

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 6, 1999

SENATE BILL

No. 932

Introduced by Senator Bowen

February 25, 1999

An act to add ~~Section 2889.7~~ *Sections 2889.7 and 2896.5* to the Public Utilities Code, relating to telecommunications.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 932, as amended, Bowen. ~~Telephone corporations~~ *Telecommunications*: service: notice.

Under existing law, the Public Utilities Commission has regulatory authority with respect to telephone corporations. Existing law requires telephone corporations to provide specified customer and subscriber services, *including information regarding the provider's identity, service options, pricing, and terms and conditions of service. Existing law requires the commission to impose that service information requirement on all telecommunications providers in the state. Under existing law, the commission may only permit a subscriber's local telephone service to be disconnected for nonpayment of charges relating to specified telephone services.*

This bill would require a telephone corporation that provides a new telephone service or feature to subscribers to immediately notify each subscriber in writing of that new service or feature. The bill would authorize a subscriber, within 5 days from the date that the subscriber receives such a notice, to request the telephone corporation to suspend the provision of any telephone service or feature described in that

notice, and would require the telephone corporation, upon receipt of such a request, to suspend the provision of the specified telephone service or feature. The bill would prohibit a telephone corporation from imposing any charge for the suspension of a telephone service or feature. The bill would also prohibit a telephone corporation from imposing any charge for any telephone service or feature that a subscriber does not use. The bill would require a telephone corporation to reimburse a subscriber for any charge imposed by that corporation for the inadvertent or unauthorized use of a telephone service or feature.

The bill would require a telecommunications service provider to provide a potential subscriber with clear information about a telecommunications service offered, prior to purchase, including, but not limited to, information about prices, service options, and the terms and conditions of service. The bill would require an advertisement for a telecommunications service to disclose price information, as prescribed. The bill would require a telecommunications service provider that provides local telephone service to provide that subscriber with telephone directories, as prescribed. The bill would prohibit a telecommunications service provider from requiring a subscriber to deposit a sum of money with the telecommunications service provider prior to establishing an account and furnishing service that exceeds a specified amount, or from disconnecting the local telephone service of a subscriber for nonpayment of charges imposed by a third-party. The bill would authorize a telecommunications service provider to require the social security number of a subscriber to establish creditworthiness only if the provider determines that no other reasonable means is available.

This bill would require the commission to create a means by which a telecommunications service subscriber may compare prices among telecommunications service providers.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: no.



The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 2889.7 is added to the Public
2 Utilities Code, to read:

3 2889.7. (a) A telephone corporation that provides a
4 new telephone service or feature to subscribers shall
5 immediately notify each subscriber in writing of that new
6 service or feature.

7 (b) A subscriber, within five days from the date that
8 the subscriber receives a notice required pursuant to
9 subdivision (a), may request the telephone corporation
10 to suspend the provision of any telephone service or
11 feature described in that notice. The telephone
12 corporation, upon receipt of such a request, shall suspend
13 the provision of any telephone service or feature
14 specified in the request. A telephone corporation may not
15 impose any charge for the suspension of a telephone
16 service or feature pursuant to this subdivision.

17 (c) A telephone corporation may not impose any
18 charge for a telephone service or feature that a subscriber
19 does not use.

20 (d) A telephone corporation shall reimburse a
21 subscriber for any charge imposed by that corporation for
22 the inadvertent or unauthorized use of a telephone
23 service or feature.

24 SEC. 2. Section 2896.5 is added to the Public Utilities
25 Code, to read:

26 2896.5. (a) A telecommunications service provider
27 shall provide a potential subscriber with clear
28 information about a telecommunications service offered,
29 prior to purchase, including, but not limited to,
30 information about prices, service options, and the terms
31 and conditions of service.

32 (b) The commission shall create a means by which a
33 telecommunications service subscriber may compare
34 prices among telecommunications service providers.

35 (c) An advertisement for a telecommunications
36 service that refers to the price of a service shall disclose
37 complete pricing information for that service.



1 (d) A telecommunications service provider that
2 provides local telephone service to a subscriber shall
3 provide that subscriber with a printed alphabetical
4 telephone directory and a classified telephone directory.
5 At the request of the subscriber, the telecommunications
6 service provider shall provide without charge an
7 alphabetical telephone directory for communities
8 neighboring that of the subscriber.

9 (e) A telecommunications service provider may not
10 require a subscriber to deposit a sum of money with the
11 telecommunications service provider prior to
12 establishing an account and furnishing service that
13 exceeds an amount equal to an average of two months'
14 telephone service bills. If a subscriber elects to block
15 access to toll service, the calculation of such a deposit shall
16 reflect an average based on that exclusion of toll service
17 costs.

18 (f) A telecommunications service provider may not
19 disconnect the local telephone service of a subscriber for
20 nonpayment of charges imposed by a third-party.

21 (g) A telecommunications service provider may
22 require the social security number of a subscriber to
23 establish creditworthiness only if the provider
24 determines that no other reasonable means of
25 establishing creditworthiness is available.

