

By: Deshotel

H.B. No. 583

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to disbursements from the universal service fund.

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

SECTION 1. Section 56.021, Utilities Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 56.021. UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND ESTABLISHED. The commission shall adopt and enforce rules requiring local exchange companies to establish a universal service fund to:

(1) assist telecommunications providers in providing basic local telecommunications service at reasonable rates in high cost rural areas;

(2) reimburse the telecommunications carrier that provides the statewide telecommunications relay access service under Subchapter D;

(3) finance the specialized telecommunications assistance program established under Subchapter E;

(4) reimburse the department, the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services [~~Texas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing~~], and the commission for costs incurred in implementing this chapter and Chapter 57;

(5) reimburse a telecommunications carrier providing lifeline service as provided by 47 C.F.R. Part 54, Subpart E, as amended;

(6) finance the implementation and administration of

1 an integrated eligibility process created under Section 17.007 for
2 customer service discounts relating to telecommunications
3 services, including outreach expenses the commission determines
4 are reasonable and necessary;

5 (7) reimburse a designated provider under Subchapter
6 F;

7 (8) reimburse a successor utility under Subchapter G;
8 ~~[and]~~

9 (9) finance the program established under Subchapter
10 H; and

11 (10) finance the Texas Information and Referral
12 Network under Section 531.0312, Government Code.

13 SECTION 2. Section 56.026(a), Utilities Code, is amended to
14 read as follows:

15 (a) The commission by rule shall require a [A] revenue
16 requirement showing [is not required] for a disbursement from the
17 universal service fund under this subchapter.

18 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
19 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
20 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
21 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
22 Act takes effect September 1, 2007.