

1 VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY — CHAPTER

2 *An Act to direct the State Corporation Commission to promulgate regulations establishing standards for the*
3 *use of advanced leak detection technologies for intrastate natural gas distribution facilities operated by*
4 *covered utilities.*

5 [H 1073]

6 Approved

7 **Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**8 **1. § 1. As used in this act:**

9 *"Advanced leak detection" means a program that is designed to allow a natural gas utility to deploy*
10 *advanced leak detection technologies to more accurately identify active leaks as part of the natural gas*
11 *utility's leak management program to address leaks that present a risk to safety or the environment.*

12 *"Commission" means the State Corporation Commission.*

13 *"Covered utility" means a natural gas public service company or other pipeline operator that (i) is subject*
14 *to the jurisdiction of the Commission for ratemaking or safety regulation, (ii) meets the eligibility criteria*
15 *established under Chapter 26 (§ 56-603 et seq.) of Title 56 of the Code of Virginia, and (iii) serves 25,000 or*
16 *more natural gas services within the Commonwealth.*

17 *The Commission shall promulgate regulations establishing standards for the use of advanced leak*
18 *detection technologies for intrastate natural gas distribution facilities operated by covered utilities. The*
19 *purpose of such regulations shall be to establish performance-based standards for the use of advanced leak*
20 *detection technologies informed by the U. S. Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration's*
21 *(PHMSA) rulemaking titled "Pipeline Safety: Gas Pipeline Leak Detection and Repair" (Docket No.*
22 *PHMSA–2021–0039; RIN 2137–AF51).*

23 *Such regulations shall include explicit exemptions for (i) small master meter operators, as defined by the*
24 *Commission by regulation and (ii) liquefied petroleum gas systems, including propane systems, to the extent*
25 *not otherwise regulated as covered utilities. The Commission may establish additional exemptions, delayed*
26 *applicability, or alternative compliance pathways for systems with a de minimis footprint or other*
27 *characteristics demonstrating that application of the regulations would be impracticable or not cost-effective.*

28 *The Commission shall initiate a rulemaking within 12 months of the effective date of this act. The*
29 *regulations adopted pursuant to this act shall become effective on a schedule established by the Commission.*

30 **2. That the provisions of this act and any regulations adopted by the State Corporation Commission**
31 **pursuant to this act shall expire upon the effective date of any final rule under the U. S. Pipeline and**
32 **Hazardous Materials Safety Administration's "Pipeline Safety: Gas Pipeline Leak Detection and**
33 **Repair" rulemaking (Docket No. PHMSA–2021–0039; RIN 2137–AF51) or equivalent federal rule.**