY COMPETENT AUTHORITY AS HAVING A READING  
2 DISABILITY RESULTING FROM ORGANIC DYSFUNCTION AND OF SUFFICIENT SEVERITY  
3 TO PREVENT THEIR READING OF PRINTED MATERIAL IN A NORMAL MANNER.

4 (C) CERTIFYING AUTHORITY:

5 (I) IN CASES OF BLINDNESS, VISUAL IMPAIRMENT, OR PHYSICAL LIMITATIONS,  
6 "COMPETENT AUTHORITY" IS DEFINED TO INCLUDE DOCTORS OF MEDICINE; DOCTORS  
7 OF OSTEOPATHY; OPHTHALMOLOGISTS; OPTOMETRISTS; REGISTERED NURSES; THERA-  
8 PISTS; AND PROFESSIONAL STAFF OF HOSPITALS, INSTITUTIONS, AND PUBLIC OR  
9 PRIVATE WELFARE AGENCIES (E.G., SOCIAL WORKERS, CASEWORKERS, COUNSELORS,  
10 REHABILITATION TEACHERS, AND SUPERINTENDENTS).

11 (II) IN THE CASE OF READING DISABILITY FROM ORGANIC DYSFUNCTION,  
12 COMPETENT AUTHORITY IS DEFINED AS DOCTORS OF MEDICINE AND DOCTORS OF  
13 OSTEOPATHY WHO MAY CONSULT WITH COLLEAGUES IN ASSOCIATED DISCIPLINES.

14 S 2. This act shall take effect on the one hundred twentieth day after  
15 it shall have become a law. Any rules and regulations necessary for the  
16 timely implementation of this act on its effective date shall be promul-  
17 gated on or before such date.