

1-1 By: Van de Putte S.B. No. 981  
 1-2 (In the Senate - Filed March 1, 2013; March 12, 2013, read  
 1-3 first time and referred to Committee on Business and Commerce;  
 1-4 March 27, 2013, reported adversely, with favorable Committee  
 1-5 Substitute by the following vote: Yeas 9, Nays 0; March 27, 2013,  
 1-6 sent to printer.)

1-7 COMMITTEE VOTE

	Yea	Nay	Absent	PNV
1-8				
1-9	X			
1-10	X			
1-11	X			
1-12	X			
1-13	X			
1-14	X			
1-15	X			
1-16	X			
1-17	X			

1-18 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR S.B. No. 981 By: Van de Putte

1-19 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
 1-20 AN ACT

1-21 relating to electric utility bill payment assistance programs for  
 1-22 certain veterans burned in combat.

1-23 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

1-24 SECTION 1. Section 36.061, Utilities Code, is amended by  
 1-25 adding Subsection (c) to read as follows:

1-26 (c) An electric utility located in a portion of this state  
 1-27 not subject to retail competition may establish a bill payment  
 1-28 assistance program for a customer who is a military veteran who a  
 1-29 medical doctor certifies has a significantly decreased ability to  
 1-30 regulate the individual's body temperature because of severe burns  
 1-31 received in combat. A regulatory authority shall allow as a cost or  
 1-32 expense a cost or expense of the bill payment assistance program.  
 1-33 The electric utility is entitled to:

1-34 (1) fully recover all costs and expenses related to  
 1-35 the bill payment assistance program;

1-36 (2) defer each cost or expense related to the bill  
 1-37 payment assistance program not explicitly included in base rates;  
 1-38 and

1-39 (3) apply carrying charges at the utility's weighted  
 1-40 average cost of capital to the extent related to the bill payment  
 1-41 assistance program.

1-42 SECTION 2. Subchapter H, Chapter 39, Utilities Code, is  
 1-43 amended by adding Section 39.359 to read as follows:

1-44 Sec. 39.359. BILL PAYMENT ASSISTANCE FOR BURNED VETERANS.

1-45 (a) A retail electric provider may establish a bill payment  
 1-46 assistance program for a customer who is a military veteran who a  
 1-47 medical doctor certifies has a significantly decreased ability to  
 1-48 regulate the individual's body temperature because of severe burns  
 1-49 received in combat.

1-50 (b) The commission shall compile a list of programs  
 1-51 described by Subsection (a) that are available from retail electric  
 1-52 providers. The commission shall publish the list on the  
 1-53 commission's Internet website and the office shall provide on the  
 1-54 office's Internet website a link to the list.

1-55 (c) A retail electric provider shall provide to the  
 1-56 commission information necessary to compile the list in the form,  
 1-57 manner, and frequency the commission by rule requires.

1-58 SECTION 3. Chapter 182, Utilities Code, is amended by  
 1-59 adding Subchapter D to read as follows:

1-60 SUBCHAPTER D. BILL PAYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR BURNED VETERANS

2-1 Sec. 182.201. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter, "electric  
2-2 cooperative" and "municipally owned utility" have the meanings  
2-3 assigned by Section 11.003.

2-4 Sec. 182.202. BURNED VETERANS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM. (a) The  
2-5 board of directors of an electric cooperative or the governing body  
2-6 of a municipally owned utility may establish a bill payment  
2-7 assistance program for a customer who is a military veteran who a  
2-8 medical doctor certifies has a significantly decreased ability to  
2-9 regulate the individual's body temperature because of severe burns  
2-10 received in combat.

2-11 (b) The costs of a bill payment assistance program  
2-12 established under Subsection (a) are considered a necessary  
2-13 operations expense.

2-14 (c) The board of directors of an electric cooperative or the  
2-15 governing body of a municipally owned utility may determine the  
2-16 method to fund a bill payment assistance program established under  
2-17 Subsection (a).

2-18 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
2-19 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
2-20 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
2-21 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
2-22 Act takes effect September 1, 2013.

2-23 \* \* \* \* \*