

Chapter 531

(House Bill 529)

AN ACT concerning

Telephone Companies – Distribution of Telephone Directories to Residential Customers

FOR the purpose of providing that a telephone company may not be required to distribute a certain telephone directory to an address in the State unless the property owner or an occupant requests the directory; requiring a telephone company to provide certain notice to ~~customers~~ a customer if the telephone company elects not to deliver a print telephone directory to ~~each~~ the customer at an address in the State; requiring a telephone company to deliver a print telephone directory to a customer at no cost to the customer under certain circumstances; requiring the Public Service Commission to review certain complaints, make certain determinations, and report certain findings and recommendations to certain committees of the General Assembly on or before a certain date; and generally relating to telephone companies and the distribution of telephone directories.

BY adding to
Article – Public Utilities
Section 8–206
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2010 Replacement Volume)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Public Utilities

8–206.

(A) THIS SECTION APPLIES TO TELEPHONE DIRECTORIES DISTRIBUTED BY, OR ON BEHALF OF, A TELEPHONE COMPANY OTHER THAN ADVERTISEMENT–BASED BUSINESS DIRECTORIES.

(B) A TELEPHONE COMPANY MAY NOT BE REQUIRED TO DISTRIBUTE A TELEPHONE DIRECTORY TO AN ADDRESS IN THE STATE UNLESS THE PROPERTY OWNER OR AN OCCUPANT REQUESTS THE TELEPHONE DIRECTORY.

(C) (1) IF A TELEPHONE COMPANY ELECTS NOT TO DISTRIBUTE A PRINT TELEPHONE DIRECTORY TO ~~EACH~~ A CUSTOMER AT AN ADDRESS IN THE

STATE, THE TELEPHONE COMPANY SHALL PROVIDE NOTICE AS TO HOW A THE CUSTOMER MAY REQUEST A PRINT TELEPHONE DIRECTORY.

(2) THE NOTICE REQUIRED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION SHALL:

(I) INCLUDE A TOLL-FREE TELEPHONE NUMBER A CUSTOMER MAY CALL TO REQUEST A PRINT TELEPHONE DIRECTORY; AND

(II) BE INCLUDED:

1. WITH CUSTOMER BILLS IN EACH CUSTOMER'S BILL AT LEAST ONCE EACH YEAR; AND

2. ON THE TELEPHONE COMPANY'S WEB SITE ; AND

3. IN BOLD RED PRINT, ON THE FRONT COVER AND THE TABLE OF CONTENTS PAGE OF ANY PRINT ADVERTISEMENT-BASED BUSINESS DIRECTORY DISTRIBUTED ON BEHALF OF THE TELEPHONE COMPANY THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2016.

(3) IF A CUSTOMER REQUESTS A PRINT TELEPHONE DIRECTORY, THE TELEPHONE COMPANY SHALL DELIVER THE PRINT TELEPHONE DIRECTORY TO THE CUSTOMER AT NO COST TO THE CUSTOMER.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, on or before October 1, 2013, the Public Service Commission shall:

(1) (i) review complaints received from residential customers who have indicated that they have not received a print telephone directory; and

(ii) based on the complaints, determine whether the notification requirement under § 8-206 of the Public Utilities Article as enacted by Section 1 of this Act is an adequate way to notify various customer groups, including the elderly and low-income individuals, as to how to request a print telephone directory; and

(2) report its findings and recommendations to the Senate Finance Committee and the House Economic Matters Committee, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article.

SECTION ~~2~~ 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2011.

Approved by the Governor, May 19, 2011.