

LEGISLATIVE BILL 899

Approved by the Governor August 06, 2020

Introduced by Hughes, 44; Albrecht, 17; Brandt, 32; Gragert, 40; Quick, 35;
Kolterman, 24.

A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to public power districts; to amend section 70-625, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska; to provide certain powers relating to certain fuels and fuel byproducts; to harmonize provisions; and to repeal the original section.

Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

Section 1. Section 70-625, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

70-625 (1) Subject to the limitations of the petition for its creation and all amendments to such petition, a public power district has all the usual powers of a corporation for public purposes and may purchase, hold, sell, and lease personal property and real property reasonably necessary for the conduct of its business. No district may sell household appliances at retail if the retail price of any such appliance exceeds fifty dollars, except that newly developed electrical appliances may be merchandised and sold during the period of time in which any such appliances are being introduced to the public. New models of existing appliances shall not be deemed to be newly developed appliances. An electrical appliance shall be considered to be in such introductory period of time until the particular type of appliance is used by twenty-five percent of all the electrical customers served by such district, but such period shall in no event exceed five years from the date of introduction by the manufacturer of the new appliance to the local market.

(2) In addition to its powers authorized by Chapter 70 and specified in its petition for creation, as amended, a public power district may sell, lease, and service satellite television signal descrambling or decoding devices, satellite television programming, and equipment and services associated with such devices and programming, except that this section does not authorize public power districts (a) to provide signal descrambling or decoding devices or satellite programming to any location (i) being furnished such devices or programming on April 24, 1987, or (ii) where community antenna television service is available from any person, firm, or corporation holding a franchise pursuant to sections 18-2201 to 18-2206 or a permit pursuant to sections 23-383 to 23-388 on April 24, 1987, or (b) to sell, service, or lease C-band satellite dish systems or repair parts.

(3) In addition to the powers authorized by Chapter 70 and specified in its petition for creation as amended, the board of directors of a public power district may apply for and use funds available from the United States Department of Agriculture or other federal agencies for grants or loans to promote economic development and job creation projects in rural areas as permitted under the rules and regulations of the federal agency from which the funds are received. Any loan to be made by a district shall only be made in participation with a bank pursuant to a contract. The district and the participating bank shall determine the terms and conditions of the contract. In addition, in rural areas of the district, the board of directors of such district may provide technical or management assistance to prospective, new, or expanding businesses, including home-based businesses, provide assistance to a local or regional industrial or economic development corporation or foundation located within or contiguous to the district's service area, and provide youth and adult community leadership training.

(4) In addition to the powers authorized by Chapter 70 and specified in its petition for creation as amended, a public power district may sell or lease its dark fiber pursuant to sections 86-574 to 86-578.

(5) In addition to the powers authorized by Chapter 70 and specified in its petition for creation as amended, a public power district may develop, manufacture, use, purchase, or sell at wholesale advanced biofuels and biofuel byproducts and other fuels and fuel byproducts so long as the development, manufacture, use, purchase, or sale of such biofuels and biofuel byproducts and other fuels and fuel byproducts is done to help offset greenhouse gas emissions.

~~(6)~~ (5) Notwithstanding any law, ordinance, resolution, or regulation of any political subdivision to the contrary, each public power district may receive funds and extend loans pursuant to the Nebraska Investment Finance Authority Act or pursuant to this section. In addition to the powers authorized by Chapter 70 and specified in its petition for creation, as amended, and without the need for further amendment thereto, a public power district may own and operate, contract to operate, or lease energy equipment and provide billing, meter reading, surveys, or evaluations and other administrative services, but not to include natural gas services, of public utility systems within a district's service territory.

Sec. 2. Original section 70-625, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is repealed.