



Legislative Council Staff

Research Note

Version: Second Reading
Date: 4/19/2017

Bill Number

Senate Bill 17-105

Sponsors

Senator Garcia
Representative Becker, K.

Short Title

Consumer Right To Know
Electric Utility Charges

Research Analyst

David Beaujon (x4781)

Status

The bill is currently pending before the House on second reading. This research note reflects the reengrossed bill.

Background

Investor-owned utilities are for-profit corporations that are regulated by the Colorado Public Utilities Commission (PUC). Colorado has two investor-owned electric utilities -- Black Hills Energy and Public Service Company of Colorado, which is also known as Xcel Energy. Black Hills Energy serves about 94,000 customers in Pueblo, Cañon City, and other parts of southern Colorado. Xcel Energy serves 1.4 million electricity customers and 1.3 million natural gas customers in Colorado. The PUC currently regulates the content of bills for the investor-owned utilities. For example, the bills for residential, small commercial, and agricultural customers must show the dates and meter readings beginning and ending the period during which service was rendered.

Senate Action

Senate Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Energy Committee (February 16, 2017). At the hearing, representatives from the Office of Consumer Counsel in the Department of Regulatory Agencies, the Pueblo Board of County Commissioners, and the Independence Institute testified in support of the bill. Black Hills Energy testified in opposition to the bill. The committee adopted Amendment L.002, which changed the billing information that must be provided to customers, allowed the PUC to extend deadlines to implement the billing requirements, and provided additional time for utilities to correct deficiencies in their billing practices. The committee referred the bill, as amended, to the Senate Committee of the Whole.

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Senate second reading (March 22, 2017). The Senate adopted the Senate Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Energy Committee report. The Senate passed the bill on second reading, as amended.

Senate third reading (March 23, 2017). The Senate passed the bill on third reading with no amendments.

House Action

House Transportation and Energy Committee (April 12, 2017). At the hearing, representatives from Xcel Energy and Conservation Colorado spoke in support of the bill with amendments. The committee adopted Amendment L.010, which added information that must be included in a customer's bill to include daily average cost for the current month compared with the same month in the previous calendar year; a description of each of the monthly fees that the utility may charge; and, for customers to which demand rates apply, a listing of the applicable demand charge, the peak demand during the billing period, and the date and time which the peak demand occurred. The committee also adopted Amendment L.011, which changed the requirements for when a utility must seek approval from the PUC for its billing format, and Amendment L.012 which add a requirement that bills include a glossary of terms used in the utility bill. The committee referred the bill, as amended, to the Senate Committee of the Whole.