

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 2868**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

***Jonathan Hecht***

*To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:*

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act relative to double poles.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Jonathan Hecht</i>	<i>29th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/11/2019</i>
<i>Peter Capano</i>	<i>11th Essex</i>	<i>1/14/2019</i>
<i>Marjorie C. Decker</i>	<i>25th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/29/2019</i>
<i>Michelle M. DuBois</i>	<i>10th Plymouth</i>	<i>1/29/2019</i>
<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>	<i>2/1/2019</i>
<i>Stephan Hay</i>	<i>3rd Worcester</i>	<i>1/30/2019</i>
<i>Jack Patrick Lewis</i>	<i>7th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/29/2019</i>
<i>David Paul Linsky</i>	<i>5th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/29/2019</i>
<i>Michael O. Moore</i>	<i>Second Worcester</i>	<i>2/1/2019</i>
<i>Brian W. Murray</i>	<i>10th Worcester</i>	<i>1/30/2019</i>
<i>Denise Provost</i>	<i>27th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/31/2019</i>
<i>Maria Duaine Robinson</i>	<i>6th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/15/2019</i>
<i>Angelo M. Scaccia</i>	<i>14th Suffolk</i>	<i>1/30/2019</i>

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By Mr. Hecht of Watertown, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 2868) of Jonathan Hecht and others for legislation to establish a double pole advisory council to recommend rules and regulations to reduce the use of double utility poles. Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy.

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[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE HOUSE, NO. 1749 OF 2017-2018.]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

—————  
**In the One Hundred and Ninety-First General Court  
(2019-2020)**  
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An Act relative to double poles.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

1           Section 1. Within 90 days of the effective date of this act, the department of public  
2 utilities and the department of telecommunications and cable shall jointly issue a report relative  
3 to double poles within the Commonwealth. The report shall provide an assessment of progress  
4 made in reducing the number of double poles in the commonwealth since the report issued  
5 pursuant to Section 110 of Chapter 46 of the Acts of 2003. Such assessment shall include data,  
6 by municipality, on the removal of double poles installed before January 31, 2004, the removal  
7 of double poles installed after January 31, 2004, and double poles remaining to be removed.  
8 With respect to each double pole remaining to be removed, the data shall include the date of its  
9 installation and the pole owner.

10           Section 2. Within 90 days of the effective date of this act, the chair of the department of  
11 public utilities and the commissioner of the department of telecommunications and cable shall  
12 jointly appoint a double pole remediation advisory council which shall consist of 11 members,  
13 including 2 persons representing municipalities, chosen from a list compiled by the  
14 Massachusetts Municipal Association, and 1 person representing each of the following (1)  
15 telephone company pole owners, (2) electric distribution company pole owners, (3) municipal  
16 light plants, (4) CATV operator pole attachees, (5), the attorney general, (6) organized telephone  
17 pole workers, (7) organized electricity distribution pole workers, (8) the department of public  
18 utilities, and (9) the department of telecommunications and cable. The chair of the department of  
19 public utilities and the commissioner of the department of telecommunications and cable or their  
20 respective designees shall serve as co-chairs of the council. The council shall meet within 90  
21 days following the passage of this act and at such times thereafter as deemed necessary by the  
22 co-chairs.

23           Section 3. Within 180 days of the effective date of this act, the double pole remediation  
24 advisory council shall report to the department of telecommunications and cable, the department  
25 of public utilities, the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy and the  
26 Joint Committee on Municipalities and Regional Government their recommendations to reduce  
27 the number of double poles in the commonwealth.

28           The report shall include, but not be limited to, analysis of the following possible  
29 measures to improve and accelerate the removal of double poles in the commonwealth:

30           (1) measures to ensure the comprehensiveness, accuracy, and timeliness of the  
31 information contained in the Pole Lifecycle Management (“PLM”) system

32 (2) measures to ensure access to the information contained in the PLM system by all pole  
33 users, including municipalities

34 (3) requiring pole owners to provide semi-annual reports to each municipality listing all  
35 double poles in their municipality, their location and/or pole number, the date of installation, and  
36 the pole user currently identified by the PLM system as “first in line” to remove its wires and  
37 other equipment

38 (4) mandating meetings of pole owners and municipalities, to take place in and at the  
39 initiative of the municipalities, to discuss the status, scheduling, and prioritization of double pole  
40 removals

41 (5) securing an enforceable commitment from pole owners to remove their existing  
42 backlog of double poles and to devote adequate personnel and resources to ensure that all new  
43 double poles are removed no more than one year after installation

44 (6) authorizing the commonwealth or municipalities to impose fines on pole owners that  
45 do not respond within 30 days to a formal demand by a municipality to remove a double pole  
46 installed for more than 180 days

47 (7) authorizing the commonwealth or municipalities to impose escalating fines on poles  
48 owners or pole attachees based on the length of delay in removing a double pole.

49 The double pole remediation advisory council may utilize the resources and staff of the  
50 department of public utilities, the department of telecommunications and cable and other relevant  
51 agencies of state government.

52           Section 4. Within one year of the effective date of this act, the department of public  
53 utilities and the department of telecommunications and cable shall jointly promulgate rules and  
54 regulations relative to reducing the number of double poles in the commonwealth pursuant to  
55 section 34B of chapter 164 of the General Laws. The departments shall consider the  
56 recommendations of the double pole remediation advisory council in promulgating such rules  
57 and regulations, provided however that if the council fails to make recommendations within 180  
58 days of the effective date of this act, the department of public utilities and department of  
59 telecommunications and cable shall promulgate rules and regulations without the  
60 recommendations of the council.

61           Such rules and regulations may include fines or other penalties on pole owners or pole  
62 attachees for their failure to remove double poles. Municipalities may enforce, by the enactment  
63 of a local ordinance or bylaw, any uniform, statewide fine structure in accordance with such  
64 rules and regulations.

65           Section 5. No later than July 1st of each year after the effective date of this act, the  
66 department of public utilities and the department of telecommunications and cable shall jointly  
67 submit an annual report to the legislature describing the status of double pole remediation and  
68 recommending legislation or other measures to improve enforcement of section 34B of Chapter  
69 164 of the General Laws or otherwise reduce the number of double poles in the Commonwealth.  
70 This section shall not apply in the year in which said departments issue their report pursuant to  
71 Section 1 of this act.