

1140

2015-2016 Regular Sessions

I N A S S E M B L Y

January 8, 2015

Introduced by M. of A. ABINANTI, BUCHWALD -- read once and referred to the Committee on Corporations, Authorities and Commissions

AN ACT to amend the public service law, in relation to requiring a safety and reliability inspection of all telephone poles used by telephone corporations providing telephone service to more than one million subscribers and requiring a safety and reliability inspection of all utility poles used by electric corporations providing electric service to over 300,000 customers and the replacement or removal of deficient poles

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

1 Section 1. Legislative findings. The legislature hereby declares that  
2 unsafe, inadequate or unreliable telephone and electrical utility poles  
3 are a danger to the general public and to telecommunications and elec-  
4 trical utility workers; that such telephone and electrical utility poles  
5 impair the effective delivery of telecommunications services; and that  
6 the public interest requires increased oversight of the safety and reli-  
7 ability of jurisdictional telecommunications and electrical utility  
8 services carried over or by above ground telephone and electrical utili-  
9 ty lines, as such are defined in article 1 of the public service law;  
10 and that the public interest requires a set of minimum fines to ensure  
11 compliance with this statute by each telephone corporation serving over  
12 one million subscribers and each electric corporation serving over  
13 300,000 subscribers.

14 S 2. The public service law is amended by adding a new section 98-a to  
15 read as follows:

16 S 98-A. SAFETY AND RELIABILITY INSPECTION. 1. THE PUBLIC SERVICE  
17 COMMISSION SHALL, WITHIN THIRTY DAYS OF THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS  
18 SECTION, REQUIRE TELEPHONE CORPORATIONS PROVIDING TELEPHONE SERVICE TO  
19 MORE THAN ONE MILLION SUBSCRIBERS, AND ELECTRIC CORPORATIONS SERVING  
20 OVER THREE HUNDRED THOUSAND CUSTOMERS, TO CONDUCT A STUDY OF THE SAFETY

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

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1 AND RELIABILITY OF ALL TELEPHONE AND ELECTRIC POLES USED BY SUCH CORPO-  
2 RATIONS TO PROVIDE TELEPHONE AND ELECTRIC SERVICE WITHIN THE STATE OF  
3 NEW YORK, AND TO REPORT UPON THE FOLLOWING FACTORS:

- 4 (A) THE TOTAL NUMBER OF TELEPHONE AND ELECTRIC POLES PER COUNTY;  
5 (B) THE NUMBER OF TELEPHONE AND ELECTRIC POLES WITHIN EACH COUNTY THAT  
6 ARE SPLIT OR SHATTERED FOR MORE THAN FIVE PERCENT OF THE LENGTH OF SUCH  
7 POLES;  
8 (C) THE NUMBER OF TELEPHONE AND ELECTRIC POLES PER COUNTY THAT ARE  
9 SEVERED OR PARTIALLY SEVERED FROM THEIR BASE;  
10 (D) THE NUMBER OF TELEPHONE AND ELECTRIC POLES PER COUNTY THAT ARE  
11 ATTACHED DIRECTLY TO OTHER TELEPHONE POLES ("STRAPPED") BY MEANS OTHER  
12 THAN THE UTILITY LINES CONNECTING SUCH POLES;  
13 (E) THE NUMBER OF STRAPPED POLES, OF WHICH EITHER OR BOTH POLES ARE  
14 SPLIT OR SHATTERED FOR MORE THAN FIVE PERCENT OF THE LENGTH OF SUCH  
15 POLES;  
16 (F) ANY POLES THAT NO LONGER COMPLY WITH ANSI SAFETY STANDARD O5.1;  
17 AND  
18 (G) ANY TELEPHONE AND ELECTRIC POLES FROM WHICH ALL ELECTRICAL, TELE-  
19 PHONE AND CABLE EQUIPMENT OR ELECTRICAL, TELEPHONE AND CABLE LINES HAVE  
20 BEEN PREVIOUSLY REMOVED FROM THE POLES AND TO WHICH NO NEW TELEPHONE,  
21 ELECTRICAL OR CABLE PLANT AND EQUIPMENT HAS BEEN ATTACHED FOR AT LEAST  
22 THIRTY DAYS.

23 2. TELEPHONE AND ELECTRIC POLES IDENTIFIED IN SUBDIVISIONS (B), (C),  
24 (D), (E), (F) AND (G) OF SUBDIVISION ONE OF THIS SECTION SHALL BE  
25 PRESUMED TO BE NO LONGER SAFE, ADEQUATE OR RELIABLE FOR TELECOMMUNI-  
26 CATIONS AND ELECTRIC SERVICE AND AN ENDANGERMENT TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC  
27 AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND ELECTRIC UTILITY WORKERS, AND SHALL BE  
28 SUBJECT TO SUCH STANDARDS FOR REPLACEMENT OF UNSAFE POLES, OR FINES, OR  
29 BOTH, AS MAY BE REQUIRED BY THIS SECTION.

30 3. THE TELEPHONE AND ELECTRIC POLE SAFETY AND RELIABILITY STUDY  
31 REQUIRED BY THIS SECTION SHALL BE COMPLETED BY EACH TELEPHONE CORPO-  
32 RATION SERVING MORE THAN ONE MILLION SUBSCRIBERS AND EACH ELECTRIC  
33 CORPORATION SERVING MORE THAN THREE HUNDRED THOUSAND SUBSCRIBERS WITHIN  
34 ONE HUNDRED TWENTY DAYS OF THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS SECTION. THE  
35 TELEPHONE AND ELECTRIC POLE SAFETY AND RELIABILITY STUDY REQUIRED BY  
36 THIS SECTION SHALL CONTAIN SUCH TELEPHONE AND ELECTRIC CORPORATION'S  
37 PLAN (THE "CORRECTIVE PLAN") FOR REPLACING, WITHIN THREE HUNDRED SIXTY-  
38 FIVE DAYS OF THE ISSUANCE OF SUCH REPORT (THE CORRECTIVE PLAN  
39 "COMPLETION DATE"), ALL POLES SPLIT OR SHATTERED FOR MORE THAN FIVE  
40 PERCENT OF THE LENGTH OF SUCH POLES, ALL POLES SEVERED OR PARTIALLY  
41 SEVERED FROM THEIR BASE, ALL POLES THAT ARE STRAPPED DIRECTLY TO OTHER  
42 TELEPHONE OR ELECTRIC POLES, ALL POLES FROM WHICH ALL ELECTRICAL, TELE-  
43 PHONE AND CABLE EQUIPMENT OR ELECTRICAL, TELEPHONE AND CABLE LINES HAVE  
44 BEEN PREVIOUSLY REMOVED FROM THE POLES AND TO WHICH NO NEW TELEPHONE,  
45 ELECTRICAL OR CABLE PLANT AND EQUIPMENT HAS BEEN ATTACHED FOR AT LEAST  
46 THIRTY DAYS, (COLLECTIVELY, "UNSAFE" POLES).

47 4. UPON ITS COMPLETION, THE TELEPHONE AND ELECTRIC POLE SAFETY AND  
48 RELIABILITY STUDY REQUIRED BY THIS SECTION SHALL BE SUBMITTED AS A  
49 REPORT, BY EACH TELEPHONE CORPORATION SERVING MORE THAN ONE MILLION  
50 SUBSCRIBERS AND EACH ELECTRIC CORPORATION SERVING MORE THAN THREE  
51 HUNDRED THOUSAND SUBSCRIBERS TO THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION, THE  
52 GOVERNOR, THE TEMPORARY PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE, THE SPEAKER OF THE  
53 ASSEMBLY, AND THE CHAIR OF BOTH THE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMIT-  
54 TEES ON CORPORATIONS, AUTHORITIES AND COMMISSIONS.

55 5. THE STUDY TO BE COMPLETED BY THE TELEPHONE AND ELECTRIC CORPO-  
56 RATIONS SHALL INCORPORATE REPORTS OF POLES NONCOMPLIANT WITH THE FACTORS

1 IDENTIFIED IN SUBDIVISION ONE OF THIS SECTION PROVIDED TO THE TELEPHONE  
2 AND ELECTRIC CORPORATIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC, TELEPHONE  
3 CORPORATION UNIONS, AND LOCAL, MUNICIPAL, COUNTY, AND STATE GOVERNMENT  
4 AND AGENCIES.

5 6. ALL TELEPHONE AND ELECTRIC POLES IDENTIFIED AS UNSAFE OR NONCOMPLI-  
6 ANT WITH ANSI SAFETY STANDARD O5.1, IN THE CORRECTIVE PLAN REQUIRED IN  
7 THE TELEPHONE AND ELECTRIC POLE SAFETY AND RELIABILITY STUDY, SHALL BE  
8 REPLACED BY THE TELEPHONE OR THE ELECTRIC CORPORATION OWNING SUCH POLES,  
9 WITHIN THREE HUNDRED SIXTY-FIVE DAYS OF THE ISSUANCE OF SUCH REPORT.

10 7. REPLACEMENT OF THE POLES IDENTIFIED AS UNSAFE OR NONCOMPLIANT IN  
11 THE CORRECTIVE PLAN SHALL BE CONDUCTED BY PROPERLY TRAINED, EXPERIENCED  
12 AND EQUIPPED EMPLOYEES OF EACH TELEPHONE CORPORATION SERVING OVER ONE  
13 MILLION SUBSCRIBERS AND EACH ELECTRIC CORPORATION SERVING MORE THAN  
14 THREE HUNDRED THOUSAND SUBSCRIBERS PREPARING THE STUDY.

15 8. A FINE OF ONE HUNDRED FIFTY DOLLARS PER MONTH PER UN-REPLACED POLE  
16 SHALL BE ASSESSED AGAINST EACH TELEPHONE POLE THAT A TELEPHONE CORPO-  
17 RATION SERVING MORE THAN ONE MILLION SUBSCRIBERS HAS IDENTIFIED AS  
18 UNSAFE OR NONCOMPLIANT IN ITS STUDY, AND HAS NOT REPLACED WITHIN THREE  
19 HUNDRED SIXTY-FIVE DAYS OF THE ISSUANCE OF THE TELEPHONE AND ELECTRIC  
20 POLE SAFETY AND RELIABILITY REPORT AND FOR EACH ELECTRIC POLE THAT AN  
21 ELECTRIC CORPORATION SERVING MORE THAN THREE HUNDRED THOUSAND SUBSCRIB-  
22 ERS HAS IDENTIFIED AS UNSAFE OR NONCOMPLIANT IN ITS STUDY, AND HAS NOT  
23 REPLACED WITHIN THREE HUNDRED SIXTY-FIVE DAYS OF THE ISSUANCE OF THE  
24 TELEPHONE AND ELECTRIC POLE SAFETY AND RELIABILITY REPORT.

25 S 3. The public service commission shall begin, within ninety days of  
26 the effective date of this act, a rulemaking proceeding to establish  
27 statewide safety and reliability standards for wooden telephone and  
28 electric poles, and to establish penalties for the violation of such  
29 standards. Penalties for violation of established standards shall not be  
30 less than \$150 per month per un-replaced pole. The rulemaking proceeding  
31 to establish statewide safety and reliability standards for wooden tele-  
32 phone and electric poles and to establish penalties for the violation of  
33 such standards shall be completed within one year of its inception.

34 S 4. Severability. If any provision of this act, or the application  
35 thereof to any person or circumstance, shall be adjudged by any court of  
36 competent jurisdiction to be invalid or unconstitutional, such judgment  
37 shall not affect, impair or invalidate the remainder thereof, but shall  
38 be confined in its operation to the provision of this act, or in its  
39 application to the person or circumstance, directly involved in the  
40 controversy in which such judgment shall have been rendered.

41 S 5. This act shall take effect immediately.