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FLOOR DEBATE

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LB 645

body. AM1769 is our attempt to do all that we discussed with multiple parties on General File. It's a comprehensive...in our view, a comprehensive cleanup amendment that also facilitates and is intended to put LB 645 in shape for advancement. As committed to you, we have made an effort to clarify and simplify Sections 2 through 6 of the bill. Section 2 is the permanent ban on retail and wholesale service by public entities other than power suppliers. Section 3 is the permanent ban on e-mail services by power suppliers. Section 4 is the temporary moratorium on wholesale services by power suppliers through December 31, 2007. Section 5 is clarifying language stating that it will not constitute retail or wholesale services when public entities provide telecommunication services to themselves for their own internal and management purposes. Section 5 further clarifies that nothing in the bill is intended to limit that internal use for management purposes. Section 6 provides further clarifying language stating that upon the expiration of the moratorium, all public power suppliers will revert to their current set of powers and authorities, with the sole exception of the permanent ban on retail services, which was acceptable to the parties. We hope that these amendments present the matter in a more straightforward fashion and provide the clarity that was requested during earlier debate. In addition, amendments are added that accommodate various interests and will assist the procedures for the task force. First were grandfather...first, grandfathering is added to Section 2 and 3 to allow the continuation of services that are currently authorized under law and were offered prior to January 1, 2005. This will ensure that the prohibition on retail services does not prohibit services that are already underway in selected locations. Second, additional language is added to the responsibilities of the task force to require them to study the geographical reach of each of the covered services and the degree of competition and regulation of such services as it relates to geographic areas of the state. Third, three additional members are appointed by the Governor to the task force. These three members must be appointed from the three congressional districts, with the other three appointees of the Governor being appointed on an at-large basis. Fourth, permissive language regarding the hiring of a facilitator for the task force is changed to a mandatory "shall." Fifth, the language is