

5696--A

2013-2014 Regular Sessions

I N S E N A T E

June 5, 2013

Introduced by Sen. LIBOUS -- 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 direct the public service commission to study and report on streamlining orders and actions associated with bills for residential electric, gas, telephone and water customers; and to amend the public service law, in relation to directing the public service commission to develop recommendations for standardized, uniform and easy to understand utility bills

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

1 Section 1. (a) The public service commission is directed to study the
2 past orders and actions related to matters which required billing
3 messages that were developed prior to industry competition and that may
4 be creating confusing bills for residential customers of electric, gas,
5 telephone and water companies. Specifically, such study shall review the
6 past commission orders and actions and determine which bill messages are
7 no longer relevant and should be removed because the information
8 required to be included in the consumer bills is no longer relevant and
9 may be largely ignored by most consumers. In such cases, the public
10 service commission shall no longer require this information to be
11 included in customer bills, but can make such information available via
12 the utility company's public website in lieu of requiring this informa-
13 tion in consumer bills. In completing this study, the public service
14 commission shall reduce bill messages that are no longer needed.
15 (b) This study shall result in a report, which details all billing
16 related orders and commission actions that are no longer necessary and
17 can hinder companies from providing streamlined consumer bills. The
18 study and report shall be filed, on or before December 31, 2014, with
19 the governor, the director of the division of the budget, the speaker of

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

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1 the assembly, the temporary president of the senate, the chair of the
2 assembly way and means committee, the chair of the senate finance
3 committee and the chairs of the assembly standing committee on corpo-
4 rations, authorities and commissions and the senate energy and telecom-
5 munications committee. Such study and report shall also be posted on the
6 website of the public service commission by December 31, 2014 and shall
7 be deemed a public document.

8 S 2. Section 5 of the public service law is amended by adding a new
9 subdivision 7 to read as follows:

10 7. THE COMMISSION SHALL DEVELOP AND PUBLISH RECOMMENDATIONS FOR
11 PROVIDERS OF ELECTRIC, GAS, STEAM, TELEPHONE AND WATER SERVICES FOR THE
12 ESTABLISHMENT OF AN IMPROVED BILLING SYSTEM FOR EACH TYPE OF SUCH
13 SERVICE PROVIDERS AND FOR BILLS THAT ARE STANDARDIZED, UNIFORM AND EASY
14 TO UNDERSTAND.

15 S 3. This act shall take effect on the ninetieth day after it shall
16 have become a law.