

ASSEMBLY, No. 2492

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

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Sponsored by:
Assemblywoman ANNETTE QUIJANO
District 20 (Union)

SYNOPSIS

Prohibits telecommunications, utility or cable television companies from charging certain customers prior to actual billing due date.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT concerning certain customer billing practices and
2 supplementing Title 48 of the Revised Statutes.

3

4 BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
5 of New Jersey:

6

7 1. As used in this act:

8 "Board" means the Board of Public Utilities or any successor
9 agency.

10 "Cable television company" or "CATV company" means a
11 company as that term is defined in section 3 of P.L.1972, c.186
12 (C.48:5A-3), that provides cable television service to the public
13 within this State.

14 "Credit card customer" means a customer who agrees to allow a
15 telecommunications company, electric public utility, gas public
16 utility or cable television company to automatically bill the
17 customer's credit card for service received during each billing cycle.

18 "Direct debit customer" means a customer who agrees to allow a
19 telecommunications company, electric public utility, gas public
20 utility or cable television company to automatically deduct
21 payments from the customer's bank account for service received
22 during each billing cycle.

23 "Electric public utility" means a public utility as that term is
24 defined in R.S.48:2-13, that transmits and distributes electricity to
25 end users within this State.

26 "Gas public utility" means a public utility, as that term is defined
27 in R.S.48:2-13, that distributes natural gas to end users within this
28 State.

29 "Telecommunications company" means a company authorized by
30 the board to provide telecommunications services to the public in
31 this State including, but not limited to, a carrier authorized by the
32 board to provide local telecommunications services or long-distance
33 telecommunications services or both.

34 "Telecommunications service" means any telecommunications
35 service which is subject to regulation by the board pursuant to Title
36 48 of the Revised Statutes.

37

38 2. a. Notwithstanding the provisions of any other law, rule,
39 regulation or order to the contrary, the board shall prohibit any
40 telecommunications company, electric public utility, gas public
41 utility or cable television company from charging a credit card
42 customer or direct debit customer for telecommunications service,
43 gas service, electric service or cable television service, as the case
44 may be, prior to the actual billing due date for service within each
45 billing cycle that would apply if the customer elected to pay for
46 service by cash, money order or personal check, unless the customer
47 expressly agrees in writing to be charged for service on an earlier
48 date.

b. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection a. of this section to the contrary, the board shall allow a telecommunications company, electric public utility, gas public utility or cable television company to charge a credit card customer or direct debit customer for telecommunications service, gas service, electric service or cable television service, as the case may be, prior to the actual billing due date for service within a billing cycle if the customer requests a company or utility to do so by making such request by telephonic communication to the company or utility or by any other means that the board approves.

12 3. The board may, pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure
13 Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.) adopt such rules and
14 regulations, as shall be necessary to implement the provisions of
15 this act.

17 4. This act shall take effect 90 days after enactment but the
18 board may take administrative actions in advance to effectuate the
19 purposes of this act.

STATEMENT

24 This bill directs the Board of Public Utilities (BPU) to prohibit a
25 telecommunications company, electric public utility, gas public
26 utility or cable television company from charging a credit card
27 customer or direct debit customer for service prior to the actual
28 billing due date that would apply if the customer were to pay by
29 cash, money order or personal check, unless: (1) the customer
30 expressly agrees in writing to be charged for service on an earlier
31 date; or (2) the customer makes such a request to the company or
32 utility by telephone or by other means approved by the BPU.