**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 58-27-250, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO RESTRICTIONS ON INTERRUPTIONS OF ELECTRIC SERVICE TO RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMERS FOR NONPAYMENT, SO AS TO MAKE RESTRICTIONS ALSO APPLICABLE TO COMMERCIAL CUSTOMERS, AND TO REQUIRE MAILED WRITTEN NOTIFICATION TO THE CUSTOMER INSTEAD OF TELEPHONIC OR ELECTRONIC NOTICE.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. Section 58‑27‑250 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 58‑27‑250. (A) Except as provided in subsections (B) and (C) of this section, an electrical utility must not interrupt electric service to any residential or commercial customer for nonpayment of a bill until twenty‑five days have elapsed from the date of billing.

(B) An electrical utility may interrupt electric service to any residential or commercial customer who has voluntarily enrolled in a prepay program if the prepay program allows the customer to monitor his consumption of electricity and his account balance on a daily basis and the balance of that customer’s prepay account is zero, provided that the following conditions are met: (1) at the time the residential or commercial customer enrolls in the prepay program, the ~~residential~~ customer is informed and agrees that his electric service may be interrupted when the balance of his prepay account reaches zero; (2) electric service must not be interrupted before 10:00 a.m. on the ~~next~~ fifth business day following an attempt by the electrical utility to give the customer mailed written notice of the impending interruption ~~by telephone or electronically~~; and (3) electric service must not be interrupted except during hours when the electrical utility, or an agent, is accepting cash payments.

(C) A prepay program established by an electrical utility shall be subject to approval by the Public Service Commission of South Carolina prior to implementation. Any interruption of electric service under an approved prepay program shall be governed by the terms of this section and the provisions of the prepay account agreement. A prepay program approved by the Public Service Commission under this subsection must allow the utility to interrupt service when the balance of the customer’s prepay account is zero and the conditions set out in subsection (B) are met. Upon a showing of good cause, the commission may allow alternative compliance with the requirement of subsection (B) regarding the ability of the customer to monitor his consumption and account balance on a daily basis, if such compliance provides consumer information and protections similar to that required in subsection (B).

(D) Nothing contained herein shall be construed so as to relieve an electrical utility of the requirements of Act 313 of 2006.

(E) Any person aggrieved by a violation of this section may petition the courts of this State for redress in accordance with applicable law.”

SECTION 2. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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