

Committee on Regulated Industries

SB 7036 — Lifeline Telecommunications Service

by Regulated Industries Committee

The bill updates Florida’s Lifeline provisions to be consistent with current federal Lifeline regulation.

The bill clarifies that an eligible telecommunications carrier (ETC) must notify a Lifeline subscriber (subscriber) of impending termination of Lifeline service if there is reason to believe that the subscriber no longer qualifies for the service. It requires a subscriber to provide proof of continued eligibility for Lifeline service upon request of the ETC, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) or its designee.

The bill removes obsolete provisions relating to income eligibility standards that are inconsistent with current FCC requirements. It clarifies that the only government entities involved in the Lifeline program are the Public Service Commission (PSC) and the Department of Children and Families (DCF). The bill clarifies that the PSC and the DCF may exchange information with ETCs, and the FCC or its designee, in order to enroll eligible customers in Lifeline service. The bill requires any state agency that determines a person is eligible for Lifeline service to coordinate with the FCC or its designee to verify eligibility.

The bill authorizes certain information exempt from public records laws to be released to the FCC or its designee as required to administer the Lifeline program.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2022.

Vote: Senate 39-0; House 111-0