
By: **Delegates Elliott, Boutin, Kittleman, O'Donnell, Riley, Dypski, Getty,
Heller, Eckardt, Stocksdale, Amedori, Walkup, Brinkley, Kagan, and
Giannetti**

Introduced and read first time: February 2, 2001
Assigned to: Environmental Matters

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Public Service Commission - Telephone Rates - Competition**

3 FOR the purpose of declaring certain findings of the General Assembly; requiring the
4 Public Service Commission to undertake certain efforts to increase competition
5 in certain telephone services for residential customers; requiring the Public
6 Service Commission to report to certain committees of the General Assembly by
7 certain dates on its progress in enhancing competition in certain telephone
8 services in the State; and generally relating to local telephone calling rates.

9 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
10 MARYLAND, That the General Assembly:

11 (1) finds that:

12 (i) competition in local exchange telephone services, which the
13 federal Telecommunications Act of 1996 was enacted to foster, has languished in this
14 State, particularly in residential local exchange services;

15 (ii) additional efforts by the Public Service Commission are needed
16 to foster competition in local exchange telephone services, and in intrastate
17 interLATA telephone services, for residential customers in the State; and

18 (iii) waiver or elimination of the LATA boundaries in the State by
19 the Federal Communications Commission would assist the Public Service
20 Commission in developing a more competitive local exchange telephone services
21 market for residential customers in the State and in creating a reasonable alternative
22 rate setting mechanism; and

23 (2) directs the Public Service Commission to undertake efforts to
24 increase competition in the local exchange service and intrastate interLATA service
25 markets for residential telephone customers in the State, consistent with the federal
26 Telecommunications Act of 1996, including:

1 (i) commencing State proceedings to investigate and implement
2 regulatory changes to enhance competition; and

3 (ii) petitioning the Federal Communications Commission to
4 implement regulatory changes to enhance competition in intrastate interLATA
5 services in the State, which may include alteration or elimination of LATAs in the
6 State that act as barriers to competition in local exchange service.

7 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Public Service
8 Commission shall report to the Senate Finance Committee and the House
9 Environmental Matters Committee, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State
10 Government Article, on or before January 1, 2003, and January 1, 2004, on the
11 progress of the Commission in enhancing competition in the local exchange service
12 and intrastate interLATA services for residential customers in the State, including
13 the status of State and federal proceedings on the subject of enhancing competition.

14 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
15 October 1, 2001.