

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2021**

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**SENATE BILL 452  
PROPOSED COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE S452-PCS45412-RI-14**

Short Title: Utilities/User Responsible for Utility Bill. (Public)

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Sponsors:

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Referred to:

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April 5, 2021

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO GENERALLY PROHIBIT A LOCAL GOVERNMENT THAT OPERATES A  
3 PUBLIC ENTERPRISE FROM BILLING A LANDLORD FOR SERVICE PROVIDED TO  
4 PREMISES THAT THE LANDLORD NO LONGER OWNS, LEASES, OR OCCUPIES.

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

6 **SECTION 1.(a)** G.S. 153A-277 reads as rewritten:

7 **"§ 153A-277. Authority to fix and enforce rates.**

8 ...

9 (b1) A county shall not do any of the following in its debt collection practices:

10 (1) Suspend or disconnect service to a customer because of a past-due and unpaid  
11 balance for service incurred by another person who resides with the customer  
12 after service has been provided to the customer's household, unless one or  
13 more of the following apply:

- 14 a. The customer and the person were members of the same household at  
15 a different location when the unpaid balance for service was incurred.  
16 b. The person was a member of the customer's current household when  
17 the service was established, and the person had an unpaid balance for  
18 service at that time.  
19 c. The person is or becomes responsible for the bill for the service to the  
20 customer.

21 (2) Require that in order to continue service, a customer must agree to be liable  
22 for the delinquent account of any other person who will reside in the  
23 customer's household after the customer receives the service, unless one or  
24 more of the following apply:

- 25 a. The customer and the person were members of the same household at  
26 a different location when the unpaid balance for service was incurred.  
27 b. The person was a member of the customer's current household when  
28 the service was established, and the person had an unpaid balance for  
29 service at that time.

30 (3) Attempt to collect payment from a landlord, whether a natural person or a  
31 company, for service to premises that the landlord no longer owns, leases, or  
32 occupies, except where the service for which payment is sought was provided  
33 during the time the landlord owned, leased, or occupied the premises. The  
34 provisions of this subdivision shall apply notwithstanding any agreement that  
35 existed between the landlord and the utility to reconnect service to the  
36 premises during the time the landlord owned, occupied, or leased the property.



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1 ...."

2 SECTION 1.(b) G.S. 160A-314 reads as rewritten:

3 "§ 160A-314. Authority to fix and enforce rates.

4 ...

5 (b1) A city shall not do any of the following in its debt collection practices:

6 (1) Suspend or disconnect service to a customer because of a past-due and unpaid  
7 balance for service incurred by another person who resides with the customer  
8 after service has been provided to the customer's household, unless one or  
9 more of the following apply:

10 a. The customer and the person were members of the same household at  
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27 company, for service to premises that the landlord no longer owns, leases, or  
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29 during the time the landlord owned, leased, or occupied the premises. The  
30 provisions of this subdivision shall apply notwithstanding any agreement that  
31 existed between the landlord and the utility to reconnect service to the  
32 premises during the time the landlord owned, occupied, or leased the property.

33 ...."

34 SECTION 2. This act is effective when it becomes law and applies to attempts to  
35 collect payment on or after that date.