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AB-13 Public Utilities Commission: membership: reports. (2025-2026)

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CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE— 2025–2026 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

NO. 13

Introduced by Assembly Member Ransom

(Coauthor: Assembly Member Ellis)

(Coauthor: Senator Rubio)

December 02, 2024

An act to amend Sections 301, 321.6, and 910.1 of, and to add Section 910.10 to, the Public Utilities Code, relating to the Public Utilities Commission.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 13, as amended, Ransom. Public Utilities Commission: membership: reports.

The California Constitution establishes the Public Utilities Commission consisting of 5 members appointed by the Governor and approved by the Senate.

This bill would require that ~~4 members of the commission represent the geographic locations of the 4 State Board of Equalization districts, existing as of January 1, 2026, and~~ one member be an at-large member with expertise in nongovernmental public advocacy or public interest law and with a nongovernmental background, as specified. *The bill would require the Governor, in selecting, and the Senate, in confirming, members of the commission to consider regional diversity in the membership of the commission. The bill would require the Governor, in appointing a candidate for membership in the commission, to consider using a candidate pool that comprises persons with permanent residences in certain regions of the state, as specified.*

Existing law requires the president of the commission to appear annually before the appropriate policy committees of the Senate and the Assembly to present certain information. Existing law authorizes the commission to fix the rates and charges for public utilities, and requires that those rates and charges be just and reasonable.

This bill would require the president of the commission, at the annual appearance before those committees, to also present information related to rates affordability and ratesetting cases decided by, or pending before, the commission.

Existing law requires the commission to report annually to the Legislature on the timeliness in resolving cases, including the number of orders issued extending the statutory deadline.

This bill would specify that the above information includes the number of cases in which the commission failed to issue a decision within the statutory deadline. The bill would require the commission, within 15 days of adopting a final decision on a ratesetting case, to submit to the Legislature a report containing certain information regarding the ratesetting case.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 301 of the Public Utilities Code is amended to read:

301. (a) The membership of the Public Utilities Commission, and the qualifications and tenure of the members of the commission are as provided in Section 1 of Article XII of the California Constitution.

(b) (1) In addition to subdivision (a) and except as provided in paragraph (2), the membership of the commission shall ~~be as follows:~~ *include, at minimum, one at-large member who shall have expertise in nongovernmental public advocacy or public interest law and a nongovernmental background in consumer advocacy, consumer protection, or advocating for residents, especially vulnerable groups.*

~~(A) Four members, each of which represents a different geographic location consistent with the geographic locations of the four State Board of Equalization districts existing as of January 1, 2026.~~

~~(B) One at-large member who shall have expertise in nongovernmental public advocacy or public interest law and a nongovernmental background in consumer advocacy, consumer protection, or advocating for residents, especially vulnerable groups.~~

(2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1), a member of the commission whose term of office has not expired on January 1, 2026, shall remain a member until the term expires or the member resigns.

(3) On and after January 1, 2026, upon the expiration of the term of office of, the resignation of, or the removal of, a member of the commission, the Governor shall appoint a person to the commission consistent with paragraph (1). ~~The Governor shall specify whether the appointment is made to meet the requirement of subparagraph (A) of, or subparagraph (B) of, paragraph (1).~~

(c) In selecting and confirming members of the commission, the Governor and the Senate shall consider achieving regional diversity in the membership of the commission. In appointing a candidate for membership in the commission, the Governor shall consider using a candidate pool that comprises at least one person with a permanent residence in northern California, at least one person with a permanent residence in the Central Valley, and at least one person with a permanent residence in southern California.

SEC. 2. Section 321.6 of the Public Utilities Code is amended to read:

321.6. The president of the commission shall annually appear before the appropriate policy committees of the Senate and Assembly to present on all of the following:

(a) The annual report of the commission required pursuant to Section 910.

(b) Rate affordability.

(c) Decisions on ratesetting cases made since the previous appearance.

(d) Ratesetting cases pending before the commission.

SEC. 3. Section 910.1 of the Public Utilities Code is amended to read:

910.1. The commission shall annually submit a report to the Legislature on the commission's timeliness in resolving cases, including the number of cases in which the commission failed to issue a decision within the statutory deadline with each type of case delineated, information on the disposition of applications for rehearings, and the days that commissioners presided in

hearings. The report shall include the number of scoping memos issued in each proceeding and the number of orders issued extending the statutory deadlines pursuant to subdivision (e) of Section 1701.2, for all adjudication cases, and pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 1701.5, for all ratesetting or quasi-legislative cases.

SEC. 4. Section 910.10 is added to the Public Utilities Code, to read:

910.10. Within 15 days of the adoption of a final decision in a ratesetting case, the commission shall submit to the Legislature a report that contains all of the following information:

- (a) The public utility affected by the decision.
- (b) Summaries of the evidence provided by the public utility in justifying any increase in rates.
- (c) A summary of the commission's rationale in support of its final decision.
- (d) A tally of the number of rate increases approved by the commission for the public utility for the 10 years preceding the date of the final decision.