

STATE OF NEW YORK

10281

IN ASSEMBLY

April 10, 2018

Introduced by M. of A. ABINANTI -- 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 § 2. The public service law is amended by adding a new section 98-a to
15 read as follows:

16 § 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
21 and reliability of all telephone and electric poles used by such corpo-
22 rations to provide telephone and electric service within the state of
23 New York, and to report upon the following factors:

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

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1 (a) the total number of telephone and electric poles per county;

2 (b) the number of telephone and electric poles within each county that
3 are split or shattered for more than five percent of the length of such
4 poles;

5 (c) the number of telephone and electric poles per county that are
6 severed or partially severed from their base;

7 (d) the number of telephone and electric poles per county that are
8 attached directly to other telephone poles ("strapped") by means other
9 than the utility lines connecting such poles;

10 (e) the number of strapped poles, of which either or both poles are
11 split or shattered for more than five percent of the length of such
12 poles;

13 (f) any poles that no longer comply with ANSI safety standard O5.1;
14 and

15 (g) any telephone and electric poles from which all electrical, tele-
16 phone and cable equipment or electrical, telephone and cable lines have
17 been previously removed from the poles and to which no new telephone,
18 electrical or cable plant and equipment has been attached for at least
19 thirty days.

20 2. Telephone and electric poles identified in paragraphs (b), (c),
21 (d), (e), (f) and (g) of subdivision one of this section shall be
22 presumed to be no longer safe, adequate or reliable for telecommuni-
23 cations and electric service and an endangerment to the general public
24 and telecommunications and electric utility workers, and shall be
25 subject to such standards for replacement of unsafe poles, or fines, or
26 both, as may be required by this section.

27 3. The telephone and electric pole safety and reliability study
28 required by this section shall be completed by each telephone corpo-
29 ration serving more than one million subscribers and each electric
30 corporation serving more than three hundred thousand subscribers within
31 one hundred twenty days of the effective date of this section. The
32 telephone and electric pole safety and reliability study required by
33 this section shall contain such telephone and electric corporation's
34 plan (the "corrective plan") for replacing, within three hundred sixty-
35 five days of the issuance of such report (the corrective plan
36 "completion date"), all poles split or shattered for more than five
37 percent of the length of such poles, all poles severed or partially
38 severed from their base, all poles that are strapped directly to other
39 telephone or electric poles, all poles from which all electrical, tele-
40 phone and cable equipment or electrical, telephone and cable lines have
41 been previously removed from the poles and to which no new telephone,
42 electrical or cable plant and equipment has been attached for at least
43 thirty days (collectively, "unsafe" poles).

44 4. Upon its completion, the telephone and electric pole safety and
45 reliability study required by this section shall be submitted as a
46 report, by each telephone corporation serving more than one million
47 subscribers and each electric corporation serving more than three
48 hundred thousand subscribers to the public service commission, the
49 governor, the temporary president of the senate, the speaker of the
50 assembly, and the chair of both the senate and assembly standing commit-
51 tees on corporations, authorities and commissions.

52 5. The study to be completed by the telephone and electric corpo-
53 rations shall incorporate reports of poles noncompliant with the factors
54 identified in subdivision one of this section provided to the telephone
55 and electric corporations by members of the general public, telephone

1 corporation unions, and local, municipal, county, and state government
2 and agencies.

3 6. All telephone and electric poles identified as unsafe or noncompli-
4 ant with ANSI safety standard O5.1, in the corrective plan required in
5 the telephone and electric pole safety and reliability study, shall be
6 replaced by the telephone or the electric corporation owning such poles,
7 within three hundred sixty-five days of the issuance of such report.

8 7. Replacement of the poles identified as unsafe or noncompliant in
9 the corrective plan shall be conducted by properly trained, experienced
10 and equipped employees of each telephone corporation serving over one
11 million subscribers and each electric corporation serving more than
12 three hundred thousand subscribers preparing the study.

13 8. A fine of one hundred fifty dollars per month per unreplaced pole
14 shall be assessed against each telephone pole that a telephone corpo-
15 ration serving more than one million subscribers has identified as
16 unsafe or noncompliant in its study, and has not replaced within three
17 hundred sixty-five days of the issuance of the telephone and electric
18 pole safety and reliability report and for each electric pole that an
19 electric corporation serving more than three hundred thousand subscri-
20 bers has identified as unsafe or noncompliant in its study, and has not
21 replaced within three hundred sixty-five days of the issuance of the
22 telephone and electric pole safety and reliability report.

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

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

39 § 5. This act shall take effect immediately.