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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

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A N A C T

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

Introduced By: Representatives Solomon, and O'Brien

Date Introduced: February 26, 2025

Referred To: House Corporations

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           **39-2-29. Removal of double utility poles.**

4           (a) For the purposes of this section the following terms shall have the following meanings:

5           (1) "Division" means the division of public utilities and carriers.

6           (2) "Double utility pole" means a replacement utility pole that is built alongside and  
7 attached to another pole for the purpose of transferring the electric, telephone, cable or other wires.

8           (3) "Plant" means the cables, terminals, conductors and other fixtures necessary for  
9 transmitting electric, cable, television or other telecommunications service.

10           (4) "Public utility" means and applies to every corporation, company, person, association  
11 of persons, their lessees, trustees, or receivers appointed to any court whatsoever, that now or  
12 hereafter may own, lease, operate, manage or control any electric plant or equipment or any part of  
13 any electric plant or equipment, within this state, for the production, transmission, delivery or  
14 furnishing of electricity, light, heat or power, either directly to or for the public.

15           (b) The owner of a double utility pole shall notify all other users of the utility pole of the  
16 starting date of such removal and installation work at least seventy-two (72) hours prior to the  
17 commencement of such work. Said owner may impose a penalty upon the user who has not  
18 removed their wiring and other attachments/plants when said failure to remove is responsible for

1 the immediate delay in the removal of the existing pole. No penalty shall be imposed when the  
2 failure of a city or town to remove its police or fire alarm circuits or any similar municipal  
3 equipment is the cause of the immediate delay and no other work could be performed.

4 (c) An electric distribution company or telephone company engaging in the removal of an  
5 existing pole and the installation of a new pole in place thereof shall complete the transfer of wires,  
6 plants, all repairs and the removal of the existing pole within thirty (30) days from the date of the  
7 installation of the new pole. Failure to remove the old pole within that time frame shall be subject  
8 to a daily penalty of up to one hundred dollars (\$100) by the division.

9 (d) Any fines collected for violation of this section shall be donated to the low-income  
10 home energy assistance program.

11 (e) The division of public utilities and carriers shall administer and enforce the provisions  
12 of this section.

13 (f) The division of public utilities and carriers shall promulgate rules and regulations  
14 necessary to effectuate the purposes of this section.

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

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

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1           This act would provide a process for the removal of double poles (utility poles that have  
2    been cut and attached to existing poles). Notice of the removal date of the pole would be provided  
3    to all third parties using the pole and their equipment must be removed promptly. The owner of the  
4    pole would be required to remove the pole within thirty (30) days or face fines.

5           This act would take effect upon passage.

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