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HOUSE BILL NO. 2289

Offered January 23, 1995

A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 56-484.2:1, relating to local exchange telephone service.

Patrons—Barlow, Councill and Nelms

Referred to Committee on Corporations, Insurance and Banking

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 56-484.2:1 as follows:

§ 56-484.2:1. Local exchange telephone service to be contiguous within county, etc.

A. Except as provided in subsection B of this section, telephone exchanges within a county shall be contiguous within the county and contiguous with the next adjacent exchange or exchanges existing exclusively outside the countywide area. Such changes to local exchange telephone service shall occur in the ordinary course of events as prescribed by the Commission when petitioned in accordance with the procedures established for voting by each affected jurisdiction pursuant to the provisions of this article. The extended area of service shall be chargeable to subscribers on a flat rate basis consistent with rates established by rate groups relative to the size of the new service area. In no case shall any affected subscriber be required to pay more than the highest rate within the highest rate group applicable to any serving telephone company. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Commission may prescribe procedures for areas which are unique in nature.

B. Every telephone company authorized to provide local exchange service to Isle of Wight County shall provide contiguous service with all exchanges within Isle of Wight County and contiguous service with all exchanges in the cities of Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Virginia Beach, Chesapeake and Suffolk. Contiguous local service shall be provided on a flat rate basis to the subscribers in Isle of Wight County, by residential and business classes, commensurate with the rate groups established by the State Corporation Commission as applicable to Suffolk. Every telephone company providing local telephone service to Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Virginia Beach, Chesapeake and Suffolk shall provide service from these jurisdictions to all Isle of Wight County exchanges at no additional expense to its subscribers.

Such service shall be implemented by June 1, 1995, and shall be maintained consistent with general service policies that apply to local exchange telephone service providers in the Hampton Roads area. The Commission shall prescribe enforcement measures and have jurisdiction to decide disputes under this section. No telephone company providing local exchange telephone service on the effective date of this act shall deny or withdraw service within their authorized service areas in Isle of Wight County, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Virginia Beach, Chesapeake and Suffolk without authorization from the Commission.

2. That an emergency exists and this act is in force from its passage.

INTRODUCED

HB2289