

JOINT COMMITTEE ON TELECOMMUNICATIONS, UTILITIES, AND ENERGY

BILL SUMMARY

BILL NO. H.3551 (Senate companion S.2306)

TITLE: An Act relative to smart meters

SPONSOR: Representative Estela A. Reyes

COMMITTEE: Telecommunications, Utilities, and Energy

HEARING DATE: June 12, 2025

PRIOR HISTORY: 193rd: S.2152 no action taken
192nd: S.2204 accompanied a study order
191st: S.1988 reported favorably to the Senate
190th: S.1864, accompanied a study order
189th: H.2868 accompanied a study order
188th: H.2926 accompanied a study order

CURRENT LAW:

Chapter 164 outlines DPU's authority and power over the manufacturing and sale of gas and electricity.

SUMMARY:

Adds a new section to Chapter 164 to address smart/wireless utility meter information.

Adds definitions for electromechanical analog meter, utility company, wireless meter, and equivalent technology.

Requires DPU to direct utilities to provide ratepayers with a choice of the type of utility meter to be installed at their residence, property, or business, including the option for an electromechanical analog meter. Utilities would be required to allow a ratepayer to retain and operate an electromechanical analog meter at no cost, and to replace a wireless meter with a non-transmitting electromechanical meter at no cost. A utility company must obtain the ratepayer's written consent before installing a wireless meter or equivalent technology on the ratepayer's property, or before altering the functionality of said meter.

A utility company must provide written notice to ratepayers within 90 days of the effective date of this act to inform ratepayers if wireless meters have been installed on their properties, and ratepayers shall have the right to request that the utility company remove said wireless meters and install in their place electromechanical analog meters that emit no radiofrequency electromagnetic radiation. There shall be no cost or other periodic usage charges to the ratepayer for such removal, replacement installation, and use of a non-wireless utility meter. The utility company shall promptly comply with such removal and replacement installation requests.

Utility companies are: prohibited from shutting off service to a ratepayer based on the rate payer's utility usage or on the ratepayer having electromechanical analog meters; prohibited from imposing any disincentive on a ratepayer for not consenting to the installation or use of wireless meters; required to notify ratepayers in writing that the installation and use of wireless meters are not mandated by state or federal law and are not permitted without the ratepayer's consent; prohibited from discriminating against ratepayers who may have medical conditions that are exacerbated by exposures to pulsed microwave radio frequencies; and prohibited from installing "equivalent technology", such as direct wireless connection to devices in the home or business, on poles or in any other manner near the home or business of an individual requesting a non-transmitting meter. The DPU shall establish terms and conditions to comply with the requirements of this section.