

SHORT TITLE: Telephone companies; "Oklahoma Telecommunications Act"; alternative regulation; emergency.

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 44th Legislature (1993)

SENATE BILL NO. 376

By: Hooper

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to telephone companies; creating Oklahoma Telecommunications Act; providing short title; stating purpose; providing for election of certain alternative regulation system; requiring certain initial election period; restricting authority of Corporation Commission upon certain notification; requiring certain demonstration projects; prohibiting certain charges for use of equipment; providing for continuation of certain election period; providing for certain assistance programs; providing for codification; and declaring an emergency.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 137.1 of Title 17, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Oklahoma Telecommunications Act."

SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 137.2 of Title 17, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

In order to streamline the regulatory process and permit telecommunication providers more operational flexibility while continuing to protect customer service and encourage the economic development goals of the state, an alternative regulation system to that provided in Section 137 of Title 17 of the Oklahoma Statutes is hereby authorized. Telecommunication providers electing to submit to the alternative regulatory system shall make such election for an initial period of four (4) years. Upon such election and notification thereof to the Corporation Commission, the Commission shall only have authority over the rates and charges of a certified telecommunications provider as prescribed in this act.

SECTION 3. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 137.3 of Title 17, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. Telecommunications providers electing to participate in alternative regulation shall create video conferencing demonstration projects in telemedicine, business service, and education. Such demonstration projects shall include the provision of compressed video digital link, customer premises equipment, and switching equipment at no charge to such demonstration project customer. These demonstration projects shall be for the period of the initial election and may be continued for another four (4) years if the electing telecommunications company continues to be regulated under the provisions of this act.

B. Electing telecommunications providers shall make available a telecommunication assistance program to eligible customers which shall be designed to assist certain low income or elderly or other needy persons with maintaining vital residential local service.

SECTION 4. It being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is hereby declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

44-1-0681

WHT