

ASSEMBLY TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND UTILITIES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO ASSEMBLY, No. 1768

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: DECEMBER 5, 2022

The Assembly Telecommunications and Utilities Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 1768, with committee amendments.

As amended and reported, this bill directs the Board of Public Utilities (BPU) to require telecommunications companies and companies that offer Voice Over Internet Protocol or other Internet-based telephone services, to provide a bill adjustment or credit, on a prorated basis, to certain customers who experience a service interruption for more than 72 hours. Under the bill, these companies may not require the customer to take any action in order to receive the bill adjustment or credit.

In the case of companies that offer Voice Over Internet Protocol or other Internet-based telephone services, the provision of bill adjustments and credits would be limited to residential customers and would not be required when a customer's service interruption occurred during an event that caused significant damage to the electric grid. The bill also permits the BPU to establish any other exceptions or limitations to the provision of bill adjustments and credits by these companies.

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 2022-2023 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amendments revise certain aspects of the bill concerning the provision of bill adjustments and credits by companies that offer Voice Over Internet Protocol or other Internet-based telephone services. Specifically, these amendments:

(1) limit the provision of bill adjustments and credits to residential customers;

(2) provide that these companies would not be required to provide a bill adjustment or credit when a customer's service interruption occurred during an event that caused significant damage to the electric grid; and

(3) allow the BPU to establish any other exceptions or limitations to the provision of bill adjustments and credits by these companies.