

By: Walle

H.B. No. 2224

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to public awareness of utility payment assistance programs
and consumer rights during a disaster.

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. DISASTER BILLING AWARENESS. (a) The
commission in cooperation with the Texas Division of Emergency
Management and the Railroad Commission of Texas shall:

(1) promote public awareness of bill payment
assistance available during a disaster for electric, gas,
telecommunications, water, and wastewater services; and

(2) provide the public with information about billing
practices during a disaster to ensure that consumers of electric,
gas, telecommunications, water, and wastewater services have an
adequate understanding of their rights.

(b) Customer awareness efforts by the commission must be
conducted in English and Spanish and any other language as
necessary to further the purposes of Subsection (a).

SECTION 2. Not later than December 1, 2019, the Texas
Division of Emergency Management, the Public Utility Commission of
Texas, and the Railroad Commission of Texas shall begin the public
awareness campaign required by Section 17.010, Utilities Code, as
added by this Act.

1 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
2 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
3 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
4 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
5 Act takes effect September 1, 2019.