

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 897
By: Shapleigh
State Affairs
4-7-97
Committee Report (Amended)

DIGEST

Currently, the General Services Commission (GSC) maintains and publishes the phone directory for the capitol complex and other Austin-area agencies and the directory of all state agencies in Texas using the Tex-An long-distance service. This information is placed on the Internet, as well as in the Blue Pages of local telephone directories. However, the latest Texas Performance Review found that state government information is still difficult for Texans to find. The government listings in the Blue Pages are by agency, not by subject matter; the state's general information number is not listed in most of Texas' telephone books; those making calls to the general information number are often transferred from agency to agency with inconclusive results; and on-line information is infrequently updated.

S.B. 897 would facilitate better organization, availability of, and public accessibility to, state government information by requiring the Records Management Interagency Council to develop and complete a categorization of state agency programs and telephone numbers by subject matter and agency name by January 1, 1999. In addition, the Public Utility Commission, private, for-profit publishers of residential telephone directories, and GSC would be required to work together to ensure that the local telephone numbers of state government programs and agencies are listed in local residential and GSC-published telephone directories alphabetically by subject matter and by agency name.

PURPOSE

As proposed, S.B. 897 sets forth requirements for facilitating the organization and availability of government information.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 441.053, Government Code, by amending Subsection (j) and adding Subsection (k), to require the Records Management Interagency Coordinating Council (council) to categorize state agency programs and telephone numbers by subject matter as well as by agency. Requires state agencies to cooperate with the council by providing the council with the information it needs to perform this function. Makes conforming changes.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 3.309, Article 1446c-0, V.T.C.S., to delete text providing that a listing of state telephone numbers is not required to exceed a certain length. Requires the Public Utility Commission's (commission) rules to require a publisher to list the telephone number for state government information and to list telephone numbers alphabetically by the subject matter of agency programs as well as alphabetically by agency. Requires the General Services Commission to cooperate with the commission and publishers to ensure that the subject matter listings of programs and telephone numbers in the telephone directories is consistent with the categorization developed by the council under Section 441.053, Government Code.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 2170.005, Government Code, by adding Subsection (c), to require telephone directories published by the commission under this section and Section 2170.059 to be revised regularly, and to list state telephone numbers alphabetically by the subject matter of agency

programs as well as alphabetically by agency. Requires the subject matter listing of programs and telephone numbers in the telephone directories to be consistent with the categorization developed by the council under Section 441.053. Authorizes the commission to authorize, under terms considered appropriate by the commission, a yellow pages advertising section in the directories to recover development, publication, and distribution costs of the directories.

SECTION 4. Requires the council to form a research group to study certain topics.

SECTION 5. Effective date: September 1, 1997.

SECTION 6. Emergency clause.

SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE CHANGES

Amendment 1.

Amends SECTION 3, Section 2170.005(c), Government Code, to authorize the commission to authorize, under terms considered appropriate by the commission, a yellow pages advertising section in the directories to recover development, publication, and distribution costs of the directories.