

By: Whitmire

S.B. No. 1976

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the eligibility process for customer service benefits.

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

SECTION 1. Section 17.007, Utilities Code, is amended to read as follows:

ELIGIBILITY PROCESS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE
[DISCOUNTS] BENEFITS. ~~[The commission by rule shall provide for an integrated eligibility process for customer service discounts, including discounts under Sections 39.903 and 55.015.]~~ The Texas Department of Health and Human Services, on request of the commission, shall assist in developing an automatic process to provide for identification of low-income customers to retail electric providers and certified telecommunications utilities to enable those providers to offer customer service, discounts, bill payment assistance, or other methods of assistance. The commissioner and the Texas Department of Health and Human Services shall continue the memorandum of understanding in effect on January 1, 2017 that establishes the respective duties of the commission and the department in relation to the automatic process, and may amend the memorandum of understanding as necessary to achieve the goals of this section.

a) The commission may not require a retail electric provider or certified telecommunications utility to offer customer service discounts, bill payment assistance, or other benefits for which the

S.B. No. 1976

1 provider is not reimbursed.