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1 **HOUSE BILL NO. 1151**

2 Offered January 14, 2026

3 Prefiled January 14, 2026

4 *A BILL to amend and reenact § 56-234 of the Code of Virginia, relating to electric utilities; duty to furnish*  
5 *adequate service; high-demand customers.*

6 Patron—Willett

7 Referred to Committee on Labor and Commerce

8 **Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**9 **1. That § 56-234 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**10 **§ 56-234. Duty to furnish adequate service at reasonable and uniform rates.**11 A. It shall be the duty of every public utility to furnish reasonably adequate service and facilities at  
12 reasonable and just rates to any person, firm or corporation along its lines desiring same. Notwithstanding  
13 any other provision of law:14 1. A telephone company shall not have the duty to extend or expand its facilities to furnish service and  
15 facilities when the person, firm or corporation has service available from one or more alternative providers of  
16 wireline or terrestrial wireless communications services at prevailing market rates; and17 2. A telephone company may meet its duty to furnish reasonably adequate service and facilities through  
18 the use of any and all available wireline and terrestrial wireless technologies; however, a telephone company,  
19 when restoring service to an existing wireline customer, shall offer the option to furnish service using  
20 wireline facilities.21 For purposes of subdivisions 1 and 2, the Commission shall have the authority upon request of an  
22 individual, corporation, or other entity, or a telephone company, to determine whether the wireline or  
23 terrestrial wireless communications service available to the party requesting service is a reasonably adequate  
24 alternative to local exchange telephone service.25 The use by a telephone company of wireline and terrestrial wireless technologies shall not be construed to  
26 grant any additional jurisdiction or authority to the Commission over such technologies.27 For purposes of subdivision 1, "prevailing market rates" means rates similar to those generally available to  
28 consumers in competitive areas for the same services.29 B. It shall be the duty of every public utility to charge uniformly therefor all persons, corporations or  
30 municipal corporations using such service under like conditions. However, no provision of law shall be  
31 deemed to preclude voluntary rate or rate design tests or experiments, or other experiments involving the use  
32 of special rates, where such experiments have been approved by order of the Commission after notice and  
33 hearing and a finding that such experiments are necessary in order to acquire information which is or may be  
34 in furtherance of the public interest. The Commission's final order regarding any petition filed by an  
35 investor-owned electric utility for approval of a voluntary rate or rate design test or experiment shall be  
36 entered the earlier of not more than six months after the filing of the petition or not more than three months  
37 after the date of any evidentiary hearing concerning such petition. The charge for such service shall be at the  
38 lowest rate applicable for such service in accordance with schedules filed with the Commission pursuant to  
39 § 56-236. But, subject to the provisions of § 56-232.1, nothing contained herein or in § 56-481.1 shall apply  
40 to (i) schedules of rates for any telecommunications service provided to the public by virtue of any contract  
41 with, (ii) for any service provided under or relating to a contract for telecommunications services with, or (iii)  
42 contracts for service rendered by any telephone company to, the state government or any agency thereof, or  
43 by any other public utility to any municipal corporation or to the state or federal government. The provisions  
44 hereof shall not apply to or in any way affect any proceeding pending in the State Corporation Commission  
45 on or before July 1, 1950, and shall not confer on the Commission any jurisdiction not now vested in it with  
46 respect to any such proceeding.47 C. The Commission may conclude that competition can effectively ensure reasonably adequate retail  
48 services in competitive exchanges and may carry out its duty to ensure that a public utility is furnishing  
49 reasonably adequate retail service in its competitive exchanges by monitoring individual customer complaints  
50 and requiring appropriate responses to such complaints.51 D. An electric utility formed under or subject to Chapter 9.1 (§ 56-231.15 et seq.) may meet its duty to  
52 furnish reasonably adequate service through unregulated sales of electric power directly from one or more of  
53 its affiliates to any customer located within the cooperative's certificated service territory that contracts for  
54 electric utility services to serve a demand that is reasonably expected to exceed 90 megawatts.55 E. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection A, an electric utility may delay the provision of service to  
56 a customer with demand that is reasonably expected to exceed 90 megawatts if such delay is necessary to

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**59**    *maintain electric grid reliability, to avoid exceeding available generation or transmission capacity*  
**60**    *constraints, or to ensure compliance with load interconnection policies issued by the Federal Energy*  
**61**    *Regulatory Commission.*