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

1949

2015-2016 Regular Sessions

I N  S E N A T E

January 15, 2015

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

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:

Section 1. (a) The public service commission is directed to study the past orders and actions related to matters which required billing messages that were developed prior to industry competition and that may be creating confusing bills for residential customers of electric, gas, telephone and water companies. Specifically, such study shall review the past commission orders and actions and determine which bill messages are no longer relevant and should be removed because the information required to be included in the consumer bills is no longer relevant and may be largely ignored by most consumers. In such cases, the public service commission shall no longer require this information to be included in customer bills, but can make such information available via the utility company's public website in lieu of requiring this information in consumer bills. In completing this study, the public service commission shall reduce bill messages that are no longer needed.

(b) This study shall result in a report, which details all billing related orders and commission actions that are no longer necessary and can hinder companies from providing streamlined consumer bills. The study and report shall be filed, on or before December 31, 2016, with the governor, the director of the division of budget, the speaker of the assembly, the temporary president of the senate, the chair of the assem-

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

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bly way and means committee, the chair of the senate finance committee and the chairs of the assembly standing committee on corporations, authorities and commissions and the senate energy and telecommunications committee. Such study and report shall also be posted on the website of the public service commission by December 31, 2016 and shall be deemed a public document.

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

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

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