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H.21

Introduced by Representatives Page of Newport City, Higley of Lowell, Labor
of Morgan, Smith of Derby, and Williams of Granby

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Utilities; disconnection; rental properties; landlord notice

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to require a
utility to notify the owner of a rental property when service to the property has
been disconnected even if the tenant is the ratepayer.

An act relating to landlord notice of utility disconnections

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

~~Sec. 1. UTILITY DISCONNECTION; LANDLORD NOTIFICATION~~

~~For the purpose of promoting safety, the protection of property, and
providing assistance to tenants, the Public Utility Commission shall revise its
applicable rules to ensure that a utility provides notice of a utility service
disconnection to the residential or nonresidential property owner even if the
tenant is the ratepayer. As used in this section, "utility service" means gas,
electric, water, and sewer service. The notice requirement developed by the
Public Utility Commission pursuant to this section also shall apply to~~

1 ~~disconnections of water and sewer service provided by a water or sewer~~
2 ~~system owned by a municipality, fire district, or private company subject to the~~
3 ~~uniform water and sewer disconnection requirements in 24 V.S.A. chapter 129.~~

4 Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

5 ~~This act shall take effect on passage.~~

Sec. 1. UTILITY DISCONNECTION; LANDLORD NOTIFICATION;

PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION; RULEMAKING

(a) For the purpose of promoting safety, the protection of property, and providing assistance to tenants, the Public Utility Commission shall revise its rules concerning utility service disconnection to:

(1) require that a utility provide notice to the property owner of residential or nonresidential rental property if utility service to the property has been disconnected, even if the tenant is the ratepayer; and

(2) allow a utility to disconnect utility service remotely.

(b) As used in this section, "utility service" means gas, electric, water, and wastewater service subject to the jurisdiction of the Public Utility Commission.

(c) The rules adopted pursuant to subdivision (a)(1) of this section shall:

(1) establish the form, content, time, and manner of the notification required by subdivision (a)(1) of this section;

(2) include a process whereby a property owner can request that the notification is provided to a property manager or other appropriate third party; and

(3) ensure that the notification does not include personal or confidential information pertaining to the tenant or the tenant's account, except that the utility may disclose information necessary to enable the property owner or other applicable third party to reconnect utility service to the property.

(d) On or before January 15, 2024, the Public Utility Commission shall submit to the House Committees on General and Housing and on Environment and Energy and the Senate Committees on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs and on Finance a proposal in the form of draft legislation that incorporates, as the Commission deems appropriate, the rules adopted by the Commission pursuant to this section and that applies to utility disconnections not subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission, including water and sewer service provided by a water or sewer system owned by a municipality, fire district, or private company subject to the uniform water and sewer disconnection requirements in 24 V.S.A. chapter 129.

Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.