

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
76R4745 DWS-D

S.B. 437
By: Nixon
Technology & Business Growth
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As Filed

DIGEST

Currently, telemarketing is a growing industry. Texans have complained of harassment by some telemarketing companies. This bill would allow consumers to block calls from telephone solicitors.

PURPOSE

As proposed, S.B. 437 authorizes the Public Utility Commission of Texas to establish procedures and standards that would allow customers to have calls from telephone solicitors blocked.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is granted to the Public Utility Commission of Texas in SECTION 1 (Section 55.154(d), Utilities Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 55G, Utilities Code, by adding Section 55.154, as follow:

Sec. 55.154. BLOCKING CALLS BY TELEPHONE SOLICITORS. Defines “telephone solicitor” and “consumer telephone call.” Provides that this section applies only to telephone solicitors that the Public Utility Commission (PUC) determines make an average of 25 consumer telephone calls a day. Authorizes a local exchange company to block calls from telephone solicitors, at the request of the customer. Requires the PUC to establish standards and procedures that may identify and block calls from telephone solicitors, and provide notice to consumers of their right to have calls blocked. Provides that a telephone solicitor to whom this section applies is subject to administrative penalty under Section 15.023.

SECTION 2. Requires the PUC to establish procedures required by Section 55.154, Utilities Code, as added by this Act, before January 1, 2000. Makes application of this Act prospective to January 1, 2000.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 1999.

SECTION 4. Emergency clause.