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**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6046**

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**State of Washington**

**55th Legislature**

**1997 Regular Session**

**By** Senate Committee on Energy & Utilities (originally sponsored by Senator Finkbeiner)

Read first time 03/05/97.

1       AN ACT Relating to a study by the utilities and transportation  
2 commission on universal telecommunications service; and creating new  
3 sections.

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

5       NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that in a competitive  
6 telecommunications industry, telecommunications companies may be less  
7 inclined to invest in facilities to serve sparsely populated or hard-  
8 to-serve areas of the state. The legislature further finds that in  
9 order to secure for all consumers of the state the benefits of high  
10 quality telecommunications service and evolving telecommunications  
11 technology, it is necessary to study the creation of a universal  
12 service fund. The purpose of this fund would be to provide an  
13 incentive to telecommunications carriers to build facilities to provide  
14 universal service and to serve sparsely populated and hard-to-serve  
15 areas of the state while preserving to consumers in those areas the  
16 availability of telecommunications services at rates which are  
17 comparable to rates in urban areas and are affordable.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 2.**    By January 1, 1998, the commission shall  
2 study and make recommendations on the future of providing universal  
3 telecommunications services in this state. The study shall include at  
4 least the following topics: A recommended definition of basic service  
5 for telecommunications; an analysis of the range of potential  
6 telecommunications carriers, including wireless; an analysis of the  
7 proper cost methodologies for determining universal service funding;  
8 and options for generating and disbursing universal service funding.  
9 The study shall be reported to the energy and utilities committees of  
10 the house of representatives and the senate.

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