
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 5473

AN ACT CONCERNING PUBLIC ACCESS OPERATIONS AND THE PERIODIC REVIEW OF VIDEO PROVIDERS.

SUMMARY:

This bill requires the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) to initiate a docket to conduct a performance review of every certified cable TV service provider to (1) review the state of the industry and (2) ensure compliance with the applicable terms and conditions of each provider's certification. It allows PURA to issue orders to ensure that a provider complies with the terms of its certification. The review can address customer service issues, service outage management, service to handicapped and low-income customers, cooperation with PURA, and the entity's funding and budget. PURA must conduct subsequent reviews every five years.

Under the bill, PURA must conduct the performance review as an uncontested case under the Uniform Administrative Procedure Act with the attorney general and the Office of Consumer Counsel allowed to participate. It must submit a report on its findings and any recommended legislation to the Energy and Technology Committee by January 1, 2014.

The bill allows any cable TV company, nonprofit organization, or municipality responsible for community access operations that receives subscriber funds for community access to use the money to create and develop town-specific community access programming. The money may be used for labor and staff expenses.

Lastly, the bill requires any cable TV company or nonprofit organization that (1) is responsible for community access operations and (2) supplied both original programming from locally run operations and funding to town-specific programming on January 1,

2008, to continue to fund town-specific programming in the same proportions to other original programming as it did on that date.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2012, except for the provision regarding public access funding provided in 2008, which is effective upon passage.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Energy and Technology Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 21 Nay 0 (03/28/2012)