

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY AUGUST 15, 2016

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 20, 2016

AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 3, 2016

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 26, 2016

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 12, 2016

AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 28, 2016

SENATE BILL

No. 1212

Introduced by Senator Hueso

(Coauthor: Assembly Member Gonzalez)

February 18, 2016

An act to amend Section 280 of the Public Utilities Code, relating to telecommunications.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1212, as amended, Hueso. "2-1-1" information and referral network.

Under existing law, the Public Utilities Commission has regulatory authority over public utilities, including telephone corporations. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC), pursuant to its existing authority over the North American Numbering Plan, has established several abbreviated dialing codes, including designating the number 9-1-1 for persons to dial to obtain emergency services, designating the number 3-1-1 for persons to dial for nonemergency police assistance, and designating the number 2-1-1 for persons to dial to obtain information about, and referral to, community social services. Pursuant to authority delegated by the FCC to state regulatory bodies and its

existing statutory authority, the Public Utilities Commission has established procedures for implementing 2-1-1 dialing in California.

This bill would state the intent of the Legislature to facilitate the expansion of 2-1-1 services into those counties in California where they are lacking and to support a comprehensive statewide database that will connect all callers to information and referrals they need. The bill would additionally state the intent of the Legislature to facilitate access to disaster preparedness, response, and recovery information, and referral services, uniformly in the state, especially in hard-to-serve rural areas, through a universally available telephone service.

Existing law requires the commission to develop, implement, and administer a program to advance universal service by providing discounted rates to qualifying schools, community colleges, libraries, hospitals, health clinics, and community organizations. Existing law requires that all revenues collected by telephone corporations in rates authorized by the commission to fund this program be deposited in the California Teleconnect Fund Administrative Committee Fund. Existing law provides that moneys in the fund are held in trust and may be expended only upon appropriation in the annual Budget Act or upon supplemental appropriation and requires that all moneys appropriated to the commission from the fund be used exclusively for the program.

If the commission determines that doing so is an appropriate use of funds collected from ratepayers, the bill would, until January 1, 2023, authorize the commission to expend up to \$1,500,000 from the fund to help close 2-1-1 service gaps in counties lacking access to disaster preparedness, response, and recovery information and referral services, where technically feasible, through available 2-1-1 service.

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. (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the
- 2 following:
- 3 (1) In order to create a statewide disaster preparedness, response,
- 4 and recovery system and to facilitate the reach of local services to
- 5 vulnerable populations, this act is established to expand 2-1-1
- 6 services to all areas of California that do not currently have access
- 7 to this vital service.

1 (2) 2-1-1 service is a free, accessible, three-digit telephone
2 number that gives everyone in covered areas access to needed
3 community services. First established in 2005, 2-1-1 service now
4 covers 38 California counties. It is available 24 hours a day, seven
5 days a week, allowing residents to access information about health
6 and human services, emergency care, crisis intervention, and
7 disaster preparedness, response, and recovery when they need it
8 most.

9 (3) 2-1-1 service is a natural hub for disaster-related information
10 and plays a critical role during emergencies and disasters, such as
11 fires, floods, earthquakes, terrorist attacks, and epidemics, reducing
12 nonemergency call volume on 9-1-1 lines, which frees up
13 emergency responders to deal with true life-or-death situations,
14 thus leveraging local public safety resources.

15 (4) 2-1-1 service also increases the reach of government,
16 nonprofit, and community programs by offering callers information
17 on and access to a variety of health and human services, rent and
18 utility assistance, physical and mental health resources,
19 employment opportunities, support for older Americans and
20 persons with disabilities, and support for families with special
21 needs.

22 (5) 2-1-1 service call centers are staffed with highly trained
23 specialists who have expertise in navigating the web of health and
24 human services in a particular community and who have up-to-date
25 information and guidance for callers in times of disaster.

26 (6) 2-1-1 service call center specialists are able to answer calls
27 in over 150 different languages; they are able to provide critical
28 health information to otherwise hard-to-reach ethnic populations.

29 (7) Twenty rural counties in California currently do not have
30 access to 2-1-1 services, creating holes in referral services and
31 disaster response capability.

32 (b) It is the intent of the Legislature, in enacting this act, to
33 facilitate the expansion of 2-1-1 services into those counties in
34 California where they are lacking and to support a comprehensive
35 statewide database that will connect all callers to the information
36 and referrals they need.

37 (c) It is the intent of the Legislature to facilitate access to disaster
38 preparedness, response, and recovery information, and referral
39 services, uniformly in the state, especially in hard-to-serve rural
40 areas, through a universally available 2-1-1 telephone service.

1 SEC. 2. Section 280 of the Public Utilities Code is amended
2 to read:

3 280. (a) The commission shall develop, implement, and
4 administer a program to advance universal service by providing
5 discounted rates to qualifying schools maintaining kindergarten
6 or any of grades 1 to 12, inclusive, community colleges, libraries,
7 hospitals, health clinics, and community organizations, consistent
8 with Chapter 278 of the Statutes of 1994.

9 (b) There is hereby created the California Teleconnect Fund
10 Administrative Committee, which is an advisory board to advise
11 the commission regarding the development, implementation, and
12 administration of a program to advance universal service by
13 providing discounted rates to qualifying schools maintaining
14 kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 12, inclusive, community
15 colleges, libraries, hospitals, health clinics, and community
16 organizations, consistent with Chapter 278 of the Statutes of 1994,
17 and to carry out the program pursuant to the commission's
18 direction, control, and approval.

19 (c) All revenues collected by ~~voice communications providers~~
20 *telephone corporations* in rates authorized by the commission to
21 fund the program specified in subdivision (a) shall be submitted
22 to the commission pursuant to a schedule established by the
23 commission. The commission shall transfer the moneys received
24 to the Controller for deposit in the California Teleconnect Fund
25 Administrative Committee Fund. All interest earned by moneys
26 in the fund shall be deposited in the fund.

27 (d) Except as provided in subdivisions (e) and (g), moneys
28 appropriated from the California Teleconnect Fund Administrative
29 Committee Fund to the commission shall be utilized exclusively
30 by the commission for the program specified in subdivision (a),
31 including all costs of the board and the commission associated
32 with the administration and oversight of the program and the fund.

33 (e) Moneys loaned from the California Teleconnect Fund
34 Administrative Committee Fund in the Budget Act of 2003 are
35 subject to Section 16320 of the Government Code. If the
36 commission determines a need for moneys in the California
37 Teleconnect Fund Administrative Committee Fund, the commission
38 shall notify the Director of Finance of the need, as specified in
39 Section 16320 of the Government Code. The commission may not
40 increase the rates authorized by the commission to fund the

1 program specified in subdivision (b) while moneys loaned from
2 the California Teleconnect Fund Administrative Committee Fund
3 in the Budget Act of 2003 are outstanding unless both of the
4 following conditions are satisfied:

5 (1) The Director of Finance, after making a determination
6 pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 16320 of the Government
7 Code, does not order repayment of all or a portion of any loan
8 from the California Teleconnect Fund Administrative Committee
9 Fund within 30 days of notification by the commission of the need
10 for the moneys.

11 (2) The commission notifies the Director of Finance and the
12 Chairperson of the Joint Legislative Budget Committee in writing
13 that it intends to increase the rates authorized by the commission
14 to fund the program specified in subdivision (a). The notification
15 required pursuant to this paragraph shall be made 30 days in
16 advance of the intended rate increase.

17 (f) Subdivision (e) shall become inoperative upon full repayment
18 or discharge of all moneys loaned from the California Teleconnect
19 Fund Administrative Committee Fund in the Budget Act of 2003.

20 (g) (1) Consistent with Decision 11-09-016 (September 8, 2011)
21 Decision Granting Authority to Provide Emergency Access to 211
22 Services in Counties and Localities Without Existing 211 Centers
23 and to Appoint a 211 Lead Entity, if it determines that doing so is
24 an appropriate use of funds collected from ratepayers, the
25 commission may expend up to one million five hundred thousand
26 dollars (\$1,500,000) from the California Teleconnect Fund
27 Administrative Committee Fund for one-time costs to help close
28 2-1-1 service gaps in counties lacking access to disaster
29 preparedness, response, and recovery information and referral
30 services, where technically feasible, through available 2-1-1
31 service. As the lead agency appointed by the commission in
32 Decision 11-09-016, 2-1-1 California may apply to the commission
33 for use of the funds in the counties that lack 2-1-1 service. If the
34 commission determines that doing so is an appropriate use of funds
35 collected from ratepayers, these costs may include local
36 implementation of a coordinated database that is owned by a city
37 or county to provide referrals to help with nonemergency aspects
38 of disaster planning, recovery, and response.

1 (2) This subdivision shall become inoperative on January 1,
2 2023.

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