

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 83RD LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

May 4, 2013

TO: Honorable John Carona, Chair, Senate Committee on Business & Commerce

FROM: Ursula Parks, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: SB241 by Carona (Relating to the regulation of advanced meters and the interconnection of ERCOT with another grid; requiring a study on the health effects of advanced meters; authorizing an administrative penalty.), **Committee Report 1st House, Substituted**

No significant fiscal implication to the State is anticipated.

The bill would amend the Utilities Code relating to the regulation of advanced meters and the interconnection of the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) with another grid. The bill would prohibit a person from accessing or disclosing smart meter data and from controlling equipment connected to a home area network on the customer's side of an advanced meter and would authorize the Public Utility Commission (PUC) to impose an administrative penalty for a willful violation of this prohibition.

The bill would require a utility to send by mail to each customer scheduled to receive an advanced meter and to each customer that has already received an advanced meter a notice to inform the customer that he or she may decline to have the meter installed or may choose to have the meter removed. If the customer declines to have the meter installed or chooses to have the meter removed, the bill would require the utility to remove the meter and would prohibit the utility from charging the customer any fees or surcharges related to declining the advanced meter.

The bill would prohibit the PUC or an independent organization certified under Section 39.151 of the Utilities Code from authorizing the interconnection of ERCOT with any other electric transmission grid.

The bill would require a joint committee to conduct an interim study on the effects of advanced meters on public health and report its findings and recommendations to the governor and the legislature not later than December 1, 2014.

Based on information provided by the PUC, duties and responsibilities associated with implementing the provisions of the bill could be accomplished utilizing existing resources. Based on information provided by the Comptroller of Public Accounts, the administrative penalty created by the provisions of the bill may result in additional revenue to the General Revenue Fund; however, the revenue gain cannot be determined, as it is dependent on the issuance of future administrative penalties.

Local Government Impact

No fiscal implication to units of local government is anticipated.

Source Agencies: 304 Comptroller of Public Accounts, 473 Public Utility Commission of Texas

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