

HB 404 -- Public Service Commission

Co-Sponsors: Rector, Stevenson, Willoughby, Sager, Bishop

Under current law, members of the Public Service Commission must reside within 40 miles of Jefferson City. This bill requires commissioners to be Missouri residents.

The bill also requires the commission to retain a six-member technical advisory staff with expertise in accounting, economics, finance, engineering or utility operations, law, and public policy. Each commissioner may also retain a personal advisor. All hiring of technical advisory staff members must be offset through elimination of other commission staff positions. Advisory staff members cannot be a party to any case before the commission and are subject to the same ex parte and conflict of interest requirements as commissioners.

No one regulated by, appearing before, or employed by the commission may offer advisory staff members new appointments or positions. No one leaving the advisory staff can be employed by the commission in any other capacity for at least two years; and new advisory staff members cannot have been employed by the commission, the Office of the Public Counsel, or any company regulated by the commission for at least two years before being hired.

The bill allows commissioners to confer with others on matters not relating to filed cases. Commissioners may also confer with others on matters relating to pending or filed cases if no evidentiary hearing has been scheduled and if the matter is discussed at an announced public meeting or a forum where affected parties are present or if the discussion is subsequently disclosed to affected parties. If an evidentiary hearing has been scheduled, commissioners may only discuss matters relating to procedures or unanimous agreements that resolve a case fully.