

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE

BILL NO. Senate Bill 1112

PRINTER NO. 2010

AMOUNT

No Fiscal Impact

FUND

General Fund

DATE INTRODUCED

April 30, 2020

PRIME SPONSOR

Senator Phillips-Hill

DESCRIPTION

Senate Bill 1112 amends Title 66 (Public Utilities) to provide for telecommunication carrier regulatory relief.

The legislation requires the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (commission) to permanently waive the following regulations within 30 days:

- 52 Pa. Code Section 53.57 (Relating to Definitions);
- 52 Pa. Code Section 53.58 (Relating to Offering of Competitive Services);
- 52 Pa. Code Section 53.59 (Relating to Cost Support Requirements and Effective Filing Dates for Tariff Filings of Noncompetitive Services);
- 52 Pa. Code Section 53.60 (Relating to Supporting Documentation for Promotional Offerings, Joint or Bundled Service Packages, and Toll Services);
- 52 Pa. Code Section 53.85 (Relating to Paper Billing Fees);
- 52 Pa. Code Chapter 63 (Relating to Telephone Service); and
- 52 Pa. Code Chapter 64 (Relating to Standards and Billing Practices for Residential Telephone Service).

The following provisions are exempt from the waiver:

- Section 63.37 (Relating to Operations of the Telecommunications Relay Service System and Relay Service Fund);
- Chapter 63L (Relating to Universal Services);
- Chapter 63O (Relating to Abbreviated Procedures for Review and Approval of Transfer of Control for Telecommunications Public Utilities); and
- Section 64.23 (Relating to Standardizing LEC Responses to Customer Contacts Alleging Unauthorized Charges Assed to the Customer's Bill (Cramming) and Unauthorized Changes to the Customer's Long Distance Carrier (Slamming)).

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE

Senate Bill 1112 requires the commission to undertake a review of all regulations (other than the specifically exempted ones) applicable to telecommunications carriers every three years. The commission must rescind regulations that are no longer necessary or in the public interest. Any new regulations applicable to telecommunications carriers must be supported by factual findings and determinations, based on an evidentiary record; demonstrate need for the regulation given the emergence of new industry participants, technological changes, electronic means for billing and customer notices, costs of compliance and consumer preference in the competitive market; and have benefits that outweigh the cost to comply with and enforce the regulation.

The legislation amends section 3019 (relating to additional powers and duties) by adding a new subsection (c.1) with regard to issues, disputes and appointments. Subsection (c.1) provides that if a customer of a retail voice service within the commission's jurisdiction contacts the commission with an issue or dispute with the customer's local exchange telecommunications company (LEC), the commission shall forward relevant information to a LEC-maintained e-mail address. The LEC shall begin an investigation and make a good faith effort to resolve the issue or dispute in a manner satisfactory to both parties. In the event the issue or dispute is not resolved within 30 days, the LEC shall inform the commission and the commission shall advise the customer of the option to pursue mediation before the commission.

Furthermore, new subsection (c.1) provides that for a service installation or repair appointment for voice service within the commission's jurisdiction, the LEC shall make a good faith effort to establish a mutually agreeable date and appointment window with the customer. The local exchange telecommunications company shall keep the appointment unless the customer is given advance notice that a change to the appointment is necessary.

This act shall take effect in 60 days.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact to Commonwealth funds. Senate Bill 1112 requires the commission to review regulations every three years, which according to the commission can be accomplished within existing staffing and funding levels.