SENATE COUNSEL, RESEARCH, & FISCAL ANALYSIS

BILL SUMMARY

S.F. No. 4496 – Telecommunications Regulation (as amended by the A1)

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Senate File 4496 amends and repeals several statutes that governed the regulation of telephone companies for decades, many of which are now obsolete as a result of technological advances and price deregulation.

Section 1 (amends section 237.035) makes a conforming change.

Section 2 (amends section 237.036) strikes language authorizing the commission to regulate pay telephones, but retains the requirement that coin-free access to 911 and other emergency numbers, and to telecommunications relay services for persons with communications disabilities be maintained.

Section 3 (amends section 237.069) strikes language requiring the Public Utilities Commission to adopt rules governing a telephone company's delay or denial of a customer's request to trace allegedly harassing calls. Requires a telecommunications carrier to be capable of allowing law enforcement agencies to intercept and access call-identifying information consistent with federal law.

Section 4 (amends section 237.07, subdivision 1) strikes language requiring telephone companies to keep price lists and rules available for public inspection at their offices.

Section 5 (amends section 237.11) strikes language requiring a telephone company to keep an office in Minnesota. Strikes language referring to obsolete language that this bill repeals.

Section 6 (amends section 237.164) strikes language requiring the commission to establish intrastate service discounts for schools and libraries in order to allow them to access federal discounts. Provides that a school or library is eligible to receive service discounts that are consistent with the federal E-rate discount program.

Section 7 (amends section 237.626, subdivision 1) strikes language stating that a promotion may take effect the day after the commission receives notice of it from a telephone company and that the notice must identify the consumers to whom the promotion is available.

Section 8 (amends section 237.626, subdivision 3) strikes language requiring a promotional offer to be available for resale to a qualifying carrier.

Section 9 (amends section 237.66) requires a telephone company to notify a residential customer of the price of all available service options when service is initiated, when a service change is requested, and at any time the customer requests that information.

Section 10 (amends section 237.66) provides that a telephone company may provide the notice required under section 9 above electronically if requested by the customer.

Section 11 (amends section 237.70, subdivision 7) strikes language requiring the commission to establish a uniform statewide credit for the Telephone Assistance Plan, a program that reduces telephone bills for income-qualified persons that all local providers must offer.

Section 12 (amends section 237.762, subdivision 5) strikes language requiring rate increases under a plan to be incorporated with a state universal service fund to delay an increase during the plan's initial three years.

Section 13 (Repealer) repeals several sections.