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Janet T. Mills
GOVERNOR

Barry J. Hobbins
PUBLIC ADVOCATE

March 10, 2020

Chairman Lawrence, Chairman Berry and Members of the Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee,

The Office of the Public Advocate (“OPA”) testifies neither for nor against LR 3272 “An Act Regarding Abandoned Utility Poles and Associated Facilities” which applies the standards of the Department of Transportation (DOT) to municipalities that have not adopted applicable standards governing the removal of unused or out of service facilities in their rights of way.

LR 3272 would preserve existing municipal authority over standards. For municipalities that have not acted, it adopts consistent, applicable standards for utilities and other authorized users of municipal rights of way to remove or replace structures. Inserting DOT standards into the current gaps of regulation where municipalities have not acted will likely speed up the process of removing unused facilities from rights of way.

Thank you for your time, attention and consideration of this testimony. The Office of the Public Advocate looks forward to working with the on this matter and will be present at the work session to assist the Committee in its consideration of this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Barry J. Hobbins'.

Barry J. Hobbins, Public Advocate