

By: Murr

H.B. No. 3641

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to billing for telephone service during service interruptions and establishing reporting requirements.

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

SECTION 1. Section 64.053, Utilities Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) The commission may require a telecommunications service provider to submit reports to the commission concerning any matter over which it has authority under this chapter.

(b) The commission shall adopt rules requiring telecommunications service providers to report significant interruptions of service that occur as a result of any hurricane, ice or snow storm, flood, or other weather-related event or natural disaster. The rules may require telecommunications service providers to submit plans for service restoration for service interruptions lasting longer than 72 hours.

SECTION 2. Chapter 64, Utilities Code, is amended by adding Subchapter F, as follows:

SUBCHAPTER F. PROTECTION AGAINST UNFAIR CHARGES

Sec. 64.301. BILLING DURING SERVICE INTERRUPTIONS

(a) A telecommunications service provider shall not bill a customer for services during periods when service to the customer has been interrupted as a result of any hurricane, ice or snow storm, flood, or other weather-related event or natural disaster.

1 (b) The commission has the authority to enforce this
2 section, including ordering refunds.

3 SECTION 3. Section 65.102(b), Utilities Code, is amended to
4 read as follows:

5 (b) Notwithstanding any other provision of this title, the
6 commission has only the authority provided by this section over a
7 deregulated company that holds a certificate of operating authority
8 issued under this subchapter. Subject to Subsection (c), the
9 following provisions apply to a deregulated company and may be
10 enforced by the commission using the remedies provided by
11 Subchapter B, Chapter 15, and Subsection (d):

12 (1) Subchapter A, Chapter 15;

13 (2) Subchapters A, C, and D, Chapter 17, as applicable
14 to carriers holding a certificate of operating authority;

15 (3) Sections 52.007, 52.060, and 52.156;

16 (4) Sections 54.001, 54.002, 54.003, 54.004, 54.005,
17 54.006, 54.008(a), 54.101, 54.102, 54.103, 54.105, 54.151, 54.156,
18 54.158, 54.159, 54.255, 54.256, 54.257, 54.259, 54.260, and 54.261;

19 (5) Sections 55.010, 55.123, 55.133, 55.134, 55.136,
20 and 55.137;

21 (6) Chapter 56, except Subchapters F and G;

22 (7) Chapter 60;

23 (8) Chapter 62;

24 (9) Section 64.002, Section 64.053, and Subchapters E,
25 and F, Chapter 64;

26 (10) Sections 65.001, 65.002, 65.003, and 65.004, this
27 subchapter, and Subchapter E of this chapter; and

1 (11) Chapter 66.

2 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.