
SENATE BILL 6726

State of Washington

54th Legislature

1996 Regular Session

By Senators Prentice, Spanel and Thibaudeau

Read first time 01/26/96. Referred to Committee on Energy,
Telecommunications & Utilities.

1 AN ACT Relating to the utilities and transportation commission;
2 adding a new section to chapter 80.04 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that large-scale
5 downsizings, mergers, or work force reductions by public utility
6 suppliers such as electric, gas, telecommunications, and water
7 companies, can have a substantial economic and societal impact. These
8 impacts include significant job loss, reductions in retail spending,
9 reductions in the quality of utility service, and increases in crime,
10 domestic violence, and family stress. The legislature further finds
11 that it is in the public interest for the utilities and transportation
12 commission to consider economic and societal impacts prior to approving
13 large-scale mergers or work force reductions.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 80.04 RCW
15 to read as follows:

16 (1) The commission must consider the economic, societal, and
17 quality of utility service impacts to communities, businesses,
18 individuals, and state and local governments prior to approving a

1 merger by a public utility supplier that affects the employment status
2 of one hundred or more employees of the public utility supplier, or a
3 rate increase or rate decrease that is the result of a work force
4 reduction by a public utility supplier that affects one hundred or more
5 employees of the public utility supplier. The commission may modify or
6 reject all or part of a merger, rate increase, or rate decrease
7 proposed by a public utility supplier based upon a finding of
8 significant economic, societal, or quality of utility service impact.

9 (2) A public utility supplier must notify the commission sixty days
10 prior to a work force reduction of one hundred or more employees.
11 Within thirty days of the notification, the commission must determine
12 the potential impact that the work force reduction will have on the
13 quality of utility service provided to communities, businesses,
14 individuals, and state and local governments served by the public
15 utility supplier. The commission may modify, reject, or suspend a
16 public utility supplier's proposed reduction in work force based upon
17 a finding of significant adverse impact to the quality of utility
18 service provided.

19 (3) For the purposes of this section, "public utility supplier"
20 means, but is not limited to, electric companies, gas companies,
21 telecommunications companies, and water systems.

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