

By: Edwards

H.B. No. 444

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the issuance of estimated customer bills by electric utilities and retail electric providers.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 17, Utilities Code, is amended by adding Section 17.010 to read as follows:

Sec. 17.010. ESTIMATED BILLS. (a) An electric utility or retail electric provider may, for good cause, issue a bill to a customer that is based on an estimate of the amount of electricity used. The bill must include:

(1) the word "Estimated" prominently displayed; and

(2) notice that the customer may request a meter reading and defer payment until the reading is taken.

(b) An electric utility or retail electric provider that receives a customer request to read the meter and defer payment under Subsection (a) may not disconnect electric utility service for nonpayment until a reasonable time after the meter is read and the customer receives a bill based on an actual meter reading. This section does not apply if the electric utility or retail electric provider cannot gain access to the premises to read the meter because of an action or a failure to take an action by the customer.

SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2009.