

# **HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS**

## **HB 1438**

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**Title:** *An act relating to mandatory measured telecommunications service.*

**Brief Description:** *Extending the prohibition on filing for a tariff on mandatory measured telecommunications service.*

**Sponsors:** *Representatives Crouse, Poulsen, Morris, DeBolt, Kessler, Kastama, Cooper, Mielke and Mulliken.*

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### **HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & UTILITIES**

**Meeting Date:** *February 5, 1997.*

**Bill Analysis Prepared by:** *Margaret Allen (786-7110).*

**Background:** Most telephone customers in Washington pay a flat monthly rate for local telephone service. Many of the local exchange companies offer their customers the option to pay for local calls on a per call basis. This practice is commonly known as local measured service. Under this option, the telephone customer pays a lower monthly rate and then pays for the calls actually made, based on the time of day, length of call, and in some cases, the distance of the call.

In 1984, the Legislature temporarily prohibited the Utilities and Transportation Commission from approving telecommunications tariffs that include mandatory local measured service. The prohibition has been extended a few times since then, most recently in 1993, and is currently set to expire June 1, 1998. The prohibition does not apply to mobile services, pay telephone services, or to any other service that has traditionally been offered on a measured basis.

**Summary of Bill:** The prohibition on Utilities and Transportation Commission approval of a telecommunications tariff for mandatory local measured service is made permanent.

**Appropriation:** *None.*

**Fiscal Note:** *Not requested.*

**Effective Date:** *Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.*