



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 471

February Session, 2026

Substitute Senate Bill No. 421

Senate, April 7, 2026

The Committee on Energy and Technology reported through SEN. NEEDLEMAN of the 33rd Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING REPORTING OF DOUBLE UTILITY POLES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2026*) (a) As used in this section
2 and section 2 of this act:

3 (1) "Public utility pole" means a pole, including a portion of a pole,
4 owned by a telephone company or an electric distribution company that
5 is used to support wires for (A) the distribution of electricity, (B)
6 telecommunications services, as defined in section 16-247a of the
7 general statutes, or (C) the lighting of streets or sidewalks;

8 (2) "Double utility poles" means a replacement public utility pole
9 built or installed alongside, or attached to, an existing public utility pole,
10 or a portion of an existing public utility pole, for the purpose of
11 transferring the wires from the existing utility pole to the replacement
12 utility pole, provided the existing public utility pole, including any
13 portion of such utility pole, has not been removed after the installation

14 of the replacement utility pole;

15 (3) "Electric distribution company" has the same meaning as
16 provided in section 16-1 of the general statutes;

17 (4) "Telephone company" has the same meaning as provided in
18 section 16-1 of the general statutes; and

19 (5) "User" means any person or entity, except for an electric
20 distribution company, a telephone company, a municipality or a
21 political subdivision of a municipality, that maintains equipment of any
22 sort on a public utility pole.

23 (b) The owner of any public utility pole, or the owner's agent, shall
24 deliver written notice of any removal and replacement work concerning
25 such utility pole to each user of such utility pole not less than seventy-
26 two hours (1) before the starting date of any such work if such work is
27 planned, or (2) after such work is completed if such work was
28 unplanned and necessary to correct a hazardous condition on an
29 emergency basis. Such notice shall describe the location of the public
30 utility pole, the nature of the work completed or to be completed, the
31 date upon which such work was completed or is to be completed and
32 the date and method of delivery of such notice.

33 (c) Each user of a public utility pole that receives notice of work
34 pursuant to subsection (b) of this section shall transfer its equipment
35 from the existing public utility pole to the replacement public utility
36 pole not later than fifteen days after receiving such notice. Upon the
37 completion of the work to transfer equipment pursuant to this
38 subsection, the user shall provide written notice to the owner of such
39 utility pole that such work has been completed.

40 (d) If a user fails to complete the work required to transfer the user's
41 equipment in the time required under subsection (c) of this section, the
42 owner of the public utility pole, or the owner's agent, may complete
43 such work on the user's behalf. Such owner or owner's agent may
44 submit a bill to such user based on the prevailing rate of wages

45 established pursuant to section 31-53 of the general statutes for any such
46 work completed on behalf of such user.

47 (e) (1) Except as provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection, a user
48 that fails to transfer the user's equipment to a replacement public utility
49 pole in compliance with subsection (c) of this section shall be in violation
50 of this section. The Public Utilities Regulatory Authority may impose,
51 by order of the authority, a civil penalty not to exceed one hundred
52 dollars for each violation of subsection (c) of this section, and in the case
53 of a continued violation, each day thereof shall be deemed a separate
54 violation. The authority shall impose any such civil penalty in
55 accordance with the procedure established in section 16-41 of the
56 general statutes.

57 (2) The authority shall impose no penalty on a user pursuant to this
58 subsection if (A) the user of a public utility pole was prevented from
59 completing the transfer of such user's equipment due solely to a
60 municipality's failure to timely remove or transfer any equipment
61 owned by such municipality or a political subdivision of the
62 municipality, or (B) the owner of a public utility pole, or the owner's
63 agent, completes any work required to transfer such user's equipment
64 pursuant to subsection (d) of this section.

65 (f) (1) An electric distribution company or telephone company that
66 removes a public utility pole, including any portion of such a utility
67 pole, and installs a replacement public utility pole shall complete the
68 transfer of any wires or equipment owned by the electric distribution
69 company or telephone company and the removal of the public utility
70 pole that was replaced not later than fifteen days after such company
71 receives notice from each user of such pole that each user has completed
72 the transfer work required by the user pursuant to subsection (c) of this
73 section.

74 (2) An electric distribution company or telephone company that fails
75 to transfer such company's equipment to a replacement public utility
76 pole, and remove the public utility pole that was replaced, in
77 compliance with subdivision (1) of this subsection shall be in violation

78 of this section. The Public Utilities Regulatory Authority may impose,
79 by order of the authority, a civil penalty not to exceed one hundred
80 dollars for each violation of this subsection, and in the case of a
81 continued violation, each day thereof shall be deemed a separate
82 violation. The authority shall impose any such civil penalty in
83 accordance with the procedure established in section 16-41 of the
84 general statutes.

85 (g) The Public Utilities Regulatory Authority shall remit the amount
86 of any civil penalty collected pursuant to this section or section 2 of this
87 act to the Commissioner of Social Services for the purpose of providing
88 funding for the Connecticut energy assistance program administered by
89 the commissioner pursuant to section 17b-2 of the general statutes.

90 (h) The Public Utilities Regulatory Authority may adopt regulations,
91 in accordance with chapter 54 of the general statutes, to implement the
92 provisions of this section and section 2 of this act.

93 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2026*) (a) On and after October 1,
94 2026, the owner of any public utility pole shall compile and maintain a
95 list of any double utility poles owned or maintained by such owner or
96 such owner's agent that have existed for not less than thirty days. Such
97 owner shall provide such list to the Public Utilities Regulatory
98 Authority upon the authority's request.

99 (b) Not later than October 1, 2027, the owner of any double utility
100 poles, or the owner's agent, shall undertake any work necessary to
101 eliminate such double utility poles. Any owner that fails to eliminate
102 such double utility poles on or before October 1, 2027, shall be in
103 violation of this section. The Public Utilities Regulatory Authority may
104 impose, by order of the authority, a civil penalty not to exceed one
105 hundred dollars for each violation of this section, and in the case of a
106 continued violation, each day thereof shall be deemed a separate
107 violation. The authority shall impose any such civil penalty in
108 accordance with the procedure established in section 16-41 of the
109 general statutes.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	October 1, 2026	New section
Sec. 2	October 1, 2026	New section

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In Section 1(e)(1), a reference to "subsection (b)" was changed to "subsection (c)", for accuracy.

ET *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 27 \$	FY 28 \$
Social Services, Dept.	GF - Revenue Gain	Minimal	Minimal

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill creates a process for public utility pole users and owners to transfer their wires and equipment from existing poles to replacement poles and then remove double utility poles, which does not result in a cost to the state or municipalities.

The bill also imposes a civil penalty of up to \$100 for each day that a utility pole user or owner remains in violation of the bill's requirements under various circumstances. It is anticipated that this will result in a minimal revenue gain to the Department of Social Services (DSS), which the bill requires be used to support the Connecticut Energy Assistance Program (commonly known as LIHEAP).

Rate Payer Impact

The bill could potentially achieve savings for electric customers, to the extent it results in costs caused by pole users to be appropriately allocated to those entities, rather than electric distribution companies. The amount of savings is indeterminate and will be based on a number of factors outside the immediate scope of the bill.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to the number of civil violations and the revenue collected.

OLR Bill Analysis**sSB 421*****AN ACT CONCERNING REPORTING OF DOUBLE UTILITY POLES.*****SUMMARY**

This bill generally creates a process, including notice requirements, deadlines, and penalties, for public utility pole users and owners to transfer their wires and equipment from existing poles to replacement poles and then remove double utility poles (where the existing pole and its replacement are alongside or attached to each other) by October 1, 2027.

Under the bill, a “public utility pole” is a pole or portion of it that is owned by a telephone company or an electric distribution company (EDC; Eversource or United Illuminating) and used to support wires for distributing electricity, telecommunications services, or street or sidewalk lighting. A “user” is any person or entity that maintains equipment on a public utility pole, except for an EDC, telephone company, municipality, or municipality’s political subdivision.

The bill allows the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) to adopt regulations to implement its provisions.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

REQUIREMENTS AND PENALTIES***Notice Requirement***

The bill requires a public utility pole’s owner or agent to deliver to each of the pole’s users written notice about any removal and replacement work for the pole. The notice must be delivered at least 72 hours (1) before the work on the pole starts (if the work is planned) or (2) after the work is completed (if it was unplanned and needed to correct a hazardous condition on an emergency basis). The notice must

describe the pole's location, the nature of the work, the expected or actual completion date, as applicable, and the notice's date and method of delivery.

User Requirement to Transfer Equipment

The bill requires each notified user to transfer its equipment from the existing pole to the replacement pole within 15 days after receiving the notice. Upon completing the transfer, the user must notify the pole's owner in writing.

If a user fails to complete the transfer within the 15 days, the bill allows the pole's owner, or its agent, to complete the transfer work on the user's behalf and bill the user for the work based on the prevailing wage rates set in the state's prevailing wage law.

Pole Owner's Removal and Replacement Work

The bill requires an EDC or telephone company that removes and replaces a public utility pole, including any portion of one, to finish transferring any wires or equipment it owns and remove the replaced pole within 15 days after it receives notice from each of the pole's users that they have completed the transfer work as required by the bill.

Double Utility Poles

Starting on October 1, 2026, the bill requires the owner of any public utility pole to compile and maintain a list of any double utility poles it (or its agent) owns or maintains that have existed for at least 30 days. The owner must give the list to PURA upon request.

Under the bill, a "double utility pole" is a replacement public utility pole built or installed alongside, or attached to, an existing public utility pole, or a portion of one, for transferring the wires from the existing pole to the replacement, when the existing utility pole or any portion of it has not been removed after the installation of the replacement.

The bill requires any double utility pole owner, or its agent, to perform any work needed to remove its double utility poles by October 1, 2027.

Enforcement

The bill generally allows PURA to issue an order imposing a civil penalty of up to \$100 for each day that a utility pole user or owner remains in violation of the bill’s requirements (for users to transfer their equipment, and owners to transfer their equipment and remove replaced poles and double poles). The bill requires PURA to (1) impose the penalties under its statutory procedure for issuing civil penalties and (2) remit the collected penalties to the social services commissioner to help fund the Connecticut Energy Assistance Program.

However, the bill prohibits PURA from imposing a civil penalty on a utility pole user if the (1) user was prevented from completing the transfer work solely because of a municipality’s failure to timely remove or transfer any equipment it (or its political subdivision) owns (the bill does not specify a deadline for a municipality to complete this transfer) or (2) pole’s owner or agent completed the transfer work for the user as allowed by the bill.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Energy and Technology Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 19 Nay 7 (03/19/2026)