

Energy and Technology Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-6847

Title: AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN THE STATE.

Vote Date: 3/14/2023

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 3/7/2023

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

REASONS FOR BILL:

The State of Connecticut may be able to save on its energy usage costs, improve efficiency, and reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by introducing new technologies for use in state government. These prospects are significant since new technologies could reduce state government expenses and help Connecticut reduce its greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, this bill proposes requiring the chairperson of the PURA to conduct a study regarding the use of technology in the state to inform future policy recommendations.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

N/A

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Jake Lestock, Director - State Legislative Affairs, Cellular Telephone Industries Association (CTIA) & Luke Wolff, Director of Tax, AT&T

– Support the bill if its language is amended “to ensure technology-neutral collection of the E911-service surcharge in Connecticut” (Jake Lestock; CTIA Testimony; March 7, 2023). This change would help support all the state’s telecommunications providers and produce higher revenues for the state’s Emergency 911 (E911) services. CTIA & AT&T also suggest a uniform rate that applies equally to all subscribers that connect to E911 services, as opposed to the current rates established by PURA for different types of telecommunications subscribers (e.g., wireline, Voice over Internet Protocol [VoIP], wireless, and prepaid wireless subscribers), to simplify the collection and administration processes. A single statewide telecommunications services rate would allow PURA to reduce the current statewide surcharge to more closely resemble the rates of neighboring states, resulting in savings for ratepayers while still maintaining E911 collections with the required funding. A uniform rate

would also enable PURA to lower the current surcharge rate since it may result in more resources being collected from the same number of phone lines.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Tim Wilkerson, President-The New England Connectivity and Telecommunications Association (NECTA) – Opposes the bill because it will ultimately have negative consequences for local businesses despite its intentions to save on costs. NECTA notes that a flat rate for the 911 fee structure would increase 911 fees paid by customers with two or more lines, including small businesses that rely on telecommunications services and large companies with even more lines. NECTA adds that any prospective benefits would be minimal with respect to customer savings. NECTA advises that the state maintain the progressive fee structure, codified in PURA regulations.

Reported by: David deHaas & Robert Downes Date: 3/17/23