

By: Ellis

S.B. No. 508

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to planning and reporting requirements for gas utilities regarding workforce diversity and opportunities for small and historically underutilized businesses.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subtitle A, Title 3, Utilities Code, is amended by adding Chapter 106 to read as follows:

CHAPTER 106. WORKFORCE DIVERSITY AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR CERTAIN BUSINESSES

Sec. 106.001. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter, "small business" and "historically underutilized business" have the meanings assigned by Section 481.191, Government Code.

Sec. 106.002. PLAN TO ENHANCE WORKFORCE DIVERSITY AND INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SMALL AND HISTORICALLY UNDERUTILIZED BUSINESSES. (a) Each gas utility annually shall submit to the railroad commission a five-year plan to:

(1) enhance the diversity of its workforce in all occupational categories; and

(2) increase business opportunities for small and historically underutilized businesses, including contracting and joint venture opportunities and opportunities for those businesses to enter into the market for gas, gas products, and gas services.

(b) The plan must list and describe programs and activities the gas utility intends to undertake during the five years

1 addressed in the plan to accomplish the goals described by
2 Subsection (a).

3 Sec. 106.003. REPORTING WORKFORCE DIVERSITY AND
4 OPPORTUNITIES FOR SMALL AND HISTORICALLY UNDERUTILIZED BUSINESSES.

5 (a) Each gas utility annually shall submit to the railroad
6 commission a report that summarizes the utility's efforts to
7 enhance the diversity of its workforce and increase business
8 opportunities for small and historically underutilized businesses.

9 (b) The report must include information and assessments, as
10 required by railroad commission rule, concerning:

11 (1) the diversity of the gas utility's workforce at the
12 time of the report;

13 (2) the gas utility's level of contracting with small
14 and historically underutilized businesses;

15 (3) joint ventures in which the gas utility
16 participates with a small or historically underutilized business;

17 (4) the progress made in the preceding year under the
18 plan submitted under Section 106.002;

19 (5) the programs and activities undertaken during the
20 preceding year under the plan submitted under Section 106.002 and
21 the success of the programs and activities;

22 (6) the extent to which the gas utility has carried out
23 its initiatives to increase business opportunities with small and
24 historically underutilized businesses; and

25 (7) the diversity in the gas utility's governing
26 board.

27 (c) The report may be included as part of any other annual

1 report the gas utility is required to submit to the railroad
2 commission.

3 SECTION 2. The Railroad Commission of Texas by rule shall
4 require each gas utility to submit to the commission the plan
5 required by Section 106.002, Utilities Code, as added by this Act,
6 as soon as the commission determines is practicable, but not later
7 than September 1, 2004.

8 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2003.