

6675-S

Sponsor(s): Senate Committee on Energy, Technology & Telecommunications (originally sponsored by Senators Brown, Hochstatter, Hargrove, Costa and Sheahan; by request of Governor Locke)

Brief Description: Allowing public utility districts and rural port districts to provide telecommunications services.

SB 6675-S - DIGEST

(DIGEST AS ENACTED)

Authorizes public utility districts and rural port districts to provide telecommunications services.

Makes the following findings: (1) Access to telecommunications facilities and services is essential to the economic well-being of both rural and urban areas.

(2) Many persons and entities, particularly in rural areas, do not have adequate access to telecommunications facilities and services.

(3) Public utility districts and rural port districts may be well-positioned to construct and operate telecommunications facilities.

VETO MESSAGE ON SB 6675-S

March 23, 2000

To the Honorable President and Members,
The Senate of the State of Washington
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval as to sections 4 and 8, Substitute Senate Bill No. 6675 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to the provision of telecommunications services by public utility districts and rural port districts;"

This bill gives public utility districts and rural port districts express authority to be wholesalers of telecommunications services within their districts. I support this legislation as a key step in promoting advanced telecommunications facilities and services in underserved areas of Washington.

Sections 4 and 8 of the bill would impose overly restrictive requirements on public utility and rural port districts before financing or constructing telecommunications facilities, and would not significantly improve accountability. I strongly support the goal of ensuring accountability to the public. However, I believe that some of the requirements of sections 4 and 8 could impair districts' current activities and significantly complicate or delay the facilities and services that our rural areas so urgently need.

I fully expect that public utility and port districts will respond appropriately to requests for information from the Legislature regardless of any statutory requirement to do so.

For these reasons, I have vetoed sections 4 and 8 of Substitute Senate Bill No. 6675.

With the exception of sections 4 and 8, Substitute Senate Bill
No. 6675 is approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Locke
Governor