
HOUSE BILL 2553

State of Washington

55th Legislature

1998 Regular Session

By Representatives Crouse, Morris, DeBolt, Kessler, Cooper, Benson, Mielke, Dunshee, Hankins, Delvin, Zellinsky, Constantine, Kastama, O'Brien, Conway, Dickerson and Mason

Read first time 01/15/98. Referred to Committee on Energy & Utilities.

1 AN ACT Relating to mandatory measured telecommunications service;
2 and amending RCW 80.04.130.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 80.04.130 and 1997 c 368 s 14 are each amended to read
5 as follows:

6 (1) Whenever any public service company shall file with the
7 commission any schedule, classification, rule or regulation, the effect
8 of which is to change any rate, charge, rental or toll theretofore
9 charged, the commission shall have power, either upon its own motion or
10 upon complaint, upon notice, to enter upon a hearing concerning such
11 proposed change and the reasonableness and justness thereof, and
12 pending such hearing and the decision thereon the commission may
13 suspend the operation of such rate, charge, rental or toll for a period
14 not exceeding ten months from the time the same would otherwise go into
15 effect, and after a full hearing the commission may make such order in
16 reference thereto as would be provided in a hearing initiated after the
17 same had become effective. The commission shall not suspend a tariff
18 that makes a decrease in a rate, charge, rental, or toll filed by a
19 telecommunications company pending investigation of the fairness,

1 justness, and reasonableness of the decrease when the filing does not
2 contain any offsetting increase to another rate, charge, rental, or
3 toll and the filing company agrees to not file for an increase to any
4 rate, charge, rental, or toll to recover the revenue deficit that
5 results from the decrease for a period of one year. The filing company
6 shall file with any decrease sufficient information as the commission
7 by rule may require to demonstrate the decreased rate, charge, rental,
8 or toll is above the long run incremental cost of the service. A
9 tariff decrease that results in a rate that is below long run
10 incremental cost, or is contrary to commission rule or order, or the
11 requirements of this chapter, shall be rejected for filing and returned
12 to the company. The commission may prescribe a different rate to be
13 effective on the prospective date stated in its final order after its
14 investigation, if it concludes based on the record that the originally
15 filed and effective rate is unjust, unfair, or unreasonable.

16 For the purposes of this section, tariffs for the following
17 telecommunications services, that temporarily waive or reduce charges
18 for existing or new subscribers for a period not to exceed sixty days
19 in order to promote the use of the services shall be considered tariffs
20 that decrease rates, charges, rentals, or tolls:

- 21 (a) Custom calling service;
- 22 (b) Second access lines; or
- 23 (c) Other services the commission specifies by rule.

24 The commission may suspend any promotional tariff other than those
25 listed in (a) through (c) of this subsection.

26 The commission may suspend the initial tariff filing of any water
27 company removed from and later subject to commission jurisdiction
28 because of the number of customers or the average annual gross revenue
29 per customer provisions of RCW 80.04.010. The commission may allow
30 temporary rates during the suspension period. These rates shall not
31 exceed the rates charged when the company was last regulated. Upon a
32 showing of good cause by the company, the commission may establish a
33 different level of temporary rates.

34 (2) At any hearing involving any change in any schedule,
35 classification, rule or regulation the effect of which is to increase
36 any rate, charge, rental or toll theretofore charged, the burden of
37 proof to show that such increase is just and reasonable shall be upon
38 the public service company.

1 (3) The implementation of mandatory local measured
2 telecommunications service is a major policy change in available
3 telecommunications service. The commission shall not accept for filing
4 a price list, nor shall it accept for filing or approve, prior to June
5 1, (~~1998~~) 2001, a tariff filed by a telecommunications company which
6 imposes mandatory local measured service on any customer or class of
7 customers, except that, upon finding that it is in the public interest,
8 the commission may accept for filing a price list or it may accept for
9 filing and approve a tariff that imposes mandatory measured service for
10 a telecommunications company's extended area service or foreign
11 exchange service. This subsection does not apply to land, air, or
12 marine mobile service, or to pay telephone service, or to any service
13 which has been traditionally offered on a measured service basis.

14 (4) The implementation of Washington telephone assistance program
15 service is a major policy change in available telecommunications
16 service. The implementation of Washington telephone assistance program
17 service will aid in achieving the stated goal of universal telephone
18 service.

19 (5) If a utility claims a sales or use tax exemption on the
20 pollution control equipment for an electrical generation facility and
21 abandons the generation facility before the pollution control equipment
22 is fully depreciated, any tariff filing for a rate increase to recover
23 abandonment costs for the pollution control equipment shall be
24 considered unjust and unreasonable for the purposes of this section.

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