

5033--A

2013-2014 Regular Sessions

I N   S E N A T E

May 6, 2013

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Introduced by Sens. PARKER, SAMPSON -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Energy and Telecommunications -- recommitted to the Committee on Energy and Telecommunications in accordance with Senate Rule 6, sec. 8 -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the public service law and the general business law, in relation to requiring companies to allow victims of domestic violence to cancel contracts when there is a permanent order of protection in place

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

1     Section 1. Section 91 of the public service law is amended by adding a  
2     new subdivision 8 to read as follows:  
3     8. EVERY LOCAL EXCHANGE TELEPHONE CORPORATION, AS DEFINED IN THIS  
4     CHAPTER SHALL ALLOW A CUSTOMER WHO IS UNDER CONTRACT, INCLUDING BUT NOT  
5     LIMITED TO A MULTI-YEAR CONTRACT OR BUNDLE CONTRACT, TO BREAK SUCH  
6     CONTRACT WITHOUT PENALTY WHEN SUCH CUSTOMER IS: (A) A VICTIM OF DOMESTIC  
7     VIOLENCE, AS DEFINED IN SECTION FOUR HUNDRED FIFTY-NINE-A OF THE SOCIAL  
8     SERVICES LAW; (B) SUCH CUSTOMER REQUESTS RELEASE IN WRITING; AND (C)  
9     SUCH CUSTOMER POSSESSES ANY ORDER OF PROTECTION, OTHER THAN A TEMPORARY  
10    ORDER OF PROTECTION, THAT HAS BEEN ISSUED BY A COURT OF COMPETENT JURIS-  
11    DICTION. THE TELEPHONE COMPANY SHALL WAIVE THE OTHERWISE APPLICABLE  
12    CHARGES FOR BREAKING SUCH CONTRACT. SUCH WAIVER OF CHARGES SHALL BE FOR  
13    THE DURATION OF THE APPLICABLE, NON-TEMPORARY, ORDER.  
14    S 2. Section 399-yy of the general business law, as added by chapter  
15    202 of the laws of 2013, is amended to read as follows:  
16    S 399-yy. Cable television company providing telephone services. 1.  
17    Every cable television company, as defined in section two hundred twelve  
18    of the public service law, that provides telephone service to customers  
19    in New York shall, at its option: a. allow a customer to use a modified

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

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1 or alternative name for a directory listing or b. waive the otherwise  
2 applicable charges for a non-published telephone listing, where the  
3 customer requests protection of its identity in connection with the  
4 customer's purchase of telephone service and the customer is a victim of  
5 domestic violence, as defined in section four hundred fifty-nine-a of  
6 the social services law, and for whose benefit any order of protection,  
7 other than a temporary order of protection, has been issued by a court  
8 of competent jurisdiction. This waiver of charges shall be for the dura-  
9 tion of the applicable, non-temporary, order. Any non-published listings  
10 provided in this section shall conform to all the same requirements of  
11 other non-published listings. A customer requesting such an accommo-  
12 dation shall provide a copy of the order of protection to the applicable  
13 cable television company. Any customer requesting an accommodation  
14 pursuant to this section may also request and shall be provided, at no  
15 cost to the customer, a new telephone number within fifteen days from  
16 the request for such accommodation.

17 2. EVERY CABLE TELEVISION COMPANY, AS DEFINED IN SECTION TWO HUNDRED  
18 TWELVE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE LAW, THAT PROVIDES TELEVISION AND/OR TELE-  
19 PHONE SERVICE TO CUSTOMERS IN NEW YORK SHALL ALLOW A CUSTOMER WHO IS  
20 UNDER CONTRACT, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO A MULTI-YEAR CONTRACT OR  
21 BUNDLE CONTRACT, TO BREAK SUCH CONTRACT WITHOUT PENALTY WHEN SUCH  
22 CUSTOMER IS: A. A VICTIM OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, AS DEFINED IN SECTION  
23 FOUR HUNDRED FIFTY-NINE-A OF THE SOCIAL SERVICES LAW; B. SUCH CUSTOMER  
24 REQUESTS RELEASE IN WRITING; AND C. SUCH CUSTOMER POSSESSES ANY ORDER OF  
25 PROTECTION, OTHER THAN A TEMPORARY ORDER OF PROTECTION, THAT HAS BEEN  
26 ISSUED BY A COURT OF COMPETENT JURISDICTION.

27 S 3. The general business law is amended by adding a new section 399-  
28 yyy to read as follows:

29 S 399-YYY. SATELLITE TELEVISION COMPANY PROVIDING TELEVISION AND/OR  
30 TELEPHONE SERVICES. 1. EVERY DIRECT BROADCAST SATELLITE SERVICE PROVID-  
31 ER, AS DEFINED IN THIS SECTION, THAT PROVIDES TELEVISION AND/OR TELE-  
32 PHONE SERVICES TO CUSTOMERS IN NEW YORK SHALL ALLOW A CUSTOMER WHO IS  
33 UNDER CONTRACT, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO A MULTI-YEAR CONTRACT OR  
34 BUNDLE CONTRACT, TO BREAK SUCH CONTRACT WITHOUT PENALTY WHEN SUCH  
35 CUSTOMER IS (A) A VICTIM OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, AS DEFINED IN SECTION  
36 FOUR HUNDRED FIFTY-NINE-A OF THE SOCIAL SERVICES LAW AND (B) SUCH  
37 CUSTOMER REQUESTS RELEASE IN WRITING AND (C) SUCH CUSTOMER POSSESSES ANY  
38 ORDER OF PROTECTION, OTHER THAN A TEMPORARY ORDER OF PROTECTION, THAT  
39 HAS BEEN ISSUED BY A COURT OF COMPETENT JURISDICTION.

40 2. FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION, THE FOLLOWING TERMS SHALL HAVE  
41 THE FOLLOWING MEANINGS:

42 (A) "DIRECT BROADCAST SATELLITE SERVICE", MEANS THE DISTRIBUTION OR  
43 BROADCASTING BY SATELLITE OF VIDEO PROGRAMMING OR SERVICES DIRECTLY TO  
44 RECEIVING EQUIPMENT LOCATED AT AN END USER SUBSCRIBER'S OR AN END USER  
45 CUSTOMER'S PREMISES, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, THE PROVISION OF  
46 PREMIUM CHANNELS, THE PROVISION OF MUSIC OR OTHER AUDIO SERVICES OR  
47 CHANNELS, AND ANY OTHER SERVICE RECEIVED IN CONNECTION WITH THE  
48 PROVISION OF DIRECT BROADCAST SATELLITE SERVICE.

49 (B) "DIRECT BROADCAST SATELLITE SERVICE PROVIDER", MEANS A PERSON WHO  
50 TRANSMITS, BROADCASTS OR OTHERWISE PROVIDES DIRECT BROADCAST SATELLITE  
51 SERVICE TO SUBSCRIBERS OR CUSTOMERS IN THE STATE.

52 S 4. This act shall take effect immediately.