

2026 -- S 2641

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LC005292
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

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A N A C T

RELATING TO PUBLIC UTILITIES AND CARRIERS -- DUTIES OF UTILITIES AND
CARRIERS

Introduced By: Senator Samuel D. Zurier

Date Introduced: February 27, 2026

Referred To: Senate Commerce

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 39-2 of the General Laws entitled "Duties of Utilities and Carriers"
2 is hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:

3 **39-2-1.5. Electric utility billing and metering standards.**

4 (a) The division of public utilities and carriers shall promulgate rules and regulations
5 establishing minimum statewide standards governing electric utility meter reading and billing
6 practices, which shall include, at a minimum, the following:

7 (1) Regular meter reading. All electric service meters shall be read at regular intervals and,
8 to the extent practicable, on approximately the same calendar day of each meter reading period.

9 (2) Billing transparency. Bills shall be rendered at regular intervals and shall clearly state:

10 (i) The date of the current meter reading; and

11 (ii) The amount or quantity of electric service provided during the billing period.

12 (3) Customer billing records. Each electric utility shall maintain accurate accounts of all
13 charges billed to each customer and shall retain records sufficient to demonstrate how each bill
14 rendered was calculated.

15 (4) Limit on estimated billing. No electric utility shall render estimated bills for more than
16 six (6) consecutive billing periods on any residential, commercial, or industrial account, except
17 where access to the meter is unavailable due to customer action or safety concerns, as determined
18 by the division pursuant to the provisions of subsection (a)(5) of this section.

1 (5) Once the electric utility has used estimated bills for a six (6) month period, the company
2 shall act to correct the problem within two (2) months. Absent a waiver the electric utility shall not
3 be allowed to recover billing beyond two (2) months after the use of estimated bills for a six (6)
4 month period. However, the division shall permit the electric utility to seek a waiver from the
5 division with respect to the foregoing billing prohibition. The waiver request shall include details
6 of the electric utility’s efforts and experienced difficulties in accessing the customer’s property in
7 order to obtain an actual reading. The waiver shall be filed with the division prior to the expiration
8 of the two (2) month billing deadline.

9 (6) Billing issuance standards. The division shall establish reasonable standards governing
10 the relationship between the billing date and the date of issuance or mailing of a bill, including
11 allowances for electronic billing and circumstances beyond the control of the utility. In
12 promulgating regulations pursuant to this section, the division shall consider:

13 (i) Existing utility tariffs approved by the public utilities commission; and

14 (ii) The deployment of advanced metering or automated meter reading technology.

15 (b) Nothing in this section shall be construed to impair the authority of the public utilities
16 commission to approve tariffs or rates, provided such tariffs and rates are consistent with the
17 standards established pursuant to this section.

18 (c) The provisions of this section shall, unless extended by the general assembly, sunset
19 upon the adoption of rules and regulations promulgated by the division that satisfy the conditions
20 of this section, or on January 30, 2028, whichever shall occur first.

21 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO PUBLIC UTILITIES AND CARRIERS -- DUTIES OF UTILITIES AND
CARRIERS

- 1 This act would establish statewide standards governing electric meter reading and billing
- 2 practices.
- 3 This act would take effect upon passage.

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