

Assembly Bill No. 406

CHAPTER 809

An act to add Sections 7934, 7935, 7936, 7937, 7938, 7939, and 7940 to the Public Utilities Code, relating to telecommunications, and declaring the urgency thereof, to take effect immediately.

[Approved by Governor October 8, 1999. Filed
with Secretary of State October 10, 1999.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 406, Knox. New area codes: telephone number assignment.

(1) Existing federal law provides for an administrator for California area code relief. Existing law establishes a process for that administrator and providers, as defined, to develop an area code relief plan, as prescribed.

This bill would require the Public Utilities Commission to develop and implement any measures that it determines to be available for telephone corporations that possess telephone number prefixes to efficiently allocate telephone numbers within those prefixes, as prescribed. The bill would require the Public Utilities Commission to request, and telecommunications providers to provide, certain information on telephone number use. The bill would require the Public Utilities Commission to prepare and submit to the Legislature a study on that information on or before July 1, 2001. The bill would require, if authorized as prescribed, telephone corporations to return blocks of telephone numbers, as prescribed. The bill would require the Public Utilities Commission to direct the North American Numbering Plan Administrator to seek the return of blocks of numbers smaller than 10,000, as prescribed, and also to obtain specified information prior to addressing area code relief, as prescribed.

The bill would make related legislative findings and declarations.

(2) The bill would declare that it is to take effect immediately as an urgency statute.

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

SECTION 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the Consumer Area Code Relief Act of 1999.

SEC. 2. Section 7934 is added to the Public Utilities Code, to read:

7934. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) The number of area codes in this state has more than doubled since 1991.



(b) The proliferation of area codes has caused undue hardship on citizens of this state, who have begun to be forced into new area codes after years of having the same telephone number.

(c) That proliferation has substantially increased costs to businesses, individuals, and government agencies.

(d) New area codes require the replacement of business cards and letterhead stationery, and companies must use employee time contacting their customers to ensure that those customers are able to continue to reach the affected company.

(e) The proliferation of area codes has also reduced worker productivity as employees begin using new and unfamiliar area codes.

(f) It is the policy of the Legislature that existing area codes should be preserved for as long as possible.

(g) It is the further policy of the Legislature that the hardship currently experienced by telecommunications customers as a result of the creation of new area codes should be alleviated.

(h) For all of the reasons stated above, it is necessary for the commission, as a public agency, to take all possible measures to protect area codes as a public resource, stop area code proliferation, and review their existing practice of establishing new area code regions and the creation of area code overlays.

SEC. 3. Section 7935 is added to the Public Utilities Code, to read:

7935. (a) The commission shall develop and implement any measures it determines to be available for telephone corporations that possess prefixes to efficiently allocate telephone numbers within those prefixes. The commission shall consider the cost effectiveness of these measures before requiring implementation. Among the measures the commission shall consider are rate center consolidation, allocation of numbers in blocks smaller than 10,000, and unassigned number porting.

(b) For the purpose of this section, in accordance with the North American Numbering Plan, a telephone number consists of a three digit area code or number plan area (NPA), a three digit prefix or NXX code, and a four digit line number.

SEC. 4. Section 7936 is added to the Public Utilities Code, to read:

7936. The commission shall direct the North American Numbering Plan Administrator to obtain utilization data for any area code for which a relief plan is proposed, prior to adopting a plan for, or setting a date for, relief.

SEC. 5. Section 7937 is added to the Public Utilities Code, to read:

7937. (a) On or before March 1, 2000, the commission shall request from each telephone corporation doing business in this state that possesses one or more telephone number prefixes, or a portion thereof, the specific telephone numbers and the quantities within the possession of the provider, both in use and not in use. The commission, for the purpose of this section, shall define the terms “in



use” and “not in use.” The commission shall determine the reporting requirements for the information provided to the commission pursuant to Section 7940.

(b) Notwithstanding Section 7550.5 of the Government Code, the commission shall use the information obtained pursuant to subdivision (a) and any other information required by the commission, to prepare and submit to the Legislature, on or before, July 1, 2001, a study of telecommunications industry use rates.

SEC. 6. Section 7938 is added to the Public Utilities Code, to read:

7938. The commission shall require, as an interim measure until the commission develops procedures for number pooling or adopts utilization standards, that number assignments made by telephone corporations to their customers shall be made first from prefixes that are more than 25 percent in use. A telephone corporation may assign numbers from prefixes with less than 25 percent use only to the extent necessary, if numbers from prefixes that are more than 25 percent in use are not otherwise available.

SEC. 7. Section 7939 is added to the Public Utilities Code, to read:

7939. (a) If the commission or an authorized federal agency establishes a process to ensure that telephone numbers can be allocated in blocks smaller than 10,000, the commission shall require that a telephone corporation return to the North American Numbering Plan Administrator blocks of telephone numbers for reassignment, in a quantity determined by the commission.

(b) The commission shall direct the North American Numbering Plan Administrator to seek the return of blocks of numbers smaller than 10,000 not in use. The commission, for purposes of this section, shall define “not in use.”

SEC. 8. Section 7940 is added to the Public Utilities Code, to read:

7940. A telephone corporation doing business in this state that possesses one or more telephone number prefixes, or portions thereof, shall provide to the commission or its agent, upon request, use information pertaining to both those prefixes in use and those prefixes not in use, according to any schedule established by the commission.

SEC. 9. This act is an urgency statute necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety within the meaning of Article IV of the Constitution and shall go into immediate effect. The facts constituting the necessity are:

In order to address as soon as possible the rapid proliferation of new area codes, including the imposition of planned area code overlays, which causes undue hardship to the citizens of this state, it is necessary that this act take effect immediately.

