

STATE OF NEW YORK

5900--A

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

March 24, 2023

Introduced by M. of A. BENEDETTO, CARROLL, REYES, BURGOS, SEPTIMO, ZACCARO, TAPIA, ZINERMAN, ALVAREZ, JOYNER, RAGA, FORREST, OTIS, CRUZ, JACKSON, SILLITTI, DE LOS SANTOS -- read once and referred to the Committee on Ways and Means -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the tax law, in relation to establishing a tax on direct broadcast satellite services and video streaming services; and to amend the state finance law, in relation to establishing the community media reinvestment fund

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as
2 the "community media reinvestment act".

3 § 2. The tax law is amended by adding a new article 15 to read as
4 follows:

ARTICLE 15

COMMUNITY MEDIA REINVESTMENT ACT

Section 330. Definitions.

8 331. Imposition and collection of an assessment on direct broad-
9 cast satellite services and video streaming services.

10 § 330. Definitions. For the purposes of this article, the following
11 terms shall have the following meanings:

12 1. "municipality" means any village, town, city, or county not wholly
13 contained within a city in the state of New York;

14 2. "person" means an individual, partnership, limited liability compa-
15 ny, trust or association, with or without transferable shares, joint-
16 stock company, corporation, society, club, organization, institution,
17 estate, receiver, trustee, assignee or referee and any other person
18 acting in a fiduciary or representative capacity, whether appointed by a
19 court or otherwise, and any combination of individuals acting as a unit.

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

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1 The term "person", unless expressly provided otherwise, does not
2 include:

3 (a) a governmental entity or a unit or instrumentality of a govern-
4 mental entity; or

5 (b) any entity exempt from sales and compensating use taxes pursuant
6 to paragraph four of subdivision (a) of section eleven hundred sixteen
7 of this chapter;

8 3. "community media organization" means an entity that is responsible
9 for:

10 (a) operating and administering a public access channel, as defined in
11 16 NYCRR 895.4; and/or

12 (b) operating and administering educational and/or governmental access
13 channels, as defined in 16 NYCRR 895.4;

14 4. "subscriber" or "customer" means any person or member of the gener-
15 al public who receives direct broadcast satellite service or video
16 streaming service from a direct broadcast satellite service provider or
17 video streaming service provider and does not further distribute such
18 service in the ordinary course of business;

19 5. "direct broadcast satellite service" means the distribution or
20 broadcasting by satellite of video programming or services directly to
21 receiving equipment located at an end user subscriber's or an end user
22 customer's premises, including, but not limited to, the provision of
23 premium channels, the provision of music or other audio services or
24 channels, and any other service received in connection with the
25 provision of direct broadcast satellite service;

26 6. "direct broadcast satellite service provider" means a person who
27 transmits, broadcasts or otherwise provides direct broadcast satellite
28 service to subscribers or customers in the state;

29 7. "video streaming service" means the distribution or broadcasting of
30 video programming displayed by the viewer for a fee on a subscription
31 basis. The term video streaming service, unless expressly provided
32 otherwise, does not include cable service as defined by 47 U.S.C. §
33 522(6);

34 8. "video streaming service provider" means a person who transmits,
35 broadcasts or otherwise provides video streaming service to subscribers
36 or customers in the state;

37 9. "video programming" means programming provided by, or comparable to
38 programming provided by, a television broadcast station including, but
39 not limited to, video programming provided by local networks, national
40 broadcast networks, cable television networks and all forms of pay-per-
41 view or on-demand video entertainment; and

42 10. "gross receipts" means all consideration of any kind or nature
43 received by a direct broadcast satellite service provider or video
44 streaming service provider, or an affiliate of such person, in
45 connection with the provision, delivery, or furnishing of direct broad-
46 cast satellite service or video streaming service to subscribers or
47 customers within the state, determined according to the hierarchy
48 described in section three hundred thirty-one of this article. "Gross
49 receipts" shall not include:

50 (a) revenue not actually received, regardless of whether it is billed,
51 including, but not limited to, bad debts;

52 (b) revenue received by an affiliate or other person in exchange for
53 supplying goods and services to an affiliated direct broadcast satellite
54 service provider or affiliated video streaming service provider;

55 (c) refunds, rebates or discounts made to subscribers or customers, to
56 advertisers or to other persons;

1 (d) revenue from telecommunications service as defined in 47 U.S.C. §
2 153(53). Under no circumstances shall direct broadcast satellite provid-
3 ers or video streaming service providers subject to the tax imposed
4 pursuant to this article include the amount of such tax on bills as a
5 pass-through to customers. It shall be the responsibility of each direct
6 broadcast satellite service provider and each video streaming service
7 provider subject to the tax imposed pursuant to this article to pay its
8 required taxes to the state and providers shall not mislead the customer
9 to think otherwise;

10 (e) revenue from any service that is subject to tax under article
11 twenty-eight of this chapter;

12 (f) revenue from the sale of capital assets or surplus equipment not
13 used by the purchaser to receive direct broadcast satellite service or
14 video streaming service from the direct broadcast satellite service
15 provider or video streaming service provider;

16 (g) reimbursements made by programmers to the direct broadcast satel-
17 lite service provider or video streaming service provider for marketing
18 costs incurred by such service provider for the introduction of new
19 programming;

20 (h) late payment fees collected from subscribers or customers; or

21 (i) charges, other than charges for direct broadcast satellite
22 services or video streaming services, that are aggregated or bundled
23 with direct broadcast satellite services or video streaming services on
24 a subscriber's or customer's bill, if the direct broadcast satellite
25 service provider or video streaming service provider can reasonably and
26 separately identify the charges in its books and records kept in the
27 regular course of business.

28 § 331. Imposition and collection of an assessment on direct broadcast
29 satellite services and video streaming services. 1. There is hereby
30 imposed an excise tax on the provision, delivery, or furnishing of
31 direct broadcast satellite services or video streaming services by
32 direct broadcast satellite service providers or video streaming service
33 providers to subscribers or customers in the state.

34 2.(a) Direct broadcast satellite service providers and video streaming
35 service providers shall pay an assessment equal to five percent of such
36 provider's gross receipts derived in or from the provision, delivery, or
37 furnishing of direct broadcast satellite service or video streaming
38 service to subscribers or customers in the state.

39 (b) Gross receipts derived in or from the provision, delivery, or
40 furnishing of direct broadcast satellite service or video streaming
41 service by direct broadcast satellite service providers or video stream-
42 ing service providers to subscribers or customers in the state shall be
43 determined by the hierarchy of sourcing methods set forth in paragraph
44 (c) of this subdivision. The direct broadcast satellite service provider
45 or video streaming service provider shall exercise due diligence under
46 each method described in paragraph (c) of this subdivision before
47 rejecting it and proceeding to the next method in the hierarchy, and
48 shall base its determination on information known to it or information
49 that would be known to it upon reasonable inquiry.

50 (c) Hierarchy of sourcing methods:

51 (i) the customer's primary use location of the direct broadcast satel-
52 lite service or video streaming service; and

53 (ii) the customer's billing address.

54 3. The tax authorized in this section shall be for each year, or part
55 of each year, that such direct broadcast satellite service provider or
56 video streaming service provider is engaged in the sale of direct broad-

1 cast satellite or video streaming services to subscribers or customers
2 in the state.

3 4. (a) Every direct broadcast satellite service provider and/or video
4 streaming service provider subject to tax under this section shall (i)
5 file, on or before April fifteenth of each year, for taxable years
6 beginning on or after January first, two thousand twenty-four, a return
7 for the year ended on the preceding December thirty-first, and (ii) pay
8 the tax due, which return shall state the gross receipts for the period
9 covered by each such return.

10 (b) Returns shall be filed with the commissioner on a form to be
11 furnished by the commissioner for such purpose and shall contain such
12 other data, information or matter as the commissioner may require to be
13 included therein.

14 (c) Notwithstanding paragraphs (a) and (b) of this subdivision, the
15 commissioner may require any direct broadcast satellite service provider
16 and/or video streaming service provider to file an annual return, which
17 shall contain any data specified by the commissioner, regardless of
18 whether such provider is subject to tax under this section.

19 5. (a) A direct broadcast satellite service provider or video stream-
20 ing service provider who fails to file a return or to pay any tax within
21 thirty days of the time required pursuant to this article (determined
22 with regard to any extension of time for filing or paying) shall be
23 subject to a penalty of ten percent of the amount of the tax determined
24 to be due, plus five percent of such amount for each subsequent month or
25 fraction thereof during which such failure continues, not to exceed
26 thirty percent in the aggregate.

27 (b) In the event of an underpayment of the tax owed, the commissioner
28 shall set the underpayment rate of interest to be paid, but the under-
29 payment rate shall not be less than seven and one-half percent per
30 annum, compounded daily. If no such rate of interest is set, such under-
31 payment rate shall be deemed to be set at seven and one-half percent per
32 annum, compounded daily. Any such rate set by the commissioner shall
33 apply to taxes, or any portion thereof, which remain or become due or
34 underpaid on or after the date on which such rates become effective and
35 shall apply only with respect to interest computed or computable for
36 periods or portions of periods occurring in the period during which such
37 rates are in effect.

38 6. Every direct broadcast satellite service provider and/or video
39 streaming service provider subject to tax under this section shall keep
40 such records of its business and in such form as the commissioner may
41 require, and such records shall be preserved for a period of three
42 years, except that the commissioner may consent to their destruction
43 within that period or may require that they be kept longer.

44 § 3. The state finance law is amended by adding a new section 99-m to
45 read as follows:

46 § 99-m. Community media reinvestment fund. 1. There is hereby estab-
47 lished in the joint custody of the comptroller and the commissioner of
48 taxation and finance a special fund to be known as the "community media
49 reinvestment fund".

50 2.(a) All monies received by the comptroller or the commissioner of
51 taxation and finance for the purpose of this fund shall be deposited
52 therein. No monies may be transferred from this account to any other
53 account except by authority of the commissioner of taxation and finance.

54 (b) Such fund shall consist of the revenue collected pursuant to arti-
55 cle fifteen of the tax law and any other revenues collected by or appro-
56 riated to the fund pursuant to any other law.

1 3.(a) The commissioner of taxation and finance is authorized to
2 utilize the monies in the community media reinvestment fund, for
3 distribution to the state, municipalities, and community media organiza-
4 tions in proportions as provided in paragraph (b) of this subdivision or
5 in accordance with paragraph (c) of this subdivision, provided however,
6 that the commissioner may retain up to ten percent of the monies in the
7 fund annually for operational expenditures.

8 (b) The commissioner of taxation and finance shall annually distrib-
9 ute, with no remainder left, all monies then held in the community media
10 reinvestment fund according to the following formula:

11 (i) one-fifth of the monies in the fund, less the monies retained by
12 the commissioner for operational expenditures, shall be distributed to
13 the state general fund;

14 (ii) two-fifths of the monies in the fund shall be distributed direct-
15 ly to municipalities in the state, and further allocated proportionally
16 based upon the population of such municipalities;

17 (iii) two-fifths of the monies in the fund shall be distributed
18 directly to identified community media organizations in the state, or,
19 if no community media organization has been identified in a given muni-
20 cipality, to the organization or organizations serving that municipality
21 identified by the New York state council on the arts to receive distrib-
22 utions from the fund, and further allocated proportionally based on the
23 population of the municipality or municipalities served by each such
24 identified organization.

25 (c) Notwithstanding paragraph (b) of this subdivision, in low popu-
26 lation density areas where cable is not mandated, such funds may be used
27 to build out the infrastructure needed for video or audio connectivity,
28 which may include broadband, cellular, satellite, or any other means of
29 connectivity appropriate to facilitate the establishment of the communi-
30 ty media operations desired in each low population density area.

31 4. The commissioner of taxation and finance shall promulgate regu-
32 lations by December thirty-first, two thousand twenty-three to establish
33 procedures for identifying, on an annual basis, (a) community media
34 organizations eligible to receive monies distributed pursuant to subpar-
35 agraph (iii) of paragraph (b) of subdivision three of this section; and
36 (b) in the event that no community media organization has been identi-
37 fied in a given municipality, the organizations serving that muni-
38 cipality identified by the New York state council on the arts, eligible to
39 receive monies distributed pursuant to subparagraph (iii) of paragraph
40 (b) of subdivision three of this section. Notwithstanding any other
41 provisions to the contrary in the New York state administrative proce-
42 dure act (SAPA), such rules and regulations may be adopted on an emer-
43 gency basis if necessary to meet such December thirty-first, two thou-
44 sand twenty-three deadline.

45 5. All payments of monies from the fund shall be made on the audit and
46 warrant of the comptroller.

47 § 4. This act shall take effect immediately and apply to taxable years
48 beginning on and after January 1, 2024.