

JOINT COMMITTEE ON TELECOMMUNICATIONS, UTILITIES, AND ENERGY

BILL SUMMARY

BILL NO. H.3500

TITLE: An Act to eliminate double utility poles and authorize municipal enforcement

SPONSOR: Representative Richard M. Haggerty

COMMITTEE: Telecommunications, Utilities, and Energy

HEARING DATE: June 4, 2025

PRIOR HISTORY: New bill

CURRENT LAW:

Chapter 164, Section 34B of the General Laws pertains to the removal or installation of utility poles by distribution companies or telephone companies. It requires companies switching out an existing utility pole with a new replacement to complete the transfer of wires, all repairs, and the removal of the existing pole from the site within 90 days from the date of installation of the new pole. There exists an exception for approved commercial or industrial construction projects lasting more than one year. Under such circumstances, the company is required to remove the existing pole within six months from the date of installation of the new pole.

SUMMARY:

This Act amends Section 34B of chapter 164 by adding language that allows cities and towns to enforce the section by the enactment of a local ordinance or bylaw prohibiting double poles beyond 12 months. Any violation may be punishable by a fine not to exceed a maximum of \$2,500 per occurrence imposed on the owners of such double poles.