

25100953D

HOUSE BILL NO. 1588

Offered January 13, 2025

Prefiled January 2, 2025

A *BILL to amend and reenact § 56-235.4 of the Code of Virginia, relating to public utilities; rate increases during certain months prohibited.*

Patrons—Williams, O'Quinn, Ballard, Laufer, Phillips and Rasoul

Referred to Committee on Labor and Commerce

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 56-235.4 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 56-235.4. Prohibition of multiple rate increases within any 12-month period and rate increases in certain months; exception.

A. The regulated operating revenues of a public utility shall not (i) be increased pursuant to Chapter 9.1 (§ 56-231.15 et seq.), 10 (§ 56-232 et seq.), or 19 (§ 56-531 et seq.) ~~of this title~~ more than once within any ~~twelve-month~~ 12-month period or (ii) be increased pursuant to Chapter 9.1 (§ 56-231.15 et seq.), 10 (§ 56-232 et seq.), or 23 (§ 56-576 et seq.) in the months of November, December, January, or February. This limitation shall not apply to increases in regulated operating revenues resulting from (i) (a) increases in rates pursuant to § 56-245 or § 56-249.6, (ii) (b) any automatic rate adjustment clause approved by the Commission, (iii) (c) new rate schedules for service not offered under existing rate schedules or for expansion, reduction, or termination of existing services, (iv) (d) initiation, modification or termination of experimental rates under § 56-234, or (v) (e) the making permanent of an experimental program. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section, a telephone company may apply to the Commission to pass on to its customers as a part of its rates any changes approved by the Commission in the carrier access charges.

B. The Commission may adopt such rules and regulations as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this section. The Commission may specify, by rule, the time during the calendar year when application may be filed by electric utility and cooperatives, gas utilities, telephone utilities and cooperatives, and other utilities.

The Commission may by rule provide standards and procedures for expedited handling of rate increase applications, and such rules may provide that an expedited rate increase may take effect in less than twelve months after the preceding increase so long as regulated operating revenues are not increased pursuant to the provisions of subsection A of this section more than once in any calendar year.

INTRODUCED

HB1588