

HCS HB 635 -- SERVICES BY UTILITIES

SPONSOR: Rector (Threlkeld)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Communications, Energy, and Technology by a vote of 20 to 0.

Under current law, electric, gas, and heating utilities are prohibited from offering heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC) services unless the company was providing these services for the five years prior to August 28, 1998. This substitute clarifies that the exemption only applies to areas being served on a regular basis prior to August 28, 1993. The substitute also requires utilities to comply with the same state and local requirements as other HVAC contractors and authorizes the Attorney General to enforce pertinent statutes.

FISCAL NOTE: Not available at time of printing.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that utilities are competing unfairly with contractors by not following the intent of the law. Statutes should be strengthened with regard to grandfathering and enforcement provisions.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Threlkeld; Missouri Coalition for Fair Competition; Keeven Cooling Company; and Arnold Stove and Fireplace Center.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that the law should not be changed. It was thoroughly negotiated as a fair balance between utilities and contractors during its original passage in 1998.

Testifying against the bill were Laclede Gas Company; Missouri AFL-CIO; and Paper, Allied Industrial, Chemical, and Energy Workers Local 5 and 6.

Terry Finger, Senior Legislative Analyst