STATE OF NEW YORK

1316

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 11, 2023

Introduced by Sens. PARKER, ADDABBO, HINCHEY, JACKSON, KRUEGER, MANNION -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Energy and Telecommunications

AN ACT to amend the public service law, in relation to requiring the establishment of utility customer financial assistance programs and arrears reporting

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

Section 1. The public service law is amended by adding a new section 28 to read as follows:

§ 28. Customer arrears program reporting. 1. For the purposes of this section, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

(a) "assistance program" shall mean any program offered to eligible low-income customers to assist with the costs of electricity, gas, and water, including but not limited to the low-income home energy assistance program, any low-income affordability plans as provided by public service commission case number 14-M-0565, and/or any other financial assistance program provided through or by New York state or individual utilities, counties or municipalities;

(b) "COVID-19 state of emergency" shall mean the state disaster emergency declared pursuant to executive order number two hundred two of two thousand twenty;

(c) "municipality" shall have the same meaning as subdivision sixteen of section two of this article and shall include potable water districts and potable water systems owned and/or operated by a city, town, village, authority or other governmental subdivision; and

(d) "utility" shall mean a municipality, utility corporation as defined in subdivisions twenty-three and twenty-four, water-works corporation as defined in subdivision twenty-seven, an electric corporation as defined in subdivision thirteen, a gas corporation as defined in subdivision eleven, a combination gas and electric corporation as

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

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defined in subdivision fourteen, a steam corporation as defined in subdivision twenty-two of section two of this article and any other community water system as defined in 10 NYCRR 5-1.1.

2. (a) Each utility shall, within ninety days of the effective date of this section, submit to the commission, in a form and manner determined by the commission, a report on the number of its customers in arrears, the number in arrears at ninety days or greater and the total dollar amount of customer arrears.

(b) Within one hundred eighty days of the effective date of this section, the commission shall require that utilities and/or municipalities establish financial assistance programs, related to the payback of customer arrears established due to the COVID-19 state of emergency which shall be either twenty-four month or thirty-six month payment plans.

§ 2. This act shall take effect immediately.