

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
81R19887 TJS-F

H.B. 1783
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Currently, neither the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC) nor the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) broadcast their meetings live or post audio archives online free of charge. A person can only gain access to this information by signing up and purchasing the service administered by TexasAdmin.com.

H.B. 1783 requires the PUC and ERCOT to broadcast their hearings and open meetings online without a charge to the public.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter E, Chapter 12, Utilities Code, by adding Section 12.204, as follows:

Sec. 12.204. INTERNET FOR HEARINGS AND MEETINGS. Requires the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC) to make publicly accessible without charge live Internet video of all public hearings and meetings PUC holds for viewing from the Internet website found at <http://www.puc.state.tx.us>. Authorizes PUC to recover the costs of administering this section by imposing an assessment against a public utility, corporation described by Section 32.053 (Ability of Certain River Authority Affiliates to Construct Improvements), retail electric provider that serves more than 250,000 customers, or power generation company that owns more than 5,000 megawatts of installed capacity in this state.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 39.1511, Utilities Code, by adding Subsection (c), to require PUC to ensure that an independent organization certified under Section 39.151 (Essential Organizations) makes publicly accessible without charge live Internet video of all public meetings subject to this section for viewing from an Internet website.

SECTION 3. Makes application of this Act prospective.

SECTION 4. Effective date: September 1, 2009.