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

5697--A

2011-2012 Regular Sessions

I N S E N A T E

June 10, 2011

Introduced by Sen. AVELLA -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Energy and Telecommunications -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the public service law, in relation to requiring reporting by the public service commission on consumer protections adopted by electric corporations and municipalities

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

Section 1. Section 32 of the public service law is amended by adding a new subdivision 7 to read as follows:

7. THE COMMISSION SHALL, NOT LATER THAN NOVEMBER FIFTEENTH, TWO THOUSAND THIRTEEN, AND AT LEAST ONCE ANNUALLY THEREAFTER, PROVIDE TO THE GOVERNOR, THE TEMPORARY PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE, THE SPEAKER OF THE ASSEMBLY, THE CHAIR OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND THE CHAIR OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON ENERGY A REPORT DETAILING CONSUMER PROTECTIONS ADOPTED BY ELECTRIC CORPORATIONS AND MUNICIPALITIES ("UTILITIES") PURSUANT TO THIS ARTICLE, AND THE ADEQUACY OF THE COMMISSION'S ASSISTANCE TO CUSTOMERS FACING DISCONNECTION OF UTILITY SERVICE. THE REPORT SHALL INCLUDE, BUT NOT BE LIMITED TO AN ANALYSIS OF:

(A) THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CURRENT UTILITY PROCEDURES FOR NOTIFYING CUSTOMERS IN ARREARS ON UTILITY CHARGES OF HOW THEY MAY AVOID TERMINATION OF ELECTRIC, GAS OR STEAM SERVICE, INCLUDING THE AVAILABILITY OF DEFERRED PAYMENT AGREEMENTS;

(B) THE ADEQUACY OF THE COMMISSION'S ASSISTANCE TO CUSTOMERS NEGOTIATING DEFERRED PAYMENT AGREEMENTS WITH UTILITIES IN LIEU OF DISCONNECTION OF SERVICE, INCLUDING THE AMOUNT OF DEFERRED PAYMENT PLANS BY UTILITY SERVICE TERRITORY;

(C) THE NUMBER OF INCIDENCES, IF ANY, IN WHICH UTILITIES HAVE REQUIRED MORE THAN THE LAWFULLY ALLOWED LEVEL OF DOWN PAYMENTS OR DEFERRED

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

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PAYMENTS FROM CUSTOMERS SEEKING TO CONNECT SERVICE OR AVOID DISCONNECTION;

(D) THE EFFECTIVENESS AND AVAILABILITY OF THE COMMISSION'S SHUTOFF HOTLINE IN RECEIVING CALLS FROM CUSTOMERS FACING TERMINATION OF ELECTRIC, GAS AND STEAM SERVICE AND THE CALL VOLUME TO SUCH HOTLINE IN EACH UTILITY SERVICE TERRITORY;

(E) THE MONTHLY NUMBER OF ELECTRIC AND NATURAL GAS CUSTOMERS WHO PREVIOUSLY RECEIVED UTILITY BILL ASSISTANCE FROM THE HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM WHOSE SERVICE WAS TERMINATED FOR BILL COLLECTION PURPOSES IN EACH UTILITY SERVICE AREA IN THE PREVIOUS CALENDAR YEAR, PROVIDED FURTHER THAT THE COMMISSION SHALL REQUIRE EACH UTILITY TO PROVIDE SUCH INFORMATION WHILE MAINTAINING CUSTOMER CONFIDENTIALITY; AND

(F) ANY PROPOSED LEGISLATIVE REMEDIES NECESSARY TO INCREASE CUSTOMER AWARENESS OF SUCH HOTLINE.

S 2. This act shall take effect immediately.