

Senate Bill No. 1741

CHAPTER 907

An act to add Section 7943 to the Public Utilities Code, relating to telecommunications.

[Approved by Governor September 29, 2000. Filed
with Secretary of State September 29, 2000.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1741, Bowen. Telecommunications: technology-specific area codes.

Under federal law, the Federal Communications Commission has delegated authority to the Public Utilities Commission to regulate area codes within the state subject to specific guidelines. The guidelines prohibit an area code based on specific technology and require 10 digit dialing for all telephone calls within and between all area codes covered by an area code overlay.

This bill would require the Public Utilities Commission to request authority from the Federal Communications Commission to require telephone corporations to establish technology-specific area codes based on wireless and data communications and to permit 7 digit dialing within that technology-specific area code and the underlying preexisting area code or codes. The bill would require the Public Utilities Commission to use any authority so granted unless it makes a specified finding. The bill would also prohibit the Public Utilities Commission from approving new area code splits or overlays unless a telephone utilization study has been performed and all reasonable telephone number conservation has been implemented, a technology-specific area code had been established in the affected area, if authorized, and further area code relief is warranted. The bill would also prohibit the commission from implementing any authority granted by the Federal Communications Commission in a manner that impairs number portability.

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

SECTION 1. Section 7943 is added to the Public Utilities Code, to read:

7943. (a) It is the intent of the Legislature that when the commission has no reasonable alternative other than to create a new area code, that the commission do so in a way that creates the least inconvenience for customers.

(b) On or before March 31, 2001, the commission shall request that the Federal Communications Commission grant authority for the

commission to order telephone corporations to assign telephone numbers dedicated to wireless and data usage to a separate area code and to permit seven digit dialing within that technology-specific area code and the underlying preexisting area code or codes.

(c) Before approving any new area code, the commission shall first perform a telephone utilization study and implement all reasonable telephone number conservation measures.

(d) If the commission receives the grant of authority set forth in subdivision (a) and determines that further area code relief is needed, the commission shall exercise the authority granted to it in subdivision (a) unless it finds at least one of the following:

(1) Exercising the authority granted by subdivision (a) would be more disruptive to the customers where area code relief has been determined to be necessary.

(2) Exercising the authority granted by subdivision (a) will not adequately extend the life of the area code where relief has been determined to be necessary.

(e) The commission may not implement any authority granted by the Federal Communications Commission pursuant to subdivision (a), in a manner that impairs the ability of a customer to have number portability.

