

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
89R4498 CS-F

S.B. 790  
By: Alvarado  
Water, Agriculture and Rural Affairs  
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As Filed

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Currently, if there is a discrepancy between a tenant and owner on a water or wastewater bill, the case must be resolved at the Public Utility Commission (PUC) through a drawn-out administrative process. This may look like a \$25 discrepancy taking months to resolve through administrative hearings at the PUC or the State Office of Administrative Hearings, wasting time and money. Subchapter M of the Water Code sets out requirements for how owners of apartments can charge tenants for submetered and nonsubmetered water and empowers the PUC to order the owner to provide restitution to the tenant if they have overcharged the tenant.

S.B. 790 would direct the PUC to simplify the complaint resolution process when a tenant and an owner have a small discrepancy on a water or wastewater bill.

As proposed, S.B. 790 amends current law relating to the procedure for resolving certain customer complaints before the Public Utility Commission of Texas.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Public Utility Commission of Texas in SECTION 1 (Section 13.5051, Water Code) of this bill.

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter M, Chapter 13, Water Code, by adding Section 13.5051, as follows:

Sec. 13.5051. SIMPLIFIED COMPLAINT PROCESS. (a) Authorizes the Public Utility Commission of Texas by rule to adopt a simplified procedure to resolve a complaint by a tenant against an owner about a bill for water or wastewater service brought under Section 13.503 (Submetering Rules), 13.5031 (Nonsubmetering Rules), or 13.505 (Restitution).

(b) Provides that Chapter 2001 (Administrative Procedure), Government Code, does not apply to the resolution of a complaint using a procedure described in Subsection (a).

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2025.