
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)