

SUBJECT: Removing lifeline program requirement for certain phone companies

COMMITTEE: State Affairs — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 12 ayes — Cook, Giddings, Craddick, Farrar, Guillen, K. King, Kuempel, Meyer, Oliveira, Paddie, E. Rodriguez, Smithee

0 nays

1 absent — Geren

WITNESSES: For — Bob Digneo, AT&T

Against — None

On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Brian Lloyd, Public Utility Commission of Texas)

BACKGROUND: The Lifeline Service program provides a discount on phone service for low-income consumers. Some suggest that due to recent decreases in landline phone use, it may not be necessary for the state to require a deregulated incumbent local exchange company (AT&T) to offer the Lifeline Service program.

DIGEST: HB 2370 would remove the requirement that a deregulated incumbent local exchange company provide the Lifeline Service program.

NOTES: A companion bill, SB 1003 by Hancock, was reported favorably from the Senate Committee on State Affairs on May 1.